

Oblong quarto (145 by 185mm), engraved title, to the reader, introduction, 4ff. text, map of England, 1f. text and 3ff. of tables, half title, and 51 engraved maps with text, some minor damp staining, loss to upper margin of a3 and a4, contemporary calf, gilt roll tool border, recornered, spine in six compartments.

JOHN BILL’S RARE COUNTY ATLAS

The Abridgment of Camden’s Britannia with the Maps of the severall Shires of England and Wales

Author
CAMDEN, William and John BILL

Publication date
1626.

Publisher
Printed by John Bill, Printer to the Kings most excellent Maiestie,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
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Dimensions

Notes
John Bill’s exceedingly rare county atlas.

The atlas was the work of John Bill (1576-1630) bookseller publisher, and printer to the King, who had worked together with John Norton on the publication of an English edition of Ortelius Theatrum in 1606. He was also known to have travelled extensively in Europe, often visiting the Frankfurt book fair. He also made several visits to Itlay in order to buy books for Sir Thomas Bodley, founder of the Bodleian Library.

The maps for the atlas were based upon those by Saxton, and are the first county maps to mark latitude and longitude. The prime meridian is taken from the Azores. On the verso of each map is printed the descriptive text of the county following, so that the text faces the map. This is the only edition and the maps themselves were never reprinted. Bill in the introduction gives a brief account of the science of geography, a description of England, and four tables giving details on the Spanish Armada, “The last and most admirable [battle]”; notable dates in British history; the number of religious houses before the dissolution; and a list of English and Welsh counties.

Bibliography
Skelton 15; Chubb XLI.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 2501

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