Barry Lawrence Ruderman
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Germania

Stock#: 61514
Map Maker: Ortelius

Date: 1573
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 20 x 14 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Abraham Ortelius Maps The Holy Roman Empire

Fine old color example of Ortelius' map of the German Empire, from his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the first modern atlas of the world.

Ortelius' map of the Holy Roman Empire was perhaps the most influential map of the region of its time. Compiled from the best available sources, the map was without question the most widely circluated map of the Holy Roman Empire among scholars and the upper castes of Europe. Covering a vast region from the English Channel to the Baltic, and delineating boundaries from the Vistula and Poland in the northeast to Budapest, Venice in the southeast, and reaching Milan and Geneva in the south, this map is a notable representation of the Holy Roman Empire in the late 16th century.

The cities, rivers, and other landmarks are meticulously detailed, showcasing Ortelius's commitment to providing an accurate geographical account. Notably, the map also integrates artistic elements. The coat of arms located in the lower-left corner likely represents Maximilian II, the Holy Roman Emperor. Additionally, the ship illustration in the English Channel is consistent with designs from Ortelius's other works, like "Angliae, Scotiae et Hiberniae" and "Flandria." The presence of a sea monster in the Baltic hints at the maritime myths of the era.

A significant strength of this map lies in its sources. Ortelius's primary reference for "Germania" was a nine-sheet map crafted by Christiaan Sgrooten. While not widely recognized due to the predominance of his manuscript works, Sgrooten's attention to detail and accuracy was unparalleled in his time. He amalgamated data from both published and perhaps lesser-known unpublished sources, possibly including

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Stella's 1560 map of Germany.

Ortelius also drew from multiple other cartographic experts. He explicitly credits Carolus Heydanus, pointing to the potential influence of Mercator's 1590 mapping, which was known for its enhanced precision and clarity. Sebastian Munster, another reputed cartographer, also seems to have influenced Ortelius. Furthermore, Tilemannus Stella's work from 1567 was noted, suggesting that Ortelius was comprehensive in integrating multiple perspectives to ensure the map's accuracy.

Detailed Condition:
Old Color. Trimmed to neatline at left side at the top corner.