



Speed's map of Scotland with 'commoner' portraits

SPEED, John.  
 The Kingdome of Scotland.

London, Roger Rea, 1665. Coloured. 390 x 510mm.

£2,300

A rightly famous map of Scotland, with an inset of the Orkneys. First issued 1611-12, the plate originally had portraits of James VI of Scotland I of England, his wife Anne and their two sons. However in 1652 the Puritan ascendancy made it politic to re-engrave the plate: away went the Royal family, to be replaced by costume vignettes of a 'Scotch' (i.e. lowland) man & woman and their wilder 'Highland' neighbours. The checked garments worn by the second pair are considered to be one of the earliest depictions of tartan. This example comes from the Roger Rea issue, which was beset with disaster: according to an advert for the 1676 Bassett & Chiswell edition, "the greatest part of an Impression, then newly Printed, [was] destroyed by the late dreadful Fire, 1666". Surviving examples of any Rea map are thus rare.

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