



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

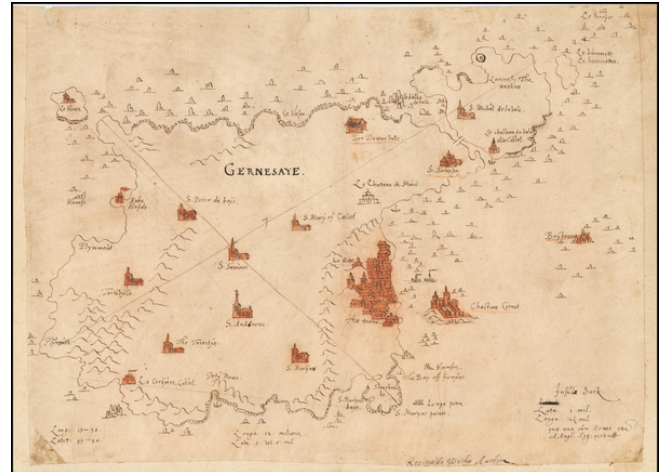
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(Guernsey)

Stock#: 54904
Map Maker: Wolfe
Date: 1560 circa
Place: England
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 17 x 12 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Striking, Elizabethan Manuscript Map of Guernsey by Reyner Wolfe, Pioneer of Early English Mapmaking and Printing

This remarkable Elizabethan manuscript map of Guernsey is one of the earliest surviving maps of the island and is attributed to an important figure in English mapmaking history, Reyner Wolfe (d. 1573).

The map seems to be contemporary copy of a map prepared by Wolfe for circulation amongst England's ministers. Likely dating from the 1560s, when England faced war with France, the map outlines a strategically important island located between two combatants. It is an historically significant map in Channel Islands and English cartography.

Peter Barber, the recently retired head of the British Library Map Department, opined that the present map was most likely prepared as part of the communications between English ministers regarding the defense of England against French invasion, noting:

[The map was] . . . perhaps prepared by a secretary of the man who owned the original (e.g. William Cecil, Lord Burghley) for use by a colleague with whom he might have been discussing the defense of the island. If so, the map was intended . . . to support ministers in reaching decisions as to how to defend the island from a French attack. It must be remembered that ministers had very little idea of even the geographic basics of outlying parts of the British Isles until the 1570s and, as maps of islands go, this is quite a large-scale map . . .



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. . . [Such a] story would link in the fascinating and little-studied cartographic activities of Reyner Wolfe and the international context of the early 1560s and the mapping related thereto. . .

Contents of the map

The map is oriented to the north. Settlements are marked out in red, with churches and small forts as symbols, although some towns and landmarks have singular symbols. The written names are in Norman French. Hills are marked inland, while rocky portions of the coast are denoted with small hummocks extending toward the sea. In the water, tiny rocks jut out, warning would-be sailors to keep an eye open for obstructions.

The largest settlement is marked as "The towne", which refers to St. Peter Port. Across a narrow channel is the formidable Castle Cornet, stationed to defend the town from French invasion from the east. Both the town and castle have detailed, individual dwellings.

Further east, the tiny island of Brayhound is marked, while the latitude and longitude of the small yet strategically important island of Sark is given in the lower right corner. To the northeast, connected with a tiny bridge, is what appears to be another neighboring island. This is the Braye du Valle which, at high tide, was an island, hence the bridge, the Pont du Valle, first built in 1204. The Vale, as it was known, was thought vulnerable to invasion during the Napoleonic Wars, and the channel was filled via dams in 1806.

In the lower left corner are Guernsey's own coordinates. Further to the left is an inscription near the bottom of the page. It says, "Reginaldo Wolfio Authore." This refers to Reyner Wolfe, printer to the Queen [Elizabeth] and an important, yet little known, figure in the early history of English cartography.

Guernsey, an English possession near France

Although Guernsey lies closer to the French coast than the English, it has been an English possession for nearly a millennium. Occupied since Neolithic times, an influx in population came in the early centuries AD when people fled west, away from the invading Romans. The Romans later came to the island as well; by then, St. Peter Port was already a lively trade center on the western maritime trade routes.

