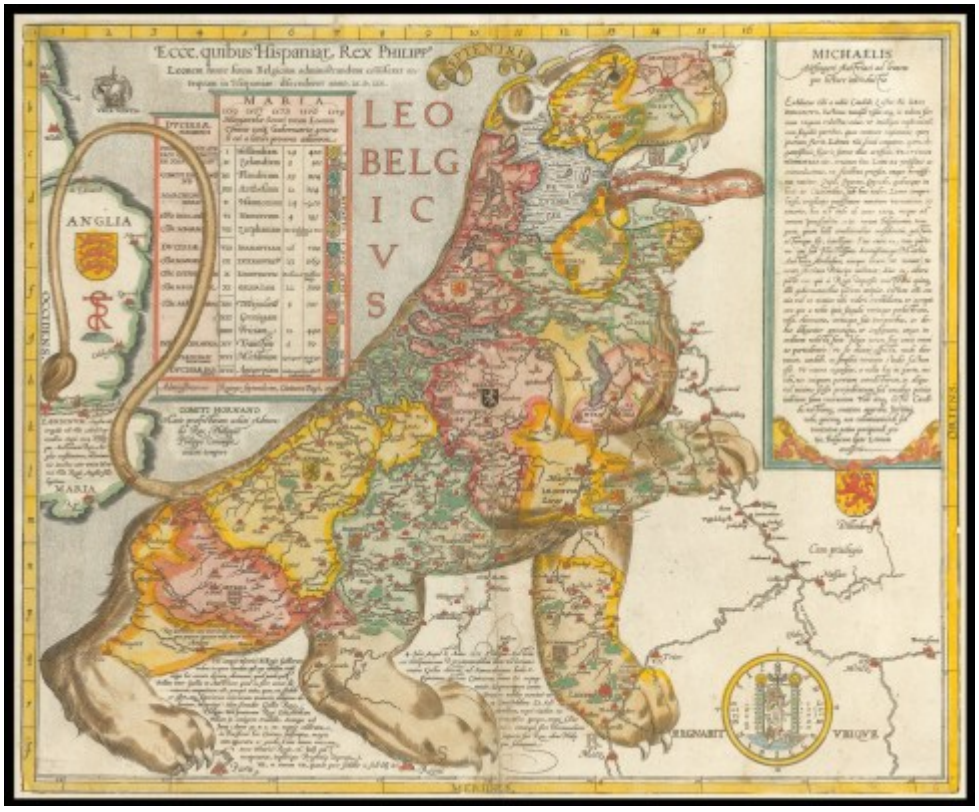

Double-page engraved map, contemporary hand colour, trimmed to neatline and inlaid, minor loss to printed surface.

THE FIRST LEO BELGICUS

Leo Belgicus.

Author
AITZING, Michael von

Publication date
1583].

Publisher
Gerardus Campensis,

Publication place
[Cologne,

Physical description
Double-page engraved map, contemporary hand colour, trimmed to neatline and inlaid, minor loss to printed surface.

Dimensions
370 by 455mm (14.5 by 18 inches).

Notes
The first Leo Belgicus was published by Michael von Aitzing (1530-1598) in his work ‘De Leone Belgico’ of 1583. Here the lion rampant, with right paw raised, faces right, with the lion’s back following the coastline.

The text to the far right is both an introduction to the lion and an apologia. The lion is introduced “in such a form as it has never been seen before, in order that you will better understand the description of the various parts it comprises”. The text goes on to affirm Aitzing’s and the lion’s neutrality in the ongoing war, and reassures the reader that “you will find everything more truthful and acceptable since we personally observed and verified all the facts on both sides”. He finishes with a plea that his Leo Belgicus will not be studied “for the purpose of calumniation but to find out the truth”.

To the far left, in England, is Aitzing’s monogram; and next to it a table with a list of the Stadholders of the XVII Provinces, together with each province’s coat-of-arms, and the number of towns and villages within each province. The upper part of the table bears the acronym M.A.R.I.A., which stood for the names of the five governors of the Provinces between 1559-1579. Between the lion’s feet is text relating to the wars between France and Spain; most notably that between Henry II and Philip II of 1558/1559, in which Aitzing himself fought.

Bibliography
Van der Heijden 1.1

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1910

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