



Folio (287 by 202mm), preliminary page to frontispiece, engraved frontispiece, dedication to Prince Henry of Wales, table of contents, note to the reader, note on illustrations, pp. 168, 31 double-paged engraved maps, contemporary calf, spine in eight compartments, gilt title.

THE POLY-OLBION

Poly-olbion or A Chorographickall Description of Tracts, Rivers, Mountaines, Forests, and other Parts of this renowned Isle of Great Britain...

Author

DRAYTON, Michael

Publication date

1622

Publisher

Printed for M. Lownes, I. Browne, I. Helme, I. Bushee,

Publication place

London,

Physical description

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Dimensions

Notes

Michael Drayton (1563-1631) spent much of his life producing poetry, from 'The Harmony of the

Church', a volume of spiritual poems that appeared when he was in his mid-20s, to 'The Muses' Elizium' which he produced at 67 years of age, shortly before his death. Like many Elizabethan poets, Drayton also wrote for the theatre, although his plays, which number around 23, are not as well-regarded as his verse. The 'Poly-Olbion' is generally considered to have been his magnum opus. Consisting of 15,000 lines of verse in Alexandrine couplets, divided into thirty songs, the 'Poly-Olbion' is a topographical poem describing the land, traditions and history of the English and Welsh counties. Each song, which typically describes between one and three counties, is accompanied by maps by William Hole, with key places illustrated anthropomorphically. Combining ancient history, mythical tales and accurate factual information, the Poly-Olbion was certainly popular, although not usually read as a whole. Historical and philological summaries were appended to the first book. Although Drayton intended to compose more verse to cover Scotland, this part of the project never came to fruition.

The present example of the 'Poly-Olbion' was ten years after the work first appeared, and contains 31 double-page maps.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £12500

Inventory reference: 12703