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Virginia. Discovered and Discribed by Captain John Smith . . . 1606

Stock#: 39305hs
Map Maker: Smith
Date: 1612 (1626 ca)
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 14 x 11 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

John Smith's map of the fledgeling Virginia colony is one of the true milestones in the mapping of America.

As noted by Burden, Smith's map is "one of the most important printed maps of America ever published and certainly one of the greatest influence. It became the prototype for the area for half a century."

Burden goes so far as to say that the map's publication considerably influenced the success of the Virginia Colony itself.

In 1606, the London Company sent its first ship to Virginia and established the Jamestown settlement. Captain John Smith accompanied the English settlers at Jamestown. Between 1607 and 1609, he explored the major rivers which flowed west into the Chesapeake Bay, recording the names of the Native American villages and tribes he encountered. The limits of Smith's explorations are marked with a Maltese cross. Beyond the crosses, Smith relied on Native American accounts to delineate territories further upriver. Smith notes on the map "To the crosses hath bin discouered what beyond is by relation."

Smith's depiction of the Native America Villages and accounts of the region is one of the primary sources for information on the region in the early 17th Century. Burden notes that "to this day the map is still used by archaeologists to locate native Indian villages. It records 166 of them, and is remarkably detailed." The illustrations of Powhatan's Council and a Sasquesahanough Indian are derived from the original drawings of John White.

Upon Smith's return to England in 1609, Smith employed William Hole to engrave a map, which was first included in a small pamphlet by Joseph Barnes of Oxford in 1612. The map would not appear again for 12



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years, when it was included, along with Smith's map of *New England* in his landmark work, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*, in 1624. The following year it was included in Purchas His Pilgrimes.

Smith's map was by far the most important map of Virginia published in the first part of the 17th Century. First issued in 1612, it became the prototype map of the region until Augustine Hermann's map of 1673. The map depicts a number of explorations and observations of Smith and the Jamestown settlers. There is some question as to whether the map is the work of Smith, who led most of the explorations, or the surveyor accompanying him, Nathaniel Powell. However, convention attributes the map to John Smith as his name appears on it in two publications by him and in a third by Samuel Purchas who credits Smith with the production of the map.

The present example is State 8, with the addition of the page number 41 and additional place names, but pre-dating Washbourne C: above the ship.

Detailed Condition:

Minor tear at lower left margin, expertly repaired on verso. Narrow margins, with just a bit of loss at the top right, but outside the neatline. Evidence of an old printer's crease.