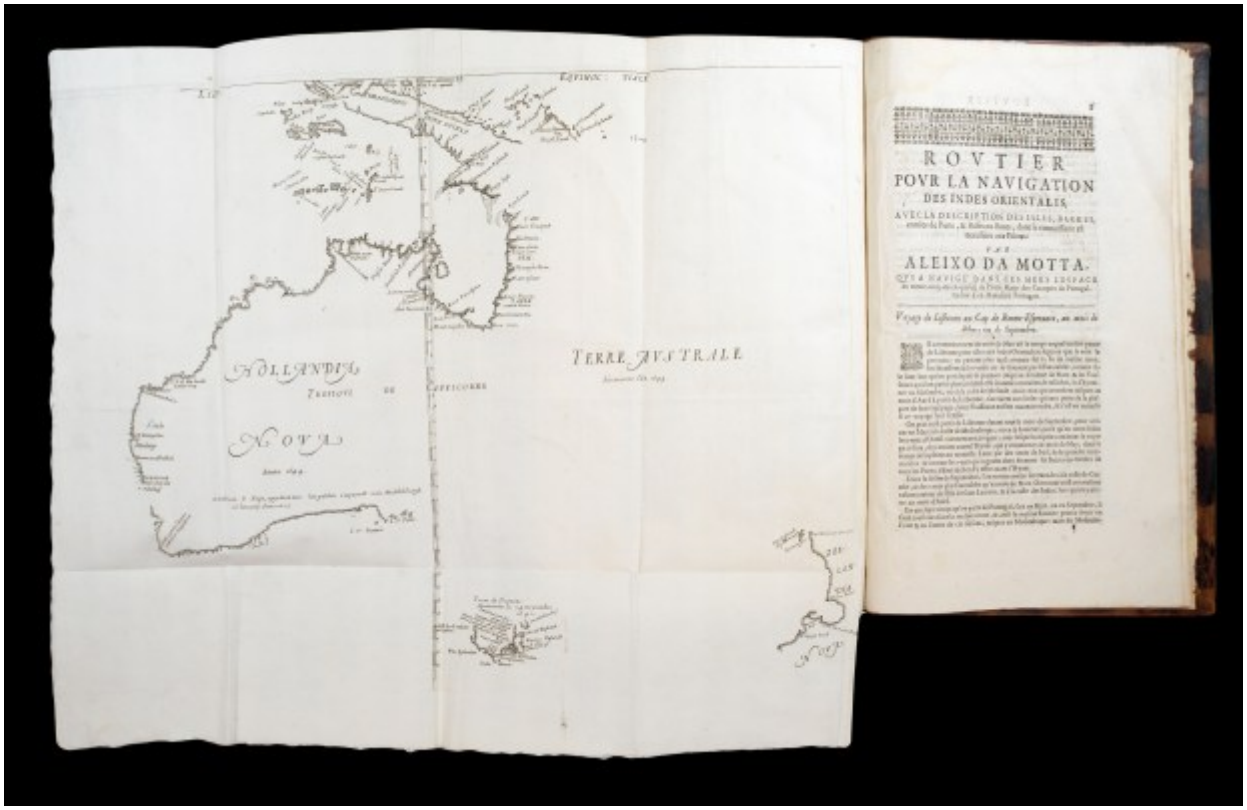


First edition, first part only, Folio (360 by 230mm). (4)ff, XXVpp., 52pp., 50pp. (poorly numbered, but complete), 12pp., 80pp., 30pp., 19p. (poorly numbered, but complete), 35pp., 56pp (poorly numbered, but complete), 9pp., (2)pp., numerous pages misnumbered, but complete, four engraved plates (two double-page), four illustrations in the text, and four engraved maps,; contemporary mottled calf, rebacked, spine in 7 compartments with red morocco lettering piece, gilt, in the second.

