

Hand-coloured, engraved map, trimmed to neatline, remargined.

THE DUTCH LION LOOKS TOWARD THE SPANISH THREAT

Leo Belgicus.

Author
GERRITSZ, Hessel

Publication date
1611.

Publisher
Jodocus Hondius,

Publication place
Amsterdam,

Physical description
Hand-coloured, engraved map, trimmed to neatline, remargined.

Dimensions
430 by 560mm (17 by 22 inches).

Notes
In 1608, the cartographer Hessel Gerritsz (1581-1632) published a new version of the Leo Belgicus with the Netherlands orientated with the west at the top. Again the lion’s back follows the coastline, however, this time he is shown walking on all fours (passant), with his head facing south – towards the Spanish threat.

The genesis of this map is somewhat complicated, as no example of Gerritsz' original survives. The waters are further muddied by the fact that Gerritsz would appear to have engraved two, almost identical, copper plates. Although neither of the first states survive, it is likely that the works were engraved between 1608 and 1612, for two reasons: first, Gerritsz set up on his own in 1608, having been previously employed by Willem Blaeu, second, if one looks at the cartography, the map is unlikely to have been engraved after 1612, as the lakes of northern Holland have yet to be reclaimed.

To the left is a table of towns and villages, to the upper right is an elaborate title cartouche. Below the lion's feet is a legend that reads:

"The Leo Belgicus as a personification of the Netherlands. My fame of Trojan courage and strength, my glory as another Mars are known world wide. But far more happy would I be than many a king, if the gods would grant me everlasting peace".

Gerritsz sold the plates for the map to Cornelius Janszoon, who in turn sold them to Jodocus Hondius, who issued this edition in 1611.

Bibliography

H.A.M. van der Heijden, Leo Belgicus: An illustrated and annotated cartobibliography, 2nd ed., (Alphen aan den Rijn: Canaletto, 2006), 15.4.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 2858

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