

Double-page engraved map.

“THE FIRST

published in an atlas to depict California as an island, and an accurate east coast of North America” (Burden)

America with those known parts in that unknowne worlde both people and manner of buildings Discribed and inlarged by I.S. Ano. 1626.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
1626 [but 1627-1632].

Publisher
are to be sold in pops-head alley against the Exchange by G. Humble,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map.

Dimensions
400 by 510mm (15.75 by 20 inches).

Notes
The first map published in an atlas to depict California as an island, from the first atlas compiled and published by an Englishman, Speed's 'Prospect'.

For this map, Abraham Goos "drew on his engraving of North America in 1624, and the Briggs 1625, to depict California as an island once more. He was the only Dutch cartographer to do so for some considerable time. There are five fewer placenames in California than the Briggs. However, like his earlier one he includes a similar faint north-west coastline and Strait of Anian. Brasil and Frisland, remnants from the sixteenth century, make a stubborn appearance in the North Atlantic. The fledgling colonies of Plymouth in New England, and Iames Citti in Virginia, are both recognised" (Burden).

Vignettes in the border at the top of the map depict bird's-eye views of important towns, among them 'S. Domingo' and 'Olinda'. Illustrated in the borders along the left-side of the map are figures from North America, and from South America on the right.

Accompanying text in English, 'The Description of America', is printed on the reverse.

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', first published in 1611 or 1612, was the first large-scale printed atlas of the British Isles. The 'Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World', from which the present work is drawn, appeared in 1627, bound with the 'Theatre', and is the first world atlas compiled by an Englishman to be published in England. Engraved in Amsterdam, many of the maps are anglicized versions of works by Dutch makers in distinctive carte-à-figure style, featuring borders with figures in local costume and city views.

Bibliography
Burden, 217; Chubb, XXV; Tooley, pg. 113; Shirley [Atlases], T.SPE-2a.

Provenance

Price: £3500

Inventory reference: 21911

© Daniel Crouch Rare Books Ltd | 2025