

Hand-coloured engraved map, a few minor areas of loss skilfully repaired in facsimile.

THE TRUCE MAP

Novissima et Accuratissima Leonis Belgici seu Septemdecim Regionum Descriptio. Auct: N.I. Visschero.

Author
VISSCHER, Claes Jansz

Publication date
[1611-1621 or later].

Publisher
Claes Jansz Visscher,

Publication place
Amsterdam,

Physical description
Hand-coloured engraved map, a few minor areas of loss skilfully repaired in facsimile.

Dimensions
470 by 580mm. (18.5 by 22.75 inches).

Notes
The signing of the Twelve Year Truce in 1609, by the Dutch Republic, the Southern Netherlands and Hapsburg Spain, proved a catalyst for another version of the Leo Belgicus.

In around 1611, Claes Janszoon Visscher published his ‘Bestandskaart’ or ‘Truce Map’ – “one of the

peaks of seventeenth century cartography" (van der Heijden) – a lion at rest in a sitting position, his right paw on the hilt of a lowered sword. The map is replete with allusions to the fruits of peace: to the right of the lion, war – personified by a knight in a full suit of armour – is shown asleep, and to the left personifications of North and South are shown seated together with 'd'Oude Twist' (the old rancour) buried unde foot. A cherub pours the sweet nectar of the 'Bestant van 12 jaer' (the Twelve Year Truce) into the mouth of the lion; the clouds part to allow heavenly blessings ('zeghen des hemels') to rain down upon the country. These include the arts and sciences ('Const en Wetenschap'); safety ('Vailighe Tijdt'); knowledge and wealth ('Kennisse en Rijkdom'); prosperous towns ('Vergrooten der Steden'); the cultivation of the land ('Vredich Lantbouwen'); and trade ('Coophandel'). Yet even in these peaceful times, the frontier guard ('Frontier Wacht') remains alert.

Although the map celebrated the truce, it also implied – with the personification of north and south – the break-up of the Seventeen Provinces. This is further reenforced by the individual north and south medallions that can be seen suspended from the lion's sword.

Bibliography

H.A.M. van der Heijden, Leo Belgicus: An illustrated and annotated cartobibliography, 2nd ed., (Alphen aan den Rijn: Canaletto, 2006), 5.2.

Provenance

Price:

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