Oblong octavo (144 by 171mm), engraved title and 54 maps and plates minor dampstaining (three of which are folding), occasional faint spotting and browning, contemporary blind stamped calf, rebacked.

SELLER’S EXCEEDINGLY RARE MINIATURE SEA ATLAS

Hydrographia Universalis, or a book of maritime charts.

Author
SELLER, John

Publication date
[c. 1695].

Publisher
By John Seller, Hydroge. to the King and are Sold by him at ye Hermitage in Wapping,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
Oblong octavo (144 by 171mm), engraved title and 54 maps and plates minor dampstaining (three of which are folding), occasional faint spotting and browning, contemporary blind stamped calf, rebacked.

Dimensions

Notes
Extremely rare miniature sea atlas with eighteen maps of the Americas, three of Asia, three of Africa and two polar charts.

John Seller (1630–1697) was one of the most important individuals in the early history of the atlas trade in England, yet his grand ambition – to rival the great atlas publishing houses of Blaeu, Janssonius, and Goos – would lead to bankruptcy and eventual failure.

Before entering the atlas market, Seller traded in nautical instruments from his shop 'at the Sign of the Mariner's Compass' in Wapping – at the time the heart of the maritime trade. In 1669 he published 'Paxis Nautica: Practical Navigation', which established his credentials within the maritime community. His place was further strengthened when, in 1671, he was appointed hydrographer to Charles II.

That same year, Seller published his first sea atlas, the 'English Pilot: The First Book', covering the northern navigation. In the following few years, Seller would go on to publish the second, third, and fourth books of the 'English Pilot', covering the Southern, Oriental, and North American navigations; a 'Coasting Pilot' detailing the coasts of Britain the Low Countries; and a sea atlas, the 'Atlas Maritimus'. Although much of their contents were taken from Dutch works by the likes of Goos, Blaeu, and Janssonius, one has to admire Seller's sheer industry. This industry, however, was not allied with enough business acumen, and by 1677 a consortium of map publisher's – most notably William Fisher and John Thornton – had taken over his business. It would seem that the terms of the rescue were quite harsh, as when the consortium broke up in 1679, Fisher kept the publication rights to the 'Atlas Maritimus' and the 'English Pilot the Southern Navigation', and Thornton received some of Seller's plates.

Following financial difficulties with his folio atlases, Seller turned to producing smaller format atlases which were less costly to publish, like for example the present work; 28 of the maps here were previously produced in Seller's 1682 Atlas Maritimus; but the present lot also has 3 maps not in either of the British Library copies of the Atlas Maritimus or this title (including one map of Newfoundland). This copy also has seven more maps than the British Library copy of Hydrographia Universalis. In fact of the four other known institutional examples, only the Codrington Library example bear as many maps as the present example.

We are unaware another copy coming up for sale in the last 40 years; and we are only able to trace five institutional examples: The British Library (47 plates), Oxford University Codrington Library (54 plates), Cambridge University Library (52 plates), The Library Company of Philadelphia (52 plates), and the Library of Congress (53 plates).

Contents

1. SELLER, John. Pixis Nautica or the Mariners Compas Shewing the Names of the Points. By John Seller Hydrographer to the King.
2. [SELLER, John]. A New Map of the World According to Mercator.
3. SELLER, John. A Chart of the North Sea By John Seller Hydrographer to the King.
4. [SELLER, John]. Novissima Islandiae Tabula.
5. SELLER, John. A Chart of the Baltick Sea By John Seller.
6. [SELLER, John]. The Islands of Orkney.
7. SELLER, John. The Islands of Farne By John Seller.
8. SELLER, John. Holy I. Land By John Seller.
9. SELLER, John. A Draught of the Sands, Channels, Buoyes, Beacons ans Sea Marks upon the Coast of England by John Seller Hydrographer to ye King.
10. SELLER, John. A Chart of ye Downs by John Seller.
11. SELLER, John Junior.. A Mapp of the Sea Coast of England, France and Holland. By John Seller Hydrog. to ye King. Sold by J. Seller Junr. at his Shop at the Westend of St Pauls, London. (folding)
12. SELLER, John. A New Chart of the Channel by John Seller.

13. [SELLER, John]. A New Chart of the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. (folding)
14. [SELLER, John]. The Prince of Orange Landing at Torbay November the 5th 1688.
15. [SELLER, John]. The Coast of Flanders from Sluys to Calis.
16. SELLER, John. A Chart of the Coasts of France from Callis to Bayon By J. Seller.
17. SELLER, John. The Island of Jarsey By John Seller.
18. SELLER, John. The Island of Garnsey By John Seller.
19. SELLER, John. A Chart of St. Malo by I. Seller.
20. [SELLER, John]. Brest Water & the Adjacent Parts.
21. SELLER, John. A Plat of the Channel Describing ye Sea Coasts of England, Scotland, Ireland and Part of France by John Seller.
22. SELLER, John. The Isle of Man By John Seller.
23. SELLER, John. The River Dee or Chesterwater. By John Seller.
24. [SELLER, John]. Milford Haven.
25. SELLER, John. A Chart of Spain by John Seller.
26. SELLER, John. A Chart of the Bay of Cadiz in Spain Comonly called Cales. Published By John Seller at ye Hermitage in Wapping. (folding)
27. SELLER, John. A Chart of the Mediterranean Sea. By John Seller.
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35. SELLER, John. A Chart of the Eastermost part of the East Indies by John Seller.
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42. SELLER, John. New Jarsey. By John Seller.
43. SELLER, John. Virginia and Maryland By I. Seller.
44. SEELER, John. A Chart of the Sea Coasts of New England, New Jarsey, Virginia, Maryland & Carolina. From Cape Cod to C. Hattaras. By John Seller.
45. SELLER, John. Bermudas al' Summer Islands by John Seller.
46. SELLER, John. Carolina Newly Discribed By John Seller.
47. SELLER, John. A Chart of the West Indies From Cape Cod to ye River Oronoque By John Seller.
48. SELLER, John. New Mexico or New Spaine By John Seller.
49. SELLER, John. The Island of Barbados By John Seller.
50. SELLER, John. Insulae Jamaicae By John Seller.
51. SELLER, John. Insula Matanino vulgo Martanico in lucem editd per J. Seller.
52. SELLER, John. The Island of Tobago By John Seller.
53. SELLER, John. A Chart of the Sea Coast of Brazil from Cape St Augustine to the Straights of Magella John Seller.
54. SELLER, John. A Map of the South Pole By J. Seller.

Bibliography

Shirley BL M.SELL-7a; CUL; Oxford Codrington Library; LC; LC Piladelphia.

Provenance
Manuscript list of maps of flyleaf in early hand. Thomas Wyndham (1681-1745), Lord Chancellor of Ireland 1726-1739; later ink inscription on title ascribing ownership.

Price:

Inventory reference: 13034

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