

Double-page engraved map with hand colour, trimmed to image at lower-left, but with no loss to map.

SPEED’S MAP OF DEVON

Devonshire With Excester Described And the Armes of such Nobles as have borne the titles of them.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
[1676].

Publisher
And are to be sold by Tho: Bassett in Fleet Street and Ric: Chiswell in St. Pauls Churchyard,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map with hand colour, trimmed to image at lower-left, but with no loss to map.

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

Notes
A map of Devon from the 1676 edition of the first large-scale atlas of the British Isles, Speed’s ‘Theatre’. In the bottom right-hand corner is an inset town-plan of ‘Excester’, with points of interest

including ‘Milklane’ and ‘Little Britaine’ marked using an alphabetical key. Along the left-hand side are illustrated the arms of ‘The families that have bene dignified with the title of Devonshire’ and ‘The families that have bene dignified with the title of Excester’.

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 the 1676 edition of the ‘Theatre’, published by Thomas Bassett and Richard Chiswell.

Bibliography
Chubb, CIV; Shirley [Atlases], T.Spe-1j; Skelton, 92.

Provenance

Price:

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