



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

The discription of the Isles and Castle of Mozambique

Stock#: 69467
Map Maker: Wolfe / Linschoten
Date: 1598
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 9.5 x 7.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare English Edition!

Decorative view of Melinde harbor on the island of Mozambique, which appeared in the rare English edition of Linschoten's *Itinerario, Iohn Huighen van Linschoten. His discours of voyages . . .*, published in London in 1598, and engraved by English engraver William Rogers.

The view shows the fortifications of the city, with numerous ships flying the Portuguese standard at anchor in the protected harbor. The map is finely engraved and decorated with a large compass rose, the Portuguese coat of arms, and title cartouche with the title in both Latin and Dutch.

The island of Mozambique was an important trade center in Portuguese Mombasa in the second half of the 16th Century, on the route from Portugal to India. In 1542, Joao Velho, an agent for the King of Portugal, wrote a series of letters describing his 4 year stay on the island, where he lived in a fortified tower with a white slave woman. He was one of the principal overseers of the Portuguese King's stores of cloth and beads, which were used to trade for gold and ivory mined in the interior regions. The Portuguese factor was one of the principal points of trade with Muslim controlled Sofala, where goods from the interior were traded with the Europeans.

Among other things, Vehlo gives an account of certain corrupt captains who were then actively stealing from the King, setting up their own side businesses, using the King's stores, and murdering local traders to escape their debts. The map depicts Vehlo's tower, along with the church and other structures, and provides a nice thematic depiction of the island and port, which were then being visited by more than 500



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ships per year.

Linschoten was "one of the pathfinders for the first Dutch voyages to the East" (Schilder, p. 195). He was in the service of the Portuguese as Secretary to the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa, in India, from 1583 to 1589. Here, he had access to many Portuguese portolans as well as other valuable commercial information, especially as Goa at this time was the commercial and political center for the Portugal Empire in the east. Van Linschoten left Goa for home in January 1589. On the way to Portugal, his ship was pursued by an English fleet and lost its cargo in a storm while anchored off the Azores. After the loss of the cargo, Van Linschoten was persuaded to stay and help recover it; he spent two years on Tercera, working and preparing his notes from Goa. Van Linschoten eventually arrived in Lisbon early in 1592, and then sailed home to The Netherlands. His account of his experiences is one of the most important travel works of the period.

Wolfe, Linschoten, and the *Itinerario*

In 1594, Linschoten set out with Willem Barentsz on an exploratory expedition to find the Northeast Passage. The crew had many adventures, including an encounter with a polar bear, which they killed while attempting to capture it. Eventually, the crews had to turn back because of ice, a situation that also happened with a similar expedition the following year.

Upon his return, Linschoten published his journal from the Barentsz voyages. In 1595, he also published *Reysgheschrift vande navigation der Portugaloyzers in Orienten* (Travel Accounts of Portuguese Navigation in the Orient), based on his research. The work includes sailing directions in addition to descriptions of lands still new to Europeans, like Japan. In 1597, Linschoten published again, this time a description of the African coast.

His most famous work, however, is *Itinerario: Voyage ofte schipvaert van Jan Huyghen van Linschoten naer Oost ofte Portugaels Indien, 1579-1592* (Travel account of the voyage of the sailor Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the Portuguese East India). It was published in 1596 by Cornelis Claesz in Amsterdam.

Two years later, in 1598, John Wolfe published an English translation, with entirely newly maps engraved in London by Robert Becket, Raynald Elstrak, William Rogers. The 11 maps includes several maps not drawn from the original Linschoten *Itinerario*, including a World Map after Ortelius, two maps of Africa drawn from Pigafetta, and an English copy of the first state of the Plancius Spice map.

Rarity

The Wolfe edition of Linschoten's work is very rare on the market, as are the individual maps.



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Detailed Condition: