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[Spitzbergen & Wiches Lande]

Stock#: 61990
Map Maker: Churchill
Date: 1704
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 12.5 x 11.5 inches
Price: \$1,200.00



Description:

Mapping the early whaling voyages of the Muscovy Company

Scarce early map of Spitzbergen, flanked by nine scenes of whaling, fishing, processing & bear hunting, and walrus (here called Seamorces), which first appeared in *Purchas His Pilgrims* and was later issued in *Churchill's Voyages and Travels*

The map illustrates the accounts of the whaling voyages of the Muscovy Company beginning in 1611, including those by Thomas Edge (still remembered in the name of one of the islands, Edgeøya), William Baffin and Robert Fotherby.

The reference to Greenland in the map is consistent with the English placenames for the period, as early English mariners used the same name for the island called Spitzbergen by the Dutch, despite Fotherby writing that there is nowhere yet known and discovered that has less green on it. The map makes several references to Thomas Edge, including Edge's Land (1616) and Mount Edge. The dates 1613 is also shown on the map.

Sir Thomas Smyth, then Governor of the Muscovy Company, is also extensively memorialized on the map. Of the references to Smyth on the map, one, Sr. Thomas Smyth Iland, reflects the discovery of Nordaustlandet (Norway) in 1617 (the second-largest island in the archipelago of Svalbard, Norway), this being the first appearance of the island on a printed map.



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The discovery of Spitzbergen marked the beginning of the English whaling industry. In 1612 the Moscovy Company obtained a charter supposedly giving them exclusive rights to exploiting the islands; in 1613 a fleet of seven ships under Benjamin Joseph and Edge arrived to find 17 foreign ships, which they either bullied into leaving or forced to hand over half their catch. By 1625 competition from the Dutch made Spitzbergen less attractive to the English, so the whalers turned west to the real Greenland.

Detailed Condition: