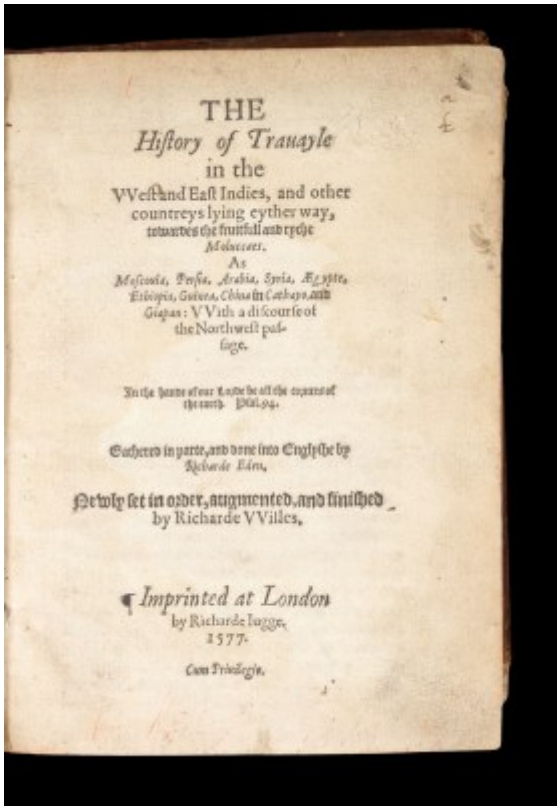

THE
Hiſtory of Trauayle
in the
VVeſt and Eaſt Indies, and other countreys lying eyther way, towardes the fruitfull and ryche *Moluccaes.*
As
Muſcouia, Perſia, Arabia, Syria, Ægypte, Ethiopia, Guinea, China in Cathayo, and Giapan: VVith a diſcourſe of the Northweſt paſſage.
In the hande of our Lorde be all the corners of the earth. Pſal. 94.
Gathered in parte, and done into Engliſhe by *Richarde Eden.*
Newly ſet in order, augmented, and finiſhed by Richarde VVilles.
Imprinted at London
by Richarde Iugge,
1577.
Cum Priuilegio.

Octavo (179 by 129mm). Black letter; woodcut vignette, historiated initials; contemporary full calf, each cover decorated with blind and gilt fillet border, and gilt arabesque centrepiece, a bit worn, hinges strengthened, preserved in a grey cloth slipcase and chemise.

BETTER THAN EDEN

The History of Travayle in the West and East Indies, and other countreys lying eyther way, towards the fruitfull and ryche Moluccas. As Muscovia, Persia, Arabia, Syria, Fgypte, Ethiopia, Guinea, China in Cathayo, and Giapan: With a discourse of the Northwest passage Gathered in parte, and done into Englyshe by Richarde Eden, Newly set in order, augmented, and finished, by Richard Willes.

Author
WILLES, Richard; after Richard EDEN

Publication date
1577.

Publisher
Imprinted… by Richard Jugge,… Cum Pivilegio,

Publication place
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Physical description
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Dimensions

Notes

The Macclesfield copy, and a superb example of this revised and augmented edition of the first collected voyages to be published in English, Richard Eden's 'The Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India' (1555), including a beautiful woodcut illustration of the stars in the skies of the South Pole.

This new edition incorporates, for the first time in English, Peter Martyr's fourth 'Decade', which gives account of the voyages of Hernandez de Cordoba, Grijalva, and Cortes; Maffei's account of Japan; and the first account in English of Pereira's description of China. All in addition to the translations of Martyr's 'De orbe novo' and Oviedo's 'History of the West Indies', Lodovico di Varthema's travels in 1503 to Arabia, including Mecca, and Medina, Egypt, Persia, Syria, Ethiopia and East India, which had appeared in the earlier edition of 1555.

Richard Willes (c1546–1579) was educated at New College, Oxford, before becoming a Jesuit in 1565 at Mainz. From there he went to Rome, then Perugia, before returning to England, and the Anglican Church, in 1572, to write poetry and study geography. He found patronage with the firmly protestant family of Francis Russell, earl of Bedford, and published this 'History of Travayle…' dedicated to Bridget, countess of Bedford; "it included a treatise on Frobisher and the north-west passage, addressed by Willes to the earl's daughter, Anne, countess of Warwick, an investor in Frobisher's ventures. A major revision of Richard Eden's 'Decades of the Newe Worlde' (1555), the 'History…' added substantial new material on Asia, nearly all derived from continental sources and including accounts of China and Japan translated by Willes and never before printed in English (he refers to G. P. Maffei, the Jesuit historian of the Indies, as his "olde acquaynted friend". It has been judged "one of the outstanding compilations of travel literature to be published in England" (Parker). The remainder of Willes's life is uncertain. Gabriel Harvey called him "a greate travelour, very well lernid" (Smith). Edmund Spenser mourned his death in the 'Teares of the Muses' (first published in 1591, but possibly written earlier, or incorporating earlier material). Francis Meres lauded Willes in 'Palladis tamia' (1598) among the English Latin poets who "have attained good report and honourable advancement in the Latin empyre" (Smith). Richard Hakluyt used material from Willes's 'History of Travayle in the Principal Navigations' (1589; 1598–1600)" (Payne).

Eden, Richard (c.1520–1576), had a varied career, in the treasury (1544–6), as a chemist, and dabbled in in alchemy, being employed by Richard Whalley, a prominent Nottinghamshire gentleman (and subsequent prisoner at Her Majesty's pleasure), search for the secret of turning base metal into gold. In 1552 Eden became a secretary to Sir William Cecil, who hoped to find gold by means of exploration and discovery of the Far East. Eden's translation of considerable portions of Peter Martyr d'Anghiera's 'De orbe novo decades', Gonzalo Oviedo's 'Natural hystoria de las Indias', and other works, and publication as 'The Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India' (1555), is considered his most important work, but he also revised Thomas Gemini's abbreviation of Vesalius's 'De humani corporis fabrica' (1559), translated Martin Cortes's 'Breve compendio de la sphaera y de la arte de navigar' as 'The Arte of Navigation' (1561), the first such work in English, and Ludovico de Varthema's 'Itinerario', which was included by Richard Willes here.

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Alden & Landis, 'European Americana: a chronological guide to works printed in Europe relating to the Americas, 1493-1776', 577/2; Church, 'Catalogue of books relating to the discovery and early history of North and South America', 119; Cordier, 'Japonica', 71; Payne for ODNB online; Sabin, 'Dictionary of books relating to America from its discovery to the present time', 1562; ESTC 649.

Provenance

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