In 933, the second Duke of Normandy, William Longsword, annexed the islands from the Duchy of Brittany. When the Normans successfully invaded England in 1066, Guernsey and England came under the control of the same rulers. In 1204, King John lost the Duchy of Normandy yet retained the islands, making the Channel Islands the only remaining English vestiges of the Duchy of Normandy. Indeed, Queen



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Elizabeth II still rules the islands not as Queen, but as the Duke of Normandy. Their proximity to France made the islands a point of contention between France and England and they were repeatedly attacked throughout the Medieval period.

In the thirteenth century, defense of the islands became a priority. Every man was required to serve in the militia and a professional troop of soldiers was stationed there. The militia also fortified Castle Cornet, which was under construction from 1206 to 1256.

In the mid-sixteenth century, when this map was made, Castle Cornet was undergoing a major overhaul. The king of France and the Queen of England were almost always on opposing sides during the Wars of Religion, with Elizabeth supporting the Protestant cause and the French king usually associated with the Catholics. In the early 1560s, Elizabeth pledged support to the Huguenots and contributed to the occupation of Le Havre, which was recaptured by the French on August 1, 1563. Tensions remained high between the two countries thereafter.

On Guernsey, a series of governors sought to fortify Castle Cornet, starting in the late 1540s when the first round bastion was built. Throughout the 1550s and 1560s, Sir Leonard Chamberlain, and his son and successor Sir Francis Chamberlain, carried out new works on more bastions. Their engineering consultant for these projects was Richard Popinjay, who left several manuscript maps of the islands. His map of Jersey (1563) is in the Cotton collection of the British Library, but his map of Guernsey (1562) has been lost.

In 1570, a new governor, Sir Thomas Leighton, overhauled the fortifications yet again. It is from around this time that a sketch of Castle Cornet was made. It is also in the Cotton collection of the British Library. A final manuscript, showing the intimidating fortress which Castle Cornet had become, ca. 1593 and supposedly by Paul Ivy, completes the Cotton collection's coverage of Guernsey. This manuscript map makes an important, and perhaps the earliest, addition to this set of early Guernsey cartography.

Early English mapmaking and Reyner Wolfe

Like many involved in the printing trade in England at this time, Reginald or Reyner Wolfe was not a native Englishman. As Peter Barber has explained, under the reign of Henry VIII, mapmakers domestic and foreign flourished thanks to increased government interest in maps for administrative, defense, and propaganda purposes. From the 1530s, the English Crown instigated a massive coastal survey. By the 1550s, the nobility and educated classes alike had an increased sense of map consciousness and maps were appearing more and more in manuscript and in print.

Wolfe is an example of this larger trend. As a publisher, he is known to have published the first maps



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produced in England (1549 New Testament) and possibly for the first copper plate printed map published in the country. In connection with these maps, he wrote to his readers:

*And because that the knowledge of Cosmographie is very necessary, so that he lacketh the same, can neither wel rede the Byble, nor yet prophane Historiographers, nor the New Testament. For the Evangelistes do describe the iourneies of Christ. S. Luke in the Actes describeth the preachyng & iourneis of the Apostles, and specifically of St. Peter and Paull. **Therefore if a man be not seen in Cosmographie, he shall be constrained to skippe ouer many notable things which otherwyse shoulde do him no lytle pleasures** (title-page verso).*

From at least the 1550s, Wolfe was working on a cosmography that was to contain many maps. Jointly, or as a separate project, he was known to be creating a series of provincial maps of England. It is generally believed that Wolfe's cartographic material was utilized by Christopher Saxton in his county surveys between 1574 and 1579.

However, these projects were never published. His materials for the cosmography passed to Raphael Holinshed, who included them in his famous *Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande* (1577), a major source for Shakespeare. Unfortunately, Holinshed could not include maps in his work, even though he had manuscript materials prepared by Wolfe.

It is likely that Wolfe's provincial map project was being closely followed by William Cecil, Lord Burghley. When Wolfe died in 1573, Burghley turned instead to Christopher Saxton, who was commissioned on July 28, 1573 to undertake a detailed survey of the counties of England and Wales. Saxton conducted this survey from 1573 to 1578, and he followed the individual maps with an atlas in 1579 and a twenty-sheet wall map in 1583.

