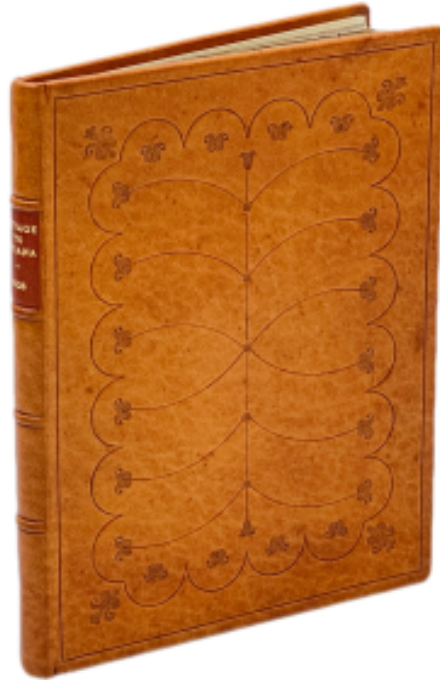




ROBERT HARCOURT - THE RELATION OF A VOYAGE TO GUIANA - 1626



Subject: Book from the first half of the 17th century. Voyages. America. Amazonia. Guiana - Robert Harcourt.

Publication: London, Edward Allde, 1626. Second edition.

Physical description: 8^o (18 cm). 4 sheets (including cover), 84 pages. Current full leather binding.

Conservation: Good condition. 4 first pages and last facsimile. Some small marginal reintegration of paper on some sheet.

Robert Harcourt (1574-1631) was an English explorer, projector of a South American colony, in what later became Guyana. He was born in Staffordshire (England) in a family with a Catholic tradition and studied law at the University of Oxford. In 1609, the court granted him permission to colonize Guyana, where he set out with his brother Michael and a crew of 30 Englishmen and two natives of Guyana (one had been taken to England by Raleigh, the other by Leigh). A month after his departure, in May 1609, he arrived at the left bank of the Oiapoque River (today's Brazil-French Guiana border). It was the rainy season and he had to wait a few months to penetrate inland, and finally on August 14 they took possession in the name of England of the lands between the Amazon and the Essequibo. Robert then decided to return to England, leaving his brother in charge of the small colony ("Guiana Company").

Later, in 1613, King James I granted Robert Harcourt and his descendants all the territory between the Amazon and Essequibo rivers. With the aim of attracting investors, Harcourt wrote "The relation of a Voyage to Guyana" explaining the great economic potential that could be obtained from the exploitation of sugar, cotton and tobacco in Guyana, although it did not achieve much impact. He published two editions of this Voyage, both equally rare and difficult to find for sale; the second one with a clear intention of winning over the public again to consolidate his interests there without success.

Edward Allde (1560-1627) was an English printer in London during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. He was

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responsible for several important texts of English Renaissance theatre, including some of the first editions of works by William Shakespeare.

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