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Mappa Aestivarum Insularum Alias Barmudas

Stock#: 95352
Map Maker: Blaeu
Date: 1650 circa
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 21 x 15.5 inches
Price: \$ 1,800.00



Description:

Blaeu's Fine Double Map of Bermuda

Fine example of Blaeu's highly sought-after map of Bermuda. It is actually a double map, as it shows a detailed survey of the islands, as well as a map relating Bermuda to mainland North America.

The map includes survey information about land owners, as well as shows structures and settlements on the island. The bar-like divisions that slice across the islands were planned by Richard Norwood, who performed the first survey of the archipelago in 1617. He divided the island into parishes and then strips, which were then sold to shareholders.

These shareholders are listed in the table running along the bottom of the map. Shareholders are split into tribes assigned to proprietors. Each shareholder is identified in the key by a number and tribe, which correlates to their strip, as well as how many shares they have.

The waters are littered with small x's, signs of the reefs, rocks, and other obstructions that could foil mariners. Bermuda is notorious for dangerous waters and treacherous sailing.

Curiously, at first, seemingly far away landmasses are shown near the edge of the map's frame, with Florida, Virginia, Cape Cod, and New England all included. Closer examination reveals that the map not only shows the Norwood survey, but the islands' relation to North American colonies at another. The tiny Bermuda mapped on the larger scale is visible just below the cartouche. This representation would lead later mapmakers, including Herman Moll and Antonio Zatta, to remove the coast of North America but to



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keep the smaller Bermuda, creating a strange phantom tiny twin.

Sources and plates of the map

This map is based on Richard Norwood's survey on behalf of the Bermuda Company, conducted in 1617 from a canoe. Norwood made a map of his work, registered in 1622, but no known example survives today. John Speed created a derivative map which was included in his *Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World* (1627). The plate for the Speed map was originally made by Jodocus Hondius, the Younger. After Hondius died in 1629, the plate was sold to Blaeu, who re-issued the handsome map.

The early modern history of Bermuda

Bermuda did not have an indigenous population before European contact. It was happened upon, largely by accident, by the Spanish in the early-sixteenth century. It first appeared on a Spanish map in 1511 and the navigator Fernández de Oviedo attributed the discovery to Juan Bermúdez as early as 1503. The Spanish did not colonize the island, however, and it remained without permanent habitation until the early-seventeenth century.

In 1609, a flotilla of seven ships destined for the Jamestown Colony were separated en route in a storm. The flagship, *Sea Venture*, limped to Bermuda, where the crew drove it onto the reef. All 150 passengers survived and reached the shore via small boats. The wreck became (in)famous and is likely the inspiration for the storm in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. After ten months, all the would-be colonists save two sailed away in ships they built while marooned. Two men stayed behind, accompanied by those who had perished there, a number which included the wife and child of John Rolfe.

After this encounter, the island was claimed as part of the English Empire and it was included in the Virginia Company's Third Charter in 1612. The English began to intentionally settle the archipelago in 1612. In 1615, the island shifted to the control of the Somers Island Company, sometimes called the Bermuda Company; this entity employed Richard Norwood to survey the island. The first enslaved people were also brought to the island ca. 1617.

Bermuda was administered by the Company until 1684, when control passed to the Crown. It became an important privateering, naval, and commercial stopover, playing a role in the English Civil War, the American Revolution, and later wars. Slavery was outlawed in 1833, as it was across the British Empire.

Detailed Condition: