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Septentrionalium Terrarum descriptio (True 1st edition!)

Stock#: 23208
Map Maker: Mercator
Date: 1595
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition:
Size: 15.5 x 15 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

First edition, first state Mercator's map of the North Polar regions, the first separate map of the North Polar Regions.

Gerard Mercator was the first cartographer to create a polar projection of the earth. This map, the first separate map devoted to the Arctic regions, is drawn from an inset on Mercator's world map of 1569. The map is extended to 60 degrees, to incorporate the recent explorations in search of the North West and North East Passages by Frobisher and Davis. California is identified as Spanish Territory and El Streto de Anian is clearly shown. The pole itself is made up of four surrounding islands, which myth had it were separated by four strong flowing rivers. These carried the oceans of the world towards a giant whirlpool at the pole where there stood a large rock. An account of this myth in Mercator's own hand still exists.

Published one year after his death by his son Rumold, Gerard Mercator's classic map of the arctic is in hemispherical form framed by four medallions and a handsome floral border. Three of the medallions contain inset maps of the Faeroe Isles, the Shetland Isles, and the mythical island of Frisland. The first edition of the map is extremely rare, especially in the true first edition. The first edition can be distinguished from later editions by its inclusion of a definitive coastline in the lower right of the 4 islands surrounding the pole (Pygmei). Later editions omit part of the coastline.

Detailed Condition:

Drawer Ref: Polar

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Old color, faded when cleaned. Fold split repaired on verso.