



The route of Saint Ursula and the 11,000 virgin martyrs

HOGENBERG, Abraham.

Tabula Britanniaru Exhibens I. Partem Itineris S. Ursulae.

Cologne, 1647. 310 x 385mm.

£800

A rare 17th century map engraved by Hogenberg, published not in an atlas but in a highly-detailed account of Ursula, a 4th century Romano-British saint. The map depicts the British Isle and the countries bordering the North Sea, with the Rhine as far south as Cologne. The tribal areas are marked, with Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. A fleet of ships fills the English Channel. According to legend, Princess Ursula was the daughter of King Dionotus of the Dumnonii tribe of south-west England. She became betrothed to the king of Amorica in north-west France but, attempting to cross the English Channel, her fleet was swept the length of the channel in a single day. Landing in Batavia (now the Netherlands) Ursula decided to embark on a pilgrimage to Rome, accompanied by 11,000 virgins, sailing up the Rhine to Basle and continuing on foot. On their return they were captured by the Huns besieging Cologne: Ursula was killed with an arrow and her virgins beheaded. Their bones are now stored in the Golden Chamber of the Basilica of St. Ursula, Cologne, the authors' home city. This map was published in the only edition of 'Vita et martyrium S. Ursulae et sociarum undecim millium Virginum' by Hermann Crombach and Philip Bebius. In more than a thousand pages, they elaborate on the legend and mount a detailed defence of its historical veracity, even attempting to identify as



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many of Ursula's 11,000 followers as possible. The 'Vita' was written during the Counter-Reformation, as an attempt to justify the importance of relics.

RARE: Not in Shirley.

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