



The first British atlas map of Wales

SPEED, John.
 Wales.

London: Roger Rea, 1665. Coloured. 385 x 515mm.

£1,700

Engraved by Jodocus Hondius, this is the most decorative map of the country, with twelve large prospects of the Shire Towns, four smaller ones of the Cathedral Cities, four armorials and a large compass rose. On the reverse is a letterpress description of Wales. As neither Saxton's atlas nor Camden's 'Britannia' contained a map of the country this is the first map of Wales to appear in a British atlas. This example comes from the Roger Rea issue, which was beset with disaster: according to an advert for the 1676 Bassett & Chiswell edition, "the greatest part of an Impression, then newly Printed, [was] destroyed by the late dreadful Fire, 1666". Surviving examples of any Rea map are thus rare.

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