



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(12-Volume Composite Atlas of Maritime Charts) Hydrographie Française [spine title]

Stock#: 100256
Map Maker: Depot de la Marine
Date: 1785 circa - 1833
Place: v.p. (Paris, etc.)
Color: (See Description)
Condition: VG+
Size: 20 x 26.25 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Largest Surviving Bound Collection of French Hydrographical Maps

This monumental 12-volume set spans the late 18th to early 19th century, offering an unparalleled collection of approximately 600 French official sea charts and plans. Published by the Dépôt Général de la Marine, these 12 volumes contain 481 engraved plates (of which 325 are double map charts), covering the coasts of the Americas, Europe, the Mediterranean, Africa, and parts of Asia. Notably, this collection stands out for its absence of duplicates and the inclusion of charts from regions as diverse as Canada and the coastal United States.

By comparison, the present 12 volume set is significantly larger than the largest known compilation (National Maritime Museum), which consists of 391 maps, including 44 duplicates (Atlases in the National Maritime Museum Vol III, pp 250-259). Excluding duplicates, the present 12 volume set of 481 plates with no duplicates has 134 more map sheets than the NMM copy.

The late 18th and early 19th centuries were a period of significant maritime exploration and expansion, especially for European powers like France. These maps were instrumental in navigating and claiming territories across the globe, particularly in the Americas and Asian regions. This era saw a surge in the production of detailed navigational charts, reflecting the growing importance of sea trade and colonial expansion. The charts in these volumes, mainly dated between 1790 and 1820, capture this pivotal period in maritime history, offering insights into the geopolitical and navigational challenges of the time.

The collection's wide geographical range, from detailed charts of the Americas to the coasts of Europe and Asia, highlights the extensive reach of French naval power and exploration. The inclusion of specific locations like Boston, Chesapeake Bay, Charleston, and the Caribbean islands, along with detailed plans of port cities, makes this set a significant resource for understanding regional navigation and maritime



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infrastructure. Furthermore, the presence of charts from the Mediterranean and the North and Baltic Seas underlines the strategic maritime routes of the era.

Among the more interesting and rare parts of the collection are a series of maps of Saigon and Cochinchina, drawn from manuscript maps created by Jean Baptiste Marie Dayot (1759-1809), a French Navy officer and an adventurer who went into the service of Nguyễn Ánh, the future emperor of Vietnam. Dayot did considerable hydrographic work, creating many maps of the Vietnamese coast, and returned to France with a hand drawn atlas of the region which was the first systematic charting of the coastlines of his region.

Detailed Condition:

Large folio. 12 volumes. 19th-century ¼ black morocco over green-dyed vellum boards, t