



Altea Gallery
35 St George Street
W1S 2FN, London
United Kingdom

www.alteagallery.com

info@alteagallery.com
+44 (0) 20 7491 0010



THE ELUSIVE FIRST STATE OF THE EARLIEST AVAILABLE PRINTED MAP OF LONDON

£12,500.00

Londinium Feracissimi Angliae Regni Metropolis.

Cartographer	BRAUN, Georg & HOGENBERG, Frans.
Date	1572
Stock #:	25592
Publication:	Köln: 1572, FIRST EDITION, Latin text. Coloured. 330 x 490mm.
Condition:	Trimmed to printed border at top, margin replaced, small repairs on reverse of centre fold.

DESCRIPTION:

The earliest town plan of London to survive, a 'map-view' with the major buildings shown in profile, and no consideration for perspective. This example is from the first state of the plate, before the addition of the Royal Exchange, with 'West Mester' rather than 'West Muster' for Westminster and without 'Cum Privilegio' lower right.

This state is particularly rare: Howgeo states that it only appeared in the first edition of the 'Civitates Orbis Terrarum', 1572 and had been altered before the first German and French-text editions (1574 & 1575). However we have seen an example of the first edition of the atlas that already contained the later state. The plan was engraved by Frans Hogenberg, probably reduced from a 15-or-20-sheet wall map commissioned by the merchants of the Hanseatic League, of which there is no known example. The League had significant commercial interests in England, benefiting from tax and customs concessions on wool and finished cloth, allowing them to control that trade in Colchester and other cloth-making centres. It is believed they commissioned the wall map in the 1550s to curry favour with Queen Mary I in an attempt to retain these concessions. Certainly the survey must predate 1561 because the Norman St Paul's Cathedral still has the spire destroyed by lightning that year and never replaced. Mary's death in 1588 made the large and expensive map superfluous, as her successor Elizabeth revoked the League's privileges. However the engraver Franz Hogenberg was allowed to copy the plan for his atlas of town plans, ensuring this view of Tudor London survived for posterity.

The League's base in the City was the Steelyard (here 'Stiliyards', by the side of the Thames), which is described in the Latin text panel lower right. They purchased the building in 1475; part of the deal was their



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obligation to maintain Bishopsgate, the gate through the city walls that led to their interests in East Anglia. The rump cities of the League sold the building in 1853 and it is now the site of Cannon Street Station.