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Tabula Asiae XII [Sri Lanka -- with Elephant]

Stock#: 51940
Map Maker: Munster
Date: 1540
Place: Basle
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 13.5 x 10 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare first edition of Munster's map of Taprobana, the island of Ceylon, which was sometimes confused with Sumatra on early maps.

Taprobana was an important post for trade between the east and the west, and was drawn too large on many maps because of its importance. Marco Polo states: It has a circumference of some 2400 miles. And I assure you that it used to be bigger than this. For it was once as much as 3500 miles, as appears in the mariners' charts of this sea. But the north wind blows so strongly in these parts that it has submerged a great part of this island under the sea. Many myths existed concerning Taprobana. It was believed to be the burial place of Adam, on Mount Serendib. The Great Khan reportedly made a mission to the Island in 1284 to retrieve Adam's teeth and other artifacts.

From the 1540 edition of *Munster's Geographia*, one of the most important works of the 16th century. Sebastian Munster is generally regarded as one of the important map makers of the 16th century. Munster was a linguist and mathematician, who initially taught Hebrew in Heidelberg. He issued his first mapping of Germany in 1529, after which he issued a call for geographical information about Germany to scholars throughout the country. The response was better than hoped for, and included substantial foreign material which supplied him with up to date, if not necessarily accurate maps for the issuance of his *Geographia* in 1540.

Detailed Condition: