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[Rare Variant!] Angliae et Hiberniae Accurata Descriptio Veteribus et Recentioribus Nominibus Illustratus Et Ad D. Guilel. Camden Britanniam Accomodata . . .

Stock#: 61353
Map Maker: Ortelius / Vrients
Date: 1608 circa
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 22.5 x 17 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Striking, Politically-Charged Map of the British Isles from the World's First Atlas--Rare Interim State with Paste Down!

Fine example of Vrients' map of Britain and Ireland, which first appeared in the 1606 edition of Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the first modern atlas of the world.

Vrients' map is one of the most elegantly engraved and distinctively designed maps of the British Isles to appear in a commercial atlas. This is a rare state (1B) with a paste down dedication with religio-political implications.

In 1601, Antwerp publisher Jan Baptist Vrients took over publication of the *Theatrum*, after Ortelius' death in 1598. Vrients gradually added new maps but did not necessarily replace existing plates. Among the new maps was this print of England, Wales, Ireland, and much of Scotland.

The map includes a genealogical table for the English Royal Family, at the right side, which traces the lineage of James I and VI directly from William the Conqueror, who successfully invaded England in 1066. Other details herald more noble ties. A Poseidon-like figure, astride a hippocampus, holds the arms of the House of York. A mermaid bears the arms of the Isle of Man, while the coat of arms of Scotland is installed near the Firth of Clyde (here Dunbreton Fyrth). A crowned lion holds the Irish flag with its harp, a reference to English colonization of the isle.



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The map includes both modern and ancient names for cities and sites across the isles. In the bottom left is a clever table that lists the number of towns, churches, parishes, rivers, bridges, and other features in each county.

The Reformation and the states of this map

Vrients' map is based on an anonymous 1594 predecessor (Shirley, 177) and Jodocus Hondius Sr.'s 1592 map which also had a genealogical table (Shirley, 164). As noted in Van Den Broecke, there are three states of the map, which have to do with the title of James I and VI at the top of the family tree:

- 1A: James' medallion on the tree reads, "*Jacobus Magnae Britanniae, Franciae, et Hiberniae Rex*," while a dedication on both sides of the medallion embellishes the title further to call James the "Most Invincible Ruler of Great Britain, France, and Ireland."
- 1B: A slip is pasted over the dedication to James I. The text on the slip reads "*Unum qua ad Dominum Britannia tota redisti, Una tibi ô redeat sic quoque prisca fides*".
- 2: Dedication removed and the circle below now reads "*1603 Iacobus Magnae Britanniae Rex*".

The Latin translation of the phrase included with state 1B is indicative of the religio-political climate that fueled these changes. It translates as, "You, Britain, who have come together wholly under one Ruler, May you also return to one ancient faith."

It is true that James' ascendance to the English throne after the death of Elizabeth I in 1603 meant that Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland all now had one ruler. Additionally, James' mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, had been married to King Francis II of France, who briefly ruled before dying of an ear infection. The claim to rule France, however, was a convention that English rulers had adopted since 1340 and which they would continue to use until 1801.

James ruled over a Protestant England, but this was a recent shift. Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547) created the Church of England as part of his attempt to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. This development thrust him to the forefront of the Protestant Reformation, which saw many worshipers across Europe leave the Catholic Church for a variety of reasons. The status of England's faithful was thus pushed into an uproar for the next few decades. Henry's son, Edward VI, was raised as, and ruled as (r. 1547-1553), a Protestant. His half-sister, and Catherine of Aragon's daughter, Mary I, had been raised a devout Catholic and she sought to undo the changes to the Church that her father and brother had enacted. She died in 1558, however, which brought her half-sister, Elizabeth, to the throne.

Elizabeth ruled England as a Protestant for over forty years (r. 1558-1603). She never married and had no



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children. This meant that her successor was likely to be James, already King of Scotland, and son of Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth's cousin and a Catholic. James had been baptized a Catholic in December 1566. Mary, unpopular among her largely Protestant nobles, was compelled to abdicate in favor of her son when he was only thirteen months old. James was taken from his mother, who never saw him again, and thereafter was raised in the Protestant Church of Scotland, the Kirk.

Vrients lived and worked in Antwerp, part of the Spanish Netherlands. It had remained Catholic. Publishing a laudatory dedication to a Protestant king was likely to alienate possible customers in Spain, Italy, and other Catholic areas. To mitigate this, Vrients created another dedication and pasted it on—state 1B. Later, he removed the dedication entirely, leaving only the medallion with James' name on it. This, too, was altered, leaving James as ruler only of Great Britain, not of Catholic Ireland or France (state 2).

Detailed Condition:

Minor soiling and repair at lower centerfold. Old Color, recently re-touched.