



Four volumes, folio atlas (300 by 190mm), second edition, second issue, including the original printing of the suppressed 'Voyage to Cadiz' (1598, state II; ?supplied), [24], 619pp.; [16], 312pp. 204pp.; [16], 868pp.; [12], 807pp., without the Edward Wright world map, as usual, small rust hole to leaf **3 in vol. II, and one or two adjacent rust stains, finely bound in early nineteenth-century red straight-grained morocco by T. Brooks, with elaborate gilt and blind-tooled borders and gilt foliate cornerpieces, spines in six compartments separated by raised bands, richly gilt, gilt edges.

THE GREAT PROSE EPIC OF THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD" WITH THE RARE SUPPRESSED 'VOYAGE TO CADIZ'

The Principall Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, Made by Sea or Over-Land, to the Remote and Farthest Distant Quarters of the Earth...

Author

HAKLUYT, Richard

Publication date

1812

Publisher

by George Bishop; Ralph Newberie and Robert Barker, Anno 1599-1600; and R.H. Evans,

Publication place

Imprinted at London

Physical description

Four volumes, folio atlas (300 by 190mm), second edition, second issue, including the original printing of the suppressed 'Voyage to Cadiz' (1598, state II; ?supplied), [24], 619pp.; [16], 312pp. 204pp.; [16], 868pp.; [12], 807pp., without the Edward Wright world map, as usual, small rust hole

to leaf **3 in vol. II, and one or two adjacent rust stains, finely bound in early nineteenth-century red straight-grained morocco by T. Brooks, with elaborate gilt and blind-tooled borders and gilt foliate cornerpieces, spines in six compartments separated by raised bands, richly gilt, gilt edges.

Dimensions

Notes

A very attractive example of the first collection of English voyages, published at the height of Elizabethan maritime prestige.

Comprising 243 narratives of voyages and travels in the New World in some 1,700,000 words, 'The Principall Navigations' is the greatest assemblage of travel accounts and navigations to all parts of the world collected up to its time, and a vital source for early New World exploration. "It is difficult to over rate the importance and value of this extraordinary collection of voyages" (Sabin).

This second edition of Hakluyt's voyages is, in fact, an entirely different book from the initial 1589 compilation and was greatly expanded from the single-volume original. Boies Penrose considered that "the first edition of the Principal Navigations transcended anything that had gone before, though it, in turn, was surpassed by the second edition". Indeed, Hakluyt devoted his life to the work and "throughout the 1590s, therefore, this indefatigable editor set himself to the formidable task of expanding the collection and bringing it up to date ... this was indeed Hakluyt's monumental masterpiece, and the great prose epic of the Elizabethan period ... Much that was new and important was included: the travels of Newbery and Fitch, Lancaster's first voyage, the new achievements in the Spanish Main, and particularly Raleigh's tropical adventures ... The book must always remain a great work of history, and a great sourcebook of geography, while the accounts themselves constitute a body of narrative literature which is of the highest value in understanding the spirit and the tendencies of the Tudor age" (Penrose).

Here the first volume contains the original printing of the rare 'Voyage to Cadiz', which was suppressed by order of Queen Elizabeth after Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, incurred her wrath by returning to England from Ireland without leave in 1599 to marry Sir Philip Sidney's widow, the daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham. The original title page, dated 1598, mentioning the "famous victorie atchieued at the citie of Cadiz" is here replaced for the 1599 printing with these words removed. As the account of the sacking of Cadiz was contained within the last leaves of the first volume (pp. 607-619), these leaves were often removed. In the present example the leaves have been re-inserted in their rightful place.

The third volume is devoted almost entirely to the Americas, the South Seas, and various circumnavigations of the world. It includes the accounts of Niza, Coronado, Ruiz, and Espejo relating to New Mexico; Ulloa, Drake, and others concerning California; and Raleigh's account of Guiana. "Hakluyt was a vigorous propagandist and empire-builder; his purpose was to further British expansion overseas. He saw Britain's greatest opportunity in the colonization of America, which he advocated chiefly for economic reasons, but also to spread Protestantism, and to oust Spain" (Hill).

Edward Wright's world map was, according to Quinn's census for 'The Hakluyt Handbook', only to be found in 19, of the 240, predominantly institutional, examples of the book surveyed. Quinn notes that this survival rate is, even allowing for the high mortality levels traditionally attached to decorative world maps in books, "sufficiently low to raise the possibility that not all copies were equipped with the map, either because it was made available after many sets had been sold, which would mean that its date might be later than 1599, or because it was an optional extra supplied at additional cost."

The rare supplement of 1812, present here, was issued in an edition of 325 copies only.

The historical importance of the work cannot be overstated. It is truly “an invaluable treasure of nautical information which has affixed to Hakluyt’s name a brilliancy of reputation which time can never efface or obscure” (Church). ‘The Principall Navigations’ “redounds as much to the glory of the English nation as any book that ever was published” (Bancroft).

Bibliography

Borba De Moraes, pp. 391–92; Church 322; Grolier English 100, 14; Hill 743; JCB (3) I:360–61; LOC European Americana 598/42; Penrose, Boies, ‘Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance 1420–1620’, p. 318; Pforzheimer 443; Printing and the Mind of Man 105; Quinn, p. 490; Sabin 29596, 29597, 29598, 29599; STC 12626.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1004