

Double-page engraved map, minor loss, small tear to lower margin skilfully repaired, minor frame burn.

SPEED’S MAP OF CORNWALL

Cornwall.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
[1610-1616].

Publisher
are to be solde in Popes-heade alley against ye Exchange by John Sudbury and G. Humble Cum Privilegio,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map, minor loss, small tear to lower margin skilfully repaired, minor frame burn.

Dimensions
385 by 510mm. (15.25 by 20 inches).

Notes
A map of Cornwall from the first large-scale atlas of the British Isles, Speed’s ‘Theatre’. In the top left-hand corner is a prospect of ‘Launceston or Ancient Dunhevet’. Along the right-hand side of the

map four antiquities are illustrated, including the Hurlers Stones, which, according to legend, are men petrified for playing hurling on a Sunday. The sea around the peninsula is filled with sea-monsters and ships.

John Speed (1552-1629) was the outstanding cartographer of his age. By trade a merchant tailor, but by proclivity a historian, it was the patronage of Sir Fulke Greville, poet and statesman, that allowed him to pursue this interest in earnest. His ‘Theatre of Great Britain’, from which the present work is drawn, was first published in 1611 or 1612 and is ‘the earliest English attempt at atlas-production on a grand scale’ (Skelton). Drawing heavily on the work of Saxton and Norden, little of Speed’s cartography is original (he acknowledges, ‘I have put my sickle into other mens corne’), instead it is his blend of cartography and history, incorporating town-plans, vignettes, and genealogy, that makes Speed an innovator.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £2200

Inventory reference: 24160

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