

Lithograph, printed in colours, small loss to lower right corner, skilfully repaired.

“THEN THE MAP WAS DRAWN FOR YOU, AND I AM MUCH MISTAKEN IF IT DOES NOT TELL YOU PLAINLY WHERE TO GO” — ‘THE HOBBIT’

A map of middle-earth.

Author
TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel; and BAYNES, Pauline

Publication date
1970.

Publisher
George Allen & Unwin Ltd.,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Lithograph, printed in colours, small loss to lower right corner, skilfully repaired.

Dimensions
930 by 600mm. (36.5 by 23.5 inches).

Notes
An iconic map of Tolkien’s Middle-earth, by the only illustrator approved by the author.

The Books
Inspired by the Midgard of Norse mythology, J.R.R. Tolkien describes Middle-earth with outstanding

richness; its lore extends not only to people and places, but also to languages, histories, religions and wars. From the Shire, “home of well-ordered towns and prosperous farms, tucked away in a corner of the world where folk are decent and peaceful”, to Mordor, “a dying land, but…not yet dead”, it is a world in which men fight alongside Elves and Dwarves, treasure is guarded by fearsome dragons, and ultimate power can be contained within a ring.

The struggle for power within Middle-earth, and the larger world of Arda, forms both the plot and the deeper message of many of Tolkien’s works, from ‘The Hobbit’ to ‘The Silmarillion’. Much like his friend C.S. Lewis, Tolkien used his works of fantasy as a conduit for profound moral messages about good and evil, friendship and death, and in doing so created a world that continues to appeal to readers of every age.

The Map
The sole artist approved by Tolkien to illustrate his work, Pauline Baynes, created art for many of the author’s books, although she declined the challenge of illustrating the ‘Lord of the Rings’ on the ground of its huge scope. Baynes did, however, paint the present map of Middle-earth in 1969.
In addition to the geography of Middle-earth, with its mountains, rivers, cities and realms including Mordor and Eriador, the map has ten circular inset vignettes showing notable locations from the story, such as “The doors of Durin”, “Hobbiton” and “The Argonath”. On seeing these for the first time upon publication, Tolkien noted that “these pictures agree remarkably with my own vision”.

Along the upper edge of the map, a charming border shows the members of the Fellowship of the Ring setting off on their quest to destroy the One Ring; along the lower edge the novel’s antagonists appear, including Gollum, Shelob and the Nazgul. Baynes considered these elements to make the map too decorative to be included in editions of ‘The Lord of the Rings’, but it has nonetheless become an iconic depiction of Tolkien’s world. Indeed, it helped to make the recognizable majuscule script standard for Middle-earth maps and merchandise.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 24417

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