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**[Portugal] Guidoni Ascanio Sfortiae S.R.E. Cardinali Cioamerar Achilles Stativs Sal.
Lusitaniam Guido Sfortiae Vernandi Alvari Seco Industria Descriptam Tibi Ob Gentis
Nostrae Patrocinium Dicamus . . . M.DLXI**

Stock#: 75448
Map Maker: Tramezzino
Date: 1562 circa
Place: Rome
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 27 x 14.2 inches
Price: \$ 29,500.00



Description:

The First Printed Map of Portugal

Fine example of Fernando Alvaro Seco's seminal map of Portugal, first printed in about 1562.

The present map is based upon a lost original manuscript drawn in 1560 by Fernando Alvaro Seco. The original manuscript map of Alvaro Seco was taken to Rome in 1560 and given as a diplomatic gift to Holy See following the installation of Pope Pius IV in January 1560. It was carried to Rome by the Portuguese humanist and writer Achilles Estaço (1524-1581), who served as Librarian to Cardinal Guido Sforza and secretary to Pope Pius IV.

The present map is the earliest surviving printed example of the lost Alvaro Seco map. Along with a separately published example of the map by Gerard de Jode dated 1565, it is the only surviving contemporary record of Alvaro Seco's manuscript map.

The Alvaro Seco map was perhaps the single most important and influential map of Portugal published in the 16th Century. The map continued to be the basis for maps of Portugal in manuscript and printed forms until the appearance of Pedro Teixeira Albernaz's map of 1662—nearly a full century later.

As noted by the History of Cartography Project,

The well-known map of Fernando Álvaro Seco is known through rare impressions of two versions. One was engraved by Sebastiano di Re, published by Michele Tramezzino with papal and Venetian senatorial privilege, and printed in Venice sometime after 1561. The other was



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engraved by Joannes van Doetecum, published by Gerard de Jode in Antwerp, and dated 1565. Both were dedicated to Cardinal Sforza by a Portuguese humanist, Achilles Estaço, who worked as a librarian for the cardinal between September 1562 and 1564, the year of Sforza's death. Both contain the name of the author in the dedication, and in the Antwerp version the name is repeated in the banner title "vernando Álvaro secco avctore."

. . . The year in which the Italian version was printed was probably 1562, because that was the year when Achilles Estaço went as a librarian to the house of Cardinal Sforza. This map, far from having left Portugal clandestinely, as had been the case of the so-called Cantino map of 1502, seems to have been an official or semiofficial product.

The deformation of the country as a whole on the Álvaro Seco map is similar to that suggested by the Hamburg Codex—with distortion increasing to the north— but slightly less pronounced.

. . .

The toponyms on both printed versions of Álvaro Seco's map are similar to those of the Hamburg Codex, although some variations suggest that a systematic comparison of the differences between the two would be useful. From various toponyms not in the Hamburg Codex or the 1527-32 Numeramento, one can deduce some of the circumstances in which the manuscript for this printed map was drawn, in 1558 at the earliest. The toponyms in the map allude to individuals who were probably involved in its production. Near the indicator for Tomar, the wording "Quinta dos Secos" confirms that the map's author belonged to this family, whose best-known member at the time was Pedro Álvares Seco, desembargador (high court judge) of the Casa da Suplicação and author of two books about the military Order of Christ that had succeeded the Knights Templar in Portugal. The map also includes the boundaries of the ecclesiastical district of Tomar, seat of the order. The order's comendador-mor (chief commander), D. Afonso de Lencastre, was the Portuguese ambassador in Rome before Lourenço Pires de Távora. South of the mouth of the Tagus, references appear to the "Quinta Távora," a morgadio (hereditary estate) belonging to the new ambassador, and the Mosteiro da Descida, a monastery he had founded in 1558 shortly before going to Rome. Finally, two places in Peniche are mentioned, "Nova Lisboa" and "Castelo do Conde," which have been interpreted as depicting the work begun for the building of the fortress of Peniche in 1557.³⁴³ The "Conde" (Count) was the count of Atouguia, Luís de Ataíde, a close relative of the finance minister, the count of Castanheira, and of the ambassador, Lourenço Pires de Távora.



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In the Italian version of the map, the Portuguese territory appears situated in a vast, almost empty, space stretching from the Strait of Gibraltar to the northern coast of Galicia, surrounded by a dotted line roughly evoking its border. The limits of the bishoprics are carefully indicated by dotted lines, even those most recently created, such as Leiria (1543), Miranda do Douro (1545), and Portalegre (1549), which would presumably have been of interest to the Vatican. Portugal's ancient coat of arms appears alongside its modern one. The main rivers bear Latin designations in addition to their modern names. Numerous bridges are represented all over the map, but because they were of more economic and military than ecclesiastical concern, they were probably derived from the map associated with the Hamburg Codex, for which these concerns were more appropriate.

*From 1570, Álvaro Seco's map gained widespread and lasting international diffusion in Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum orbis terrarum*. It also appeared in De Jode's atlas *Speculum orbis terrarum* (1578). Those versions are very similar to the central section of the Italian edition, although not all the bridges are shown and several placenames are mangled.*

States of the Map and Rarity

The map is known in two states. The original (offered here) and a re-issue in the 17th Century by Giovanni Battista de Rossi.

All states of the map are very rare. We were unable to locate another example at auction or in a dealer catalog.

Detailed Condition: