

In 1611 Jodocus Hondius published a history of Amsterdam by Johann Pontanus and among the illustrations are one view and seven miniature maps of islands, signed by the English engraver Benjamin Wright.

Described as ‘irregular in life and given to drink’ he was around that time working in Italy on maps for Giovanni A. Magini. It is probable that these plates were engraved earlier in the century when he was in Amsterdam. They are very similar to those he produced for Cornelis Claesz at that time (see 1599 & 1603) and also measure about 120 x 85 mm.



Four of the islands are in the Dutch East Indies: Amboyna, Bali, Banda (above) and Ternate. The other three are in the Barents Sea off the coast of Russia, on the very edge of Europe: Mauritius and Staten Island, both near the Straits of Vaygach and Kildun near Kola. These last three all have very long titles in cartouches: *Vera forma et situs insulae Mauritije ...*; *Vera delineatio insulae Ordinum ...*; *Vera genuina ... Insulae Kilduyn*

The book's illustrations also include three other miniature plates: *Nova Zembla*, *Iauva Insula* and one with ships arriving at Bantam on Java, which was the first Dutch settlement in the East Indies. These are unsigned and possibly not by Wright.

Rerum et urbis Amstelodamensium historia. Amsterdam, Jodocus Hondius, 1611.

Historische beschrijvinghe der seer wijt beroemde coop-stadt Amsterdam. Amsterdam, Jodocus Hondius Junior, 1614.