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Carte Du Mexique et de la Floride des Terres Angloises et des Isles Antilles du Cours et des Environs de la Riviere Mississippi . . . 1703

Stock#: 39942
Map Maker: De L'Isle
Date: 1708
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 25.5 x 19 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine third state of Guillaume De L'Isle's landmark map, the first printed map to accurately depict the course and mouth of the Mississippi River.

De L'Isle's *Carte du Mexique . . .* is drawn from the reports brought back to France from the survivors of the La Salle expedition into the interior of North America and from information derived from the explorations of Bienville and d'Iberville. In the year preceding the publication of the map, De L'Isle utilized his position with the King of France, to gain access to the best available information from the New World. During this time period he assiduously compiled the geographical data from the reports of the French Jesuit Missionaries and Explorers in North America, along with Spanish manuscript maps (often copied by the Missionaries while they were acting in the service of the Spanish as spiritual guides and gaining their confidence). The result of this work were a series of landmark maps of North America, including his map of North America (*L'Amerique Septentrionale*, 1700), Canada and the Great Lakes (*Carte du Canada ou de la Nouvelle France*, 1703), and the Mississippi Valley & Gulf Coast (*Carte de la Louisiane et du Cours du Mississippi* 1708).

Carl Wheat called the map a "towering landmark along the path of Western cartographic development." De L'Isle's map also includes greater accuracy in the Great Lakes region and in its depiction of English settlements along the East Coast. Excellent detail of the Indian villages in East Texas, based upon the reports of d'Iberville and the Spanish missionaries. The best depiction of the Southwest to date, with early trails & Indian tribes. Cumming described the map as "profoundly influential."



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The present state of the map appeared at an especially key time in history, during the middle of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), also known as Queen Anne's War, in North America. To make a long story short, while France's preferred candidate to assume the contested Spanish throne, Felipe V, ultimately succeeded in gaining power, the French generally suffered reversals at the hands of their perennial nemesis, Britain. The French attack on Charleston, South Carolina (1706) was unsuccessful, although the French successfully seized the entirety of the precious sugar-producing island of St. Christopher. A showdown between the French naval fleet under Admiral Jean du Casse and the English fleet under Admiral John Benbow, failed to produce a decisive result. Upon the conclusion