



*Vera Totius Expeditionis Nauticae... The Drake Map, Iodocus Hondius, c.1589-1595].
38 X 55 cm (15 X 21.75 inches).*

Rare separately issued world map depicting the voyages of Drake and Cavendish, by one of the greatest map engravers of his day. This rare broadsheet map is a homage to Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish – the first Englishmen (and only the second and fourth men) to circumnavigate the globe. The Latin text below the title gives a brief description of both men’s voyages: Drake left England on the 13th December 1577 with five “well equipped ships”, returning on the 27th of September 1580 “with great glory but with one ship only, the others destroyed by fire and storms at sea”; Thomas Cavendish, who fared rather better, “took the same course round the world but with less loss and in a shorter time”, leaving on the 21st July 1586 and returning on the 15th September 1588. “He acquired great riches and the admiration of all his countrymen”. The voyages were of huge significance at the time, as they directly challenged Spain’s hegemony of the New World, at the same time that England was confronting her power over Europe. The map highlights the voyages’ importance by stripping much of the descriptive text from the land, leaving only the information pertaining to the expeditions. The map also takes the uncommon step of splitting North America between its eastern and western hemispheres. Although unusual, it does have the effect of highlighting the voyages’ ports of call in South America, the western coast of North America and the Spice Islands. The map’s cartographic importance lies in its depiction of the great Southern Continent, with Tierra del Fuego clearly distinct from *Terra Australis*. Schilder states that, “Hondius was the first to see the true implication of Drake’s voyage”.

Below the title is the royal coat-of-arms of Elizabeth I, with a vignette of the *Golden Hind*, Drake's flag ship, below. The text to the left of the vignette states that the ship now resides at Dartford. To the corners are four further illustrations of the ship: Drake's landing at "*Nova Albion*" in California where he was crowned king by the natives, upper left; sailing round the southern coast of Java – the first person to do so – upper right; Drake's welcome by the King of the Moluccas, lower left; and the *Hind* cast upon rocks near the Celebes. Although, as Fite and Freeman point out these "are probably the only [contemporary] representations of the famous ship in existence", today one is rather spoilt for choice as there are not one but two full size replicas of the *Hind*, one upon the Thames, and the other at Brixham in Devon. It can also be said that the map's small inset of Drake's anchorage on the California coast (*Portus Nova Albionis*) spawned the centuries-old debate regarding the location of this key stopping point. This inset map constitutes the only contemporary cartographic evidence regarding this question.

The map was the work of Jodocus Hondius (1563-1612) one of the leading Dutch cartographers and engravers of his day. Between approximately 1584 to 1593 he lived and worked in London. Whilst there, he took a particular interest in Drake's voyages and the man himself, with several engravings of the explorer attributed to him. Hondius's residence in London also bears witness to the close ties between the English and the Dutch at the time. Both were young seafaring nations who were keen to wrench the riches of the New World and the Spices of the Moluccas from the grasp of the Iberian powers.

The exact dating of the map is uncertain. It is highly unlikely to have been published earlier than 1589 – a year after Cavendish returned. Some have stated that it was produced sometime in the early 1590s, while Hondius was still in London. Shirley counters that the map is too highly finished to be attributed such a date; this, together with the fact that some copies are mounted as broadsides with Dutch text, makes a date of post 1594 – when Hondius had returned to Amsterdam – more appropriate. One might equally argue that both theories are true. As Hondius must have owned the copper plate, publication in both London and Amsterdam is most probable.

In a larger sense, this Hondius Broadside is powerful icon of the beginning of the rise of England as a world power. Specifically, it celebrates what might be the most important implication of Drake's (1577-1580) and Cavendish's (1586-1588) voyages--the opening up of the New World to non-Iberian Europe. The map reinforces this point through various aspects of its design. In unprecedented fashion, the map sets in relief the two voyages by eliminating nearly all place names and details not germane to the voyages. With great clarity, therefore, the tracks of the voyages can be seen girdling Spanish America. Also, the map's unconventional format, which divides the two hemispheres through America, was done in order to highlight the new territories touched by the voyages and has the effect of splitting asunder the New World. In this sense, the map makes a clear statement as to English presence on the world's stage. Moreover, the richness and elegance of the engraving, with the English royal arms as the central decorative motif, certainly reinforces the map's role as an expression of national aspiration.

Also, in regard to the map's cartographic importance, Schilder suggests that "Hondius was the first to see the true implication of Drake's discovery" relative to the Southern Continent. On the map, the islands comprising Tierra del Fuego are clearly distinct from the Southern Continent. Although Hondius was tentative about this

delineation, as indicated by a note on the map, it was nevertheless one of the first significant ruptures in the portrayal of a massive southern land mass and the first indication on a map of the true nature of what lay to the south of South America.

Fite and Freeman point out another crucial, graphic element of the map:

"The five engravings (of Drake's ship, 'The Golden Hind') are probably the only representations of the famous ship in existence." It is very likely that Hondius' depictions of the ship were based on first hand observation. It is known that after Drake's return, The Golden Hind was on display to the public at Dartford on the Thames at a time when Hondius would still have been residing in London.

A few copies of the map are known with text and engraved portraits attached to them. However, it is generally believed that the map was not issued with these additions. As stated in monograph prepared by the British Museum on the map in 1927, "as the map and the text have, however, clearly been pasted together, there is no proof that they were issued at the same time or that they have any connexion with one another beyond their subject-matter."

This example of the map is in truly remarkable condition, particularly for a separately published broadside; it is also notable for the rich intensity of its printing impression. It had evidently been bound into a book for a considerable portion of its existence, which would account for its splendid condition.



The Golden Hind



Drake's landing at "Nova Albion" in California where he was crowned king by the natives



Drake sailing round the southern coast of Java – the first person to do so – upper right



Drake's welcome by the King of the Moluccas, lower left



The Hind cast upon rocks near the Celebes



References:

Shirley, R. W., *The Mapping of the World, early printed world maps, 1472-1700*, London: Holland Press, Cartographica, 1984, p. 188.

Fite, E.D., & Freeman, A., *A Book of Old Maps Delineating American History from earliest days down to the close of the Revolutionary War*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1926, p. 27.

Schilder, G., *Australia Unveiled the share of the Dutch navigators in the discovery of Australia*, 1976, p. 116, Map 15.