



A 17th century Dutch map of the Magellan Straits

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Tabula Magellanica, quâ tierrae del fuego, cum celeberrimis fretis a F. Magellano et I. Le Maire dedectis novissima et accuratissima descriptio exhibetur.

Amsterdam, c.1645, Dutch text. Original colour. 415 x 535mm.

£600

A decorative map of Tierra del Fuego, the southern tip of America, showing the two routes into the Pacific from the east, two centuries before the opening of the Panama Canal. Mariners had a choice: either navigate the twisting maze of the Magellan Straits; or pass through Le Maire's Strait and face the vicious winds of Cape Horn (the dangers emphasised by the vignette fleet of seven galleons with straining sails). Top right are the arms of Sir Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687), Dutch poet, composer, diplomat. While based in London in 1622 he was knighted by James I. He was secretary to both Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, and his son William II, and was President of the Council of the House of Orange, looking after the interests of the baby Prince inheritor, later William III of England.

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