



Double-page engraved map with hand colour.

SPEED'S MAP OF CORNWALL

Cornwall

Author

SPEED, John

Publication date

[1710-1743].

Publisher

And Now Sold by Henry Overton at the White Horse without Newgate London,

Publication place

[London],

Physical description

Double-page engraved map with hand colour.

Dimensions

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

Notes

A map of Cornwall from one of the Overton editions of 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.

This map is from one of the editions of the 'Prospect' published by Henry Overton between ca. 1710 and 1743. Unlike in earlier editions, the verso of the maps tend to be blank.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £1400

Inventory reference: 21976

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