



The rare English edition of Linschoten's chart of the Middle East

LINSCHOTEN, Jan Huygen van.

Deliniantur in hac tabula, Orae maritimae Abexiae freti Mecani: al. Maris Rubri: Arabiae, Ormi, Persiae... The description of the coast of Abex, The Straights of Meca, otherwise called the Red Sea, the coastes of Arabia, Ormus, and Persia, to the River of Sinde of the River Indus, of Bambaia, India, and Malabar, The Ilands of Ceilon, Choramandel, The Riber Ganges, and the kingdome of Bengala, As also the scituation of the Creekes, Cliffes, Banckes, Shallowes, and deptthes upon or along by said coastes, with the right name of every place, as they are called by the Portingale Pilots, all truly described.

London: John Wolfe, 1598. Coloured. 375 x 515mm.

£6,000

An extremely rare chart of the islands of the East Indies, engraved by Richard Becket for 'Iohn Huighen van Linschoten his Discours of Voyages into ye Easte & West Indies', the English edition of Linschoten's 'Itinerario, Voyage ofte Schipvaert... naer Oost ofte Portugaels Indien'. This manual for sailing to the East Indies, based on Linschoten's own experiences, helped break the Portuguese monopoly on trade with the Far East. The map shows Cyprus top left, Bokhara and Samarkand top right, Sumatra bottom right and Ethiopia bottom left, with Delhi, Bahrain and Kabul named. It copies all the features of the original map (engraved by Henricus van Langren): the titles, in Latin and English, are within a strapwork cartouche, also including the scales; across the Indian Ocean is a large, finely-engraved compass rose, surmounted by a fruit garland; sea-



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monsters and galleons fill the seas, while a lion, elephant and camel appear in Arabia, and just south of Delhi are a pair of unicorns. John Wolfe was notorious for his Machiavellian devices', which were pirating the work of other publishers, especially Latin grammars, Bibles and The Book of Common Prayer. He was blackballed from the Stationers' Company until 1583, when he is said to have reformed his behaviour following a raid on his premises. This did not stop him from copying the work of foreign publishers, as this map testifies.

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