THEVENOT'S VOYAGES

Relations de Divers Voyages Curieux qui n'ont point esté publiées, ou qui ont esté traduites d'Hacluyt, de Purchas et d'autres voyages Anglais, Hollandais, Portugais, Allemands, Espagnols, et de quelques Persans, Arabes et auteurs orientaux.

Author
THEVENOT, Melchisedec; and Abel Janszoon TASMAN

Publication date
1663.

Publisher
Jacques Langlois, chez G. Meturas, S. Piget, E. Langlois, T. Joly & L. Billaine

Publication place
Paris,

Physical description
First edition, first part only, Folio (360 by 230mm). (4)ff, XXVpp., 52pp., 50pp. (poorly numbered, but complete), 12pp., 80pp., 30pp., 19p. (poorly numbered, but complete), 35pp., 56pp (poorly numbered, but complete), 9pp., (2)pp., numerous pages misnumbered, but complete, four engraved plates (two double-page), four illustrations in the text, and four engraved maps,; contemporary

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Dimensions

Notes

A rare first edition, of the first part of the first volume, with the map of Australia in the first state: one of the earliest printed maps of the country.

The first three volumes were published between 1663 and 1666. A fourth part was published in 1672, and a fifth part unfinished in 1696. “It is difficult to find complete copies” Brunet (V, 810-813), because each volume is composed of separate parts. Brunet adds that “no two examples have the same parts in the same order”.

The text is based on the original manuscripts collected by Melchisedec Thevenot, Orientalist and librarian to the King, and offers much good information on the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.), Eastern alphabets, one of the first representations of cuneiform characters, etc.

The mapmakers
Abel Jansz. Tasman (c1603-1659), was the first European explorer to reach and map the coastlines of Tasmania and New Zealand. After a series of shipwrecks had revealed some of the western coast of Australia, he was chosen by Anthony van Diemen, governor-general of the Dutch East Indies, to lead a voyage of discovery to the south, in 1642. The intention was to find a sea route south of Nuyts land, and east across the Pacific to South America. In his ships, the ‘Heemskerck’ and ‘Zeehaen’, over a course of ten months, Tasman mapped the coast of southwest Tasmania, the west coast of New Zealand, and the island groups of Tonga and New Guinea. A second voyage, in 1644, Tasman and crew surveyed the southwest coast of New Guinea, and much of Australia’s northern coastline, as here.

Although the longed for southern sea route was not found,… the easterly’s were too strong, Tasman was awarded the rank of commandeur on his return, and a pay rise was backdated to the beginning of his first voyage. Subsequently, Tasman was “appointed to the Council of Justice at Batavia. In mid-1647 he was sent on a mission to the King of Siam and was granted precedence over all Dutchmen in the kingdom. After that mission, he was given command of a fleet of eight vessels which sailed in May 1648 against the Spaniards. His conduct in this operation was unsatisfactory and, after his return in January 1649, proceedings were taken against him for having, when inflamed by liquor, treated one of his sailors in a barbarous way; as a result, he was removed from office during the governor-general’s pleasure. He was formally reinstated in January 1651, but not long afterwards retired from the service and became a merchant in Batavia. He died there in affluent circumstances in 1659” (Forsyth).

Melchisedech Thevenot (1620-1692) was a French diplomat, scientist, and travel writer. He was a scholar with interests in mathematics, physics, and medicine, acting as the patron of several early scientific societies and most notably contributing to the formation of the Academie des Sciences. His early career included two missions to Italy in the 1640s and 1650s, and it was there that he first developed an interest in the study of Oriental languages. In 1663, he published the first part of his ‘Relations de Divers Voyages’, a work that would secure his reputation as one of the most important travel compilers of the seventeenth century. He would go on to publish a second and third part in 1666, a fourth in 1672, and a final fifth part was being assembled in 1692 when Thevenot died.

Bibliography

Literature: Tooley, ‘The Mapping of Australia’, 1247.

Provenance

Price: £35000

Inventory reference: 23215

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