

Double-page engraved map with hand-colour.

SPEED’S MAP OF OXFORDSHIRE

Oxfordshire described with ye Citie and the Armes of the Colledges of ye famous university ao 1605.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
[1627].

Publisher
Performed by John Speede and are to be sold in popes head alley against the Exchange by I.S. & G.H.,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map with hand-colour.

Dimensions
400 by 540mm. (15.75 by 21.25 inches).

Notes
A map of Oxfordshire, with an inset map of the city of Oxford and a border made up of the coats of arms of the university colleges. At the bottom, the scale bar has been decorated with a globe and two scholars, one of whom is using a pair of compasses to measure out the scale bar.

John Speed (1552-1629) was the outstanding cartographer of his age. By trade a merchant tailor, but by proclivity a historian, it was the patronage of Sir Fulke Greville, poet and statesman, that allowed him to pursue this interest in earnest.

His ‘Theatre of Great Britain’ was the first atlas of the British Isles: Speed prepared the maps himself about two years before they were published. The present map is taken from the 1627 English edition published by George Humble, who was granted a privilege to print it for twenty-one years from 1608.

The ‘History of Great Britaine’ (1611) and its companion atlas volume, the ‘Theatre of the Empire of great Britaine’ (1612) were published together and “were an immediate success: three new editions and issues of each appeared during Speed’s lifetime, and a miniature version was first published about 1619-20. The maps in the ‘Theatre’ became the basis for subsequent folio atlases until the mid-eighteenth century.

Bibliography
Chubb XXV; Skelton 16.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 22154

© Daniel Crouch Rare Books Ltd | 2025