

Small 4to., pp. [vii], 342, 143-149, 250 [recte 252], [144, of 150], eight fold-out plates in woodcut, numerous illustrations in the text, engraved and in woodcut, additional later hand-coloured engraved Scotland map bound in at p. 283, lacking additional engraved title, as often and three leaves at the end, a little spotted in place, but overall, for this genre of book a very good copy, especially given the provenance: endpapers heavily inscribed, contemporary full calf with raised bands and later ms lettering-piece, binding worn but holding, refurbished, title with tiny hole, two other leaves with small repairs.

SELLER’S EXTREMELY RARE WORK ON NAVIGATION

Practical Navigation; or An Introduction to the Whole Art Practical Navigation; or, An introduction to the whole art. Containing many useful geometrical definitions and problems; the doctrine of plain and spherical triangles; plain mercator, and great-circle-sailing; sundry useful problems in astronomy; the use of instruments; the azimuth-compass; ring-dyal; variation-compass; the fore-staff, quadrant, plough, and nocturnal; the plain scale,... also a table of 10000 logarithms, and of the log. sines, tangents and secants. The fourth edition, enlarged.

Author
SELLER, John

Publication date
1680

Publisher
printed by J. Darby, and are to be sold by the author at the Hermitage in Wapping, by W. Fisher at the Postern-gate near Tower-Hall, by R. Boulter at the Turks-Head in Cornhil, by T. Passenger at the three Bibles on London-Bridg, and R. Smith, at the Bible in Cornhil,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
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Dimensions

Notes
John Seller (c. 1632-1697) was a Wapping-based maker of navigational instruments, chart and map seller, and reknowned to have taken away the Dutch dominance of producing navigational maps and charts. ‘He wrote several textbooks, including the popular Practical Navigation [the present work], outlining the mathematical basis of navigation through worked examples. Within the limits of contemporary practice his description of the various instruments and their use at sea is of exemplary clarity’ (Laurence Worms in ODNB).

The work first published by Seller in 1669, “established a creditable reputation [him] in the maritime community. The book was frequently reprinted over the years and, indeed, some thirty years later it was described as ‘the most useful book for Seamen yet extant'” (Davis & Daniel). In fact the work proved so popular that Seller’s successors Richard Mount and Thomas Page were publishing editions of the work until the mid eighteenth century.

The present work bears numerous manuscript annotations to the upper and lower pastedown by the first owner Thomas Midleton (dated 1682) and a later owner John Wilson.

Due to there use at sea all such works are rare, and this is no exception. We are only able to trace four institutional examples of the present edition: the Smithsonian; New York Public Library; US Coast Guard Academy; and the National Library of New Zealand.

Bibliography
ESTC R183712.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 11594

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