



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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West Indische PASKAERT waerin de graden der breedde over weder=syden vande middellyn wassende...Beschreven door Willem I. Blaeuw.

Stock#: 32708clh
Map Maker: Blaeu
Date: 1626 circa
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 39 x 32 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Most Important Sea Charts of the 17th Century

First edition of Blaeu's landmark sea chart of the Atlantic Ocean, America and Africa.

Blaeu's sea chart has been called a " *scientific and artistic document of the first order, marking an important date in the history of nautical cartography and one of the most important contributions that the Lowlands produced in the XVII century*" (Destombes & Gernez).

Burden notes: "Willem Blaeu's second West Indische Paskaert is of landmark importance, being the first sea chart relating to North America to use Gerard Mercator's projection " . Blaeu's chart was the first general chart of American waters that was actually useful for navigation. It was also likely the Dutch West India Company's master chart for North America, the Caribbean, and South America.

The map is extremely rare Destombes and Gernez state that the lack of a privilege on the chart implies that it was made exclusively for internal use by the Dutch West India Company and therefore was never sold commercially.

Blaeu's *West Indische Paskaert* "presents one of the earliest practical uses of the Mercator projection,"(Schilder) if not the first overall as regarding printed charts. A review of printed charts of North America prior to Blaeu's chart reveals that it was indeed the earliest to be of practical use for



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navigation. Blaeu's first *West Indische Paskaert* of c. 1621 (Burden 194) did not utilize the Mercator Projection, significantly limiting its effectiveness as a practical navigational tool. Virtually all other charts were small works that appeared in the various editions of Medina's manual of navigation, and the similar Italian works of Camocio and Bertell. The charts by Tatton and Claesz, while of fantastic decorative appeal, were likely largely ornamental.

Blaeu produced his chart with the help of manuscript material of the area and supplementary material that was provided by pilots who had sailed these routes" (History of Cartography, p. 1425). It was works such as this one that provided the basis for the charting of the Americas that would be provided by commercially published Dutch sea atlases later in the century. "*The chart itself served as a basis for the maps published by other Amsterdam publishers such as Anthonie Jacobsz., Hendrik Doncker, Justus Danckerts, Hugo Allard, and Johannes van Keulen (History of Cartography, p. 1426).*

Blaeu's *Paskaert* also has an interesting geo-political dimension as well. The regional place name, *Nieu Nederland*, is boldly spread across both what is today New York and much of New England, with no acknowledgement of English claims or even presence in the Northeast. To the north is only *Nova Francia*, while English territory is confined to the Mid-Atlantic region under the heading of *Virginia*. In fact, the crests of the four European colonial powers (Spain's is to the south) align very neatly one top of the other, as if there existed at the time a neat territorial division among the four powers along the North American seaboard. At best, this can be said to represent a hoped-for political reality by the aspiring Dutch colonialists. Within a decade the political geography expressed in this chart would be insupportable with the expansion of English towns throughout the lower Northeast.

The significance of the *Pascaerte* is elevated by the fact that it appeared at the critical time when Dutch colonial aspirations in the Western Hemisphere were at their highest. Manhattan and other parts of the Northeast had recently been settled when the chart appeared, but the Dutch were also casting acquisitive eyes on the Caribbean and South America. This expanding of colonial ambition is vividly expressed in the ways that this second *Paskaert* both enlarged the coverage of, and considerably updated the earlier version of c. 1621. As Stokes (p. 82) observed, Blaeu sought "*to make improvements in the delineation of the New Netherland coast*" in the second *Pascaerte*. For the first time in a printed map, Manhattan takes on a triangular shape that would be followed by maps until the middle of the 16th century. Also the place name, Hellgate, appears on it for the first time on a printed map. The mapping of Long Island, Cape Cod, and Boston Harbor and Bay have all been improved, and for the first time. Blaeu here also attempted to fill in the gap on the first *Paskaert* between the New York area and the Chesapeake Bay, but did little more than just that; he reverted to an older cartography and omitted Delaware Bay altogether.



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The second *Paskaert* also considerably expanded the coverage of South America in relation to the first by including all of Brazil and part of Argentina as far as the Rio de la Plata. a large inset encompasses the remainder of South America. Approximately at the time of the second *Paskaert*, the Dutch in 1630 forcibly occupied the Pernambuco region of Brazil in order to secure a share of Brazil's valuable sugar trade. Hence, the excellent mapping of the coast of Brazil found on this chart is indicative of the on-the-ground presence of the Dutch in the area. Also, the important inset of the southern portion of South America mentioned above highlights the celebrated discovery of the Le Maire Strait and Cape Horn by the Dutch navigators Schouten and Le Maire in 1616. This would provide the Dutch and others with an important gateway to the Pacific. The second *Paskaert* also extends further to the west, thus including all of South and Central America and the Gulf of Mexico, once again reflecting a much more expansive Dutch outlook that developed in the time between the two charts.

The chart, which is without a date, has been dated as early as 1621 (by Stokes) and as late as 1630 (by Schilder). Schilder points out that there is information on the chart sourced from Admiral L'Hermite's voyage to Tierra del Fuego from 1623 to 1626. Schilder also reports that Blaeu published in 1630 a pamphlet, of which there are no surviving copies, that explains the use of the chart. Of course, it does not necessarily follow that the chart was published the same year. Therefore, dating the chart between 1626 and 1630, as Burden does, seems appropriate.

It is quite astonishing that this large chart was printed from a single plate, which would have been an inordinately large plate for the period. The fact that such an exceptional effort was made to create such a large plate is another indication of the importance attached to the work at the time. Clearly the intention must have been to print the chart on more durable vellum rather than paper, again supporting the notion that its primary use would have been for navigation aboard ship. Hence, our example on paper was most likely a rare exception even at the time of original publication. It appears that this example was at one time folded and bound, so a few examples on paper may have been run off and bound into composite atlases, possibly for the West India Company's Directors.

The second *Paskaert* had a relatively long publishing life into the latter part of the 17th century; it was re-issued by Jacob Robijn, c. 1674 (Schilder 63.3), Pieter Goos, c. 1674-75 (S. 63.4), and Joannes Loots, c. 1695 (S. 63.5). It was also in part re-employed by Blaeu himself in an ingenious fashion. In his rush to complete a general atlas to compete with the Hondius firm in the early 1630's, Blaeu resorted to several expedients to quickly come up with enough maps to fill an atlas. To produce a map of the southeastern United States, Caribbean and Gulf region of North America, Blaeu used only the northwest portion of this chart. He masked the remaining parts of the plate to produce a map of folio proportions and then added a title to it, giving it the appearance of a standard folio map.



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In all, an exceptional map and an exceptional survival--likely the only example in private hands.

Detailed Condition:

Minor repairs at centerfold