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To the Right Honourable William Lord Cowper Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain This Map of Asia according to ye Newest & Most Accurate Observations . . .

Stock#: 57097
Map Maker: Moll
Date: 1730
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 39 x 23 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Herman Moll's map of Asia

The map includes phenomenal detail in all regions. Entirely English nomenclature covers the landscape, underlining the intensity of interaction between Europe and Asia and the importance of Asia to European economies in the eighteenth century. Some of the commerce associated with Asia is shown in the cartouche, with china, incense, and textiles scattered among exotized Asian men. The map is dedicated to William Lord Cowper, the first man to be named Lord High Chancellor, a position responsible for the functioning of the courts. His family's coat of arms graces the top of the cartouche, flanked by horses.

Moll wanted his maps to be of use to as many sailors and merchants as possible, a desire evident in the map's details. Seven insets detail places of critical importance to trade: the Hellespont, the Gulf of Smirna, Bombay Harbor, Nova Zembla, and the British factories in Chusan and Amoy. The wind directions throughout the Indian Ocean are shown on a monthly basis to aid those in the East Indies trade. In addition, Moll is careful to point out sand bars and other navigational obstacles.

Moll considered himself an advocate for exploration and was always careful to note areas of commercial promise and unknown geography. This can be seen in his note on the (mythical) Island of Jesso, just north of Japan, "The Land and Seas between Japan Corea and Iesso are hitherto undiscovered and it is not known whether Iesso be a part of the ye Continent or not."

Typical of Moll, there are several more expository notes, including one describing the discovery of the "New Philippines" by two Jesuit missionaries. While the note fills an empty space in the Pacific, the islands are not included, "But whereas several able Navigators, who were in these seas, particularly Capt. Dampier...in his Course from Guam to St. John, which he could not well have missed, we must suspend our



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belief of this Relation, and therefore we have not thought fit to lay them down in this Map." Dampier is also mentioned farther south, where his name decorates a strait between New Guinea, which is incomplete, and New Britain. Dampier passed here in 1699, during one of his three circumnavigations.

Moll became acquainted with men like Dampier at Jonathan's Coffee House in Change Alley, London. As Dennis Reinhartz has explained, Moll drank coffee with the Knaptons, publishers of voyage accounts including Dampier's, the scientist Robert Hooke, the botanist John Martin, as well as the writers Jonathan Swift and Daniel Defoe, not to mention Dampier and his fellow privateer Woodes Rogers.

Born ca. 1654 in Bremen, Moll moved to England and engraved for Moses Pitt, Sir Jonas Moore, Grenville Collins, John Adair, and the Seller & Price firm. He published his first original maps in the early 1680s and had set up his own shop by the 1690s. Over the course of his career he published dozens of geographies, atlases and histories, not to mention numerous sheet maps. His most famous works are *Atlas Geographus*, a monthly magazine that ran from 1708 to 1717, and *The World Described* (1715-54). He also frequently made maps for books, including those of Dampier's publications and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

Moll died in 1732. It is likely that his plates passed to another contemporary, Thomas Bowles, after this death. Bowles and his brother, John, along with Philip Overton and John King, are listed as vendors for this map of Asia, which derives from the smaller Asia maps Moll developed in his atlases. Based on the addresses for the listed mapmakers, this map was most likely issued ca. 1730. There is also an earlier version, ca. 1710, with the names of Moll, Midwinter, T. Bowles, and Overton.

Detailed Condition:

Minor discoloration along folds.