Today, Saxton is considered the father of English cartography, but an important antecedent was clearly Reyner Wolfe. This sketch is likely a close copy of a manuscript map made by Wolfe which was intended to circulate at the ministerial level. Perhaps it was ordered by Cecil, who had a secretary copy it for a fellow involved in planning the defenses on Guernsey. It could also have been ordered by Cecil's contemporaries Robert Dudley (the first Earl of Leicester) or Sir Francis Walsingham. Another manuscript map by Wolfe in the Cotton collection, of the coasts of Flanders and Holland, was intended for such high-level consultation.

Rarity and relation to other maps of Guernsey and the Channel Islands



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Analysis of the paper reveals that it dates from the mid-to-late sixteenth century and is French in origin. The attribution to Wolfe also would date the map to the second half of the sixteenth century, as he died in 1573 and was most well known in the decades between 1550 and 1600. As noted above, there is only one other extant map (showing Flanders and Holland) attributed to Reyner Wolfe. This is quite possibly the earliest surviving manuscript map of the entire island to contain such detail.

Several later maps suggest a familiarity with the sketch, making this a foundational map in the history of the Channel Islands. For example, Mercator's 1595 map of Guernsey bears a strong resemblance to the sketch. Nicholas Reynolds' mentioned Wolfe to Abraham Ortelius, so it reasonable to believe that Mercator was also aware of his work. Joan Blaeu's and John Speed's Guernsey maps from the seventeenth century were likely influenced by Mercator.

The map is unrecorded. Manuscript sketches like these, ephemeral as they are, have an extremely low survival rate, as do any manuscript maps from the mid-sixteenth century. Its rarity and importance to the history of English cartography make it an impactful item that should be more widely known and studied.

Gernesaye

The spelling Gernesaye appears only once in our search efforts, in the following passage in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots 1547-1603 . . . Volume 2*

Feb 17 (1564). 57. RANDOLPH TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

Yesterday 16th, I received your lordships' letters of the 10th instant, of the advertisements you had of ships arriving here with artillery. For answer, more than 12 days past I was warned by Mr Secretary thereof, and replied that none such were then come—but for more assurance I sent an English merchant along the "coaste syde" under colour to buy herrings, as far as Aberdeen, who assures me no such ship is come nor any artillery between Berwick and Aberdeen. For the West seas, Lords Glencairn and Boyd assure me on their honours, there are none such arrived there. The bruit arose thus when Lethington was in France he sued the Queen mother for certain elm timber, whereof there is none in this country, to stock this Queen's dismantled artillery, and some shot for great pieces. They were promised but not sent, and are now promised again "unrequired," but not looked for. For any Frenchmen arriving, it is neither the Queen's mind, nor will of her Council, and I believe they should be evil welcome to the people. My chief care being "to knowe the bottom of thys Queens mynde" towards my Sovereign, I never heard better words or saw greater tokens of good will in her. I trust not so much to these, as that I see no act done by her causing suspicion. Some times I



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complain for lack of justice to my countrymen, which I know to proceed rather of the tediousness of the suits, and "perversenes" of the people, than want of good will in herself. Some have sped well, and somewhat I trust will be done for the rest —not many. For the reports of lack of justice on the borders: I assure your lordships only the East Marches can complain, and that rather for want of a fit man to receive, and an upright man to minister, justice, than lack of good will in her grace and council. Your honours will consider how needful it is that Berwick have a governor, whereon you should hear as few complaints of the East, as now of the Middle and West Marches. "As God helpe me," I fear rather troubles among themselves, than any evil purpose against us.

Though your lordships hear from all places and carefully provide for all events, yet as I lately heard the Queen say, "that yt were wysedome for the Queue Majestie to tayke heede to the Iles of Wighte, Gernesaye or Gornesaye" (sic) I thought to notify it, though doubtless provided for.

It is thankfully taken here by some, that your honours do not yet cast off your cares from this nation, to whom by your advice, her majesty has been so good.

The oftener that it pleases you to advise me how to deal with these men, or behave myself in "these suspicius and dayngerus tymes," the better shall I be able to serve her majesty. Edinburgh.

Signed: Tho. Randolphe.

3 pp. Holograph, also address. Indorsed

Detailed Condition:

Pen and ink on paper. Old paper, laid on a larger sheet.