

Double-page engraved map, fine original hand-colour, bunch of grapes watermark, centre-fold and margins reinforced.

THE FIRST MAP OF ENGLAND AND WALES PRINTED IN ENGLAND

Anglia hominu[m] numero, rerumq[ue] fere omniu[m] copiis abundans, sub mitissimo Elizabethae, serenissimae et doctissimae Reginae, imperio, placidissima pace annos iam viginti florentissima.

Author
SAXTON, Christopher

Publication date
1579.

Publisher

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map, fine original hand-colour, bunch of grapes watermark, centre-fold and margins reinforced.

Dimensions
385 by 490mm. (15.25 by 19.25 inches).

Notes
In 1575, Christopher Saxton was authorised by the Queen’s Privy Council to survey and map the counties of England and Wales, a task which he had completed by 1579, when the resulting maps

were compiled and published in his seminal ‘Atlas of England and Wales’. This map of England is one of the 35 maps included in the atlas and is the first map of England and Wales printed in England.

The map records the country’s landscapes and settlements, represented by small illustrations of churches, rivers, and hills. An elaborate cartouche dominates the top-right corner of the map, with lobsters and fish hanging from the bottom, attesting to England’s strong maritime culture in this period. Above the cartouche are the arms of Elizabeth I, to whom the title of the map is also a tribute: “England: abundant in men and in nearly all resources, has been flourishing for 20 years, now, in calm peace, under the most gentle rule of Elizabeth, our fairest and most learned Queen” (trans.). Below this is illustrated the Seckford coat-of-arms, along with its later Latin motto “industria naturam ornat”, in honour of Saxton’s patron, Thomas Seckford. Top-left is an index of the counties, with their Latin names, which corresponds to numbers on the map. Bottom-left is the map’s scale-bar, along with two banners identifying Saxton as the cartographer and Augustine Ryther as the engraver. Ryther (d1593) was the most accomplished of a team of seven English and Flemish engravers who worked on the county maps in Saxton’s atlas. Originally from Leeds, he was also known for producing mathematical instruments. Additionally, like all the maps in Saxton’s ‘Atlas of England and Wales’, this map bears his watermark, a bunch of grapes, to identify the work as original.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 24369

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