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[India] Magni Mogolis Imperium

Stock#: 99730
Map Maker: Blaeu
Date: 1640
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 20.5 x 16.5 inches
Price: \$ 750.00



Description:

Old color example of Blaeu's map of India, based upon William Baffin's map of India, first published in about 1619.

The map is bounded by Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh and extends inland up the Ganges and Indus Rivers to Tartary and the Himalayas, including Katmandu, Kabul and other legendary cities along the great trading routes. Extends south to include a large portion of India, including Narsinga, Orixa Decan, etc.

Blaeu's map of India was one of the earliest Dutch maps to follow the work of Baffin. William Baffin's map represented a significant leap forward in the mapping and geographical understanding of India, significantly improving on earlier printed maps of India by Mercator and Linschoten. The differences are especially noteworthy in the interior of Baffin's map. The Indus River is shown for the first time in a relatively accurate fashion for the first time. Western and most of central India are mapped in a relatively accurate format for the first time. One of the most prominent features which first appears on the Baffin-Roe map is the Longe Walke, the route lined with trees between the palaces at Agra and Lahore.

Baffin's map was a result of the collaboration of Sir Thomas Roe, the East India Company's ambassador to the Mughal Empire and William Baffin (1584-1622), the famous explorer, who is best known for his two attempts to find the Northwest Passage while in the employ of The Company of Merchants of London. The work likely began during their time together on Roe's return to England following his time as ambassador. Following Baffin's final attempt to locate the Northwest Passage, he was employed as a surveyor by the



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East India Company from 1617 until his death in January 1622. In his initial assignment, he sailed to Surat in British India and received accolades for his charts of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea.

While serving as Master's Mate aboard the *Ann Royal* in 1619, Baffin and Roe were able to collaborate in the preparation of a manuscript map of India, the original of which is now in the British Library. The map was later printed in London by Thomas Sterne in 1620 (engraved by Elsracke). The original manuscript would have been completed prior to February 1620, when Baffin again left England aboard the *London*.

The preparation of a map of India had first been a directive given to East India Company sea captain Nicholas Downton, in 1614. Downton had been instructed to discover information sufficient to prepare a map of India, but had not obtained the necessary information to complete this task. Sir Thomas Roe, arriving the following year, compiled geographical data on 37 cities between 1615 and 1617. In a letter to Roe, Lord Carew wrote

Let me entreat you, to be carefull to make the mappe of the Mogolls territorie, as you have intended; itt wil be a worke worthye of your selfe and adorne your travell and judgement, and leave to the world a lasting memorie when you are dust.

By October 1617, Roe had created a geographical compendium of India. The resulting manuscript map, created by Baffin, would become the basis for most printed maps of India for the next 100 years. There is some question as to what role Roe played in the drafting of the map, as a number of the places located on the map do not correspond well to the information laid down in Roe's geographical compendium and at least one commentator has speculated that "Baffin had a hard--sometimes impossible--task in reconciling the statements occurring in the list and in locating his provinces from the meager information available . . ."

Baffin's map was first copied by Samuel Purchas in 1625, and thereafter became the standard depiction of Indian for over 50 years.

A fine example of this early Dutch copy of Baffin's map.

Detailed Condition: