



The first Western publication of a Chinese map of China

PURCHAS, Samuel.  
 The Map of China.

London: Henry Featherstone, 1625. Coloured. 300 x 370mm.

£5,000

A rare and important map of China, based on a Chinese woodblock map, with Chinese characters in the title but not on the map. It depicts the Great Wall and has a vignette portrait of Matteo Ricci (the Italian Jesuit missionary) and two costume illustrations. Unlike the majority of plates published in 'Purchas His Pilgrimages', this is not printed from the old Hondius 'Atlas Minor' plates. Instead Purchas copied a Chinese map brought back to England by John Saris, an East India Company merchant. who had acquired it from a Fujianese merchant in part-payment for a debt. Unable to read the script, Purchas removed the Chinese names on the map, but left the symbols representing towns.

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