



A 17th century sea chart of the Gulf of Aden in Dudley's unique style

DUDLEY, Robert.

Carta particolare che cominca con il capo Baduis è finisce con il capo Cumana, è mostra la bocca dell mare Rosso.

Florence, 1646. Two sheets conjoined, total 485 x 735mm.

£3,250

A superb sea chart of the Gulf of Aden, showing Arabia from Kamaran Island on the Red Sea coast of Yemen to Dhofar in Oman, and the Horn of Africa from Eritrea to Somalia, with Djibouti. The chart is decorated with a title cartouche, a galleon and compass rose, as well as Lucini's distinctive cursive lettering. Sir Robert Dudley's monumental atlas, 'Dell'Arcano del Mare' (Secrets of the Sea) was the first English sea-atlas to be printed (albeit engraved and published in Italy), breaking the Dutch monopoly of such publications. As a friend of Drake and brother-in-law of Thomas Cavendish he had enviable access to the latest information. The son of the Earl of Leicester, favourite of Queen Elizabeth I, he was born in secret to avoid her jealousy. Well educated, he joined the Elizabethan maritime adventurers and led an expedition to the Orinoco in 1594, raiding Trinidad en route. After failing to prove his legitimacy in 1605 he left England for Italy, and forfeited all property after illegally assuming the title of Earl of Warwick. He died in 1649, two years after the first edition of the 'Arcano'. The engraver Antonio Francesco Lucini wrote in the introduction to the second edition that he worked for 12 years on the copper plates, which weighed 5000 lbs. His clear style of engraving, with florid script, make the Dudley charts



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