



The first English atlas map of Africa

SPEED, John.

Africae, described, the manners of their habits, and buildinge: newly done into English by J.S.

London, Roger Rea & Son, 1665. Coloured. 405 x 525mm.

£2,600

A landmark map of Africa, engraved by Abraham Goos for Speed's 'Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World', the first English atlas of the world. Along the top of the map are prospects of eight cities, including Alexandria, Cairo, Tunis and Algiers. Down the sides are ten costume vignettes of African natives, including an Egyptian, Abyssinian Madagascan and a man from the Cape of Good Hope. First published in 1627, this example comes from the Roger Rea issue, which was beset with disaster. According to an advert for the 1676 Bassett & Chiswell edition, "the greatest part of an Impression, then newly Printed, [was] destroyed by the late dreadful Fire, 1666". Surviving examples of any Rea map are thus rare.

BETZ: Africa, 62, state 2 of 3.

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