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[Blaeu Sea Atlas] Het Licht der Zee-vaert, daerinne claerlyck beschreven ende afghebeeldet werden, alle de Custen ende Havenen, vande Westersche, Noordsche, Oostersche ende Middeldandsche Zee'n. Dock van vele Landen, Eylanden ende plaetsen van Guinea, Brasielien, Oost ende West-Indien

Stock#: 66530
Map Maker: Blaeu

Date: 1619 (or 1620)
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Uncolored
Condition: Good
Size: 11.5 x 10.1 inches



Price: SOLD

Description:

Rare Example of Willem Blaeu's First Atlas

Good example of Willem Blaeu's extremely rare sea atlas.

First published in 1608, this is the fifth Dutch edition with 37 (of 42) maps. The map "Carte van de Reede ende Haven van Medenblick" in the beginning, was not published until the editions 1618 and was before 1620 only published with the Dutch title (the cartouche for the French title was, as in this case, blank).

Het Licht der Zee-vaert was the first book produced by the Blaeu publishing house, heralding a golden age of atlas production, and survives in only a few copies. It is one of the most important Dutch pilot-guides rivalling and surpassing the *Thresoor der Zeevaerdt* of Lucas Waghenaeer which was first published some sixteen years earlier and ceased with the issue of the ninth edition one year later in 1609.

Blaeu's new pilot books were divided into chapters, each containing navigational instructions for specific sections of coastline, accompanied by a finely engraved coastal chart for each section. Map titles appeared in Dutch and French, with woodcut profile recognition views liberally added to the text. Blaeu also added an editorial comment at the beginning of the work, condemning the generally held view of mariners that manuscript charts were better and more accurate than printed sea charts, fighting the widely-held belief of the time that manuscript charts were updated on a daily basis.

In 1618, Blaeu added a third chapter, covering the coastline of the Mediterranean. The first two charts, signed by Blaeu as Willem Jansz, cover the eastern and western Mediterranean.



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Willem Blaeu's earliest work focused on navigational aids for mariners. His first publication in this field was his *Nieuw graetbouck*, for which there are no known surviving examples. His next work of importance were two pilot guides, the *Het licht der Zee-vaert* (first edition 1609) and *Zeespiegel* (first edition 1623). In 1621, Johannes Jansson published a direct copy of Blaeu's pilot guide *Het licht der Zee-vaert*, as Blaeu's copyright had expired. Blaeu in turn decided to compete Jansson and his brother-in-law Henricus Hondius and produce an atlas, spurring a rivalry which would last for more than 50 years.

Condition:

Oblong 4to (255 x 287mm.). Engraved title, engraved frontispiece, 38 mostly double-page engraved charts (of 42, lacking 4 maps of Denmark), woodcut illustrations and diagrams in the text, 1 with volvelle (lacking 1), letterpress tables within decorative woodcut borders. Renovated and finely repaired copy, affecting both the beginning with title, frontispiece and many maps, which have losses.

All but 2 are double-page, 261 woodcut coastal profiles in the text, illustrations, tables and charts. The maps are mostly richly embellished with fine cartouches, sailing ships, sea-monsters, compass-roses and sometimes with insets. They show the coasts of England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Finland, Baltics, Pomerania, Spain, France, Northern Africa, Canarias, Maderia, etc.. Recent fine full calf binding with richly gilt spine in compartments, only slight wear.

Engraved title very worn and with paper reinstated to upper part and corners with minor loss of the word "Het" and image loss, some holes, minor tears to lower margin, some spotting, the printing year is rubbed and you can only read "20"; engraved frontispiece with large image loss to left corner and repairs, minor tears to lower margin, new inner margin; lacking 4 maps of Denmark, number 21-22, 24-25, about 11 maps with losses and paper reinstatements to upper part and corners, about 10 with minor losses of corners, no 6 with large loss, no 17 blackened to the outer left part, many shaved or trimmed to upper part, first map mounted on paper, partly with some spotting and soiling.

Text with paper repairs to corners, about 40 leaves, especially in the introduction, about 20 leaves with some text loss, some only with loss of letters, very spotted and soiled to the beginning. Collation: Engraved title, (2), engraved frontispiece, 54 pp. (A4-F4, G2) lacking 2 pages; (2, title to Eerste Boeck), (1-8), 9-119, (1 blank) pp. (2, title to Tvveede Boeck), 3-130, (1) pp. 38 engraved maps (lacking 4). Probably lacking 1 volvelle in the beginning.



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Detailed Condition:

See full condition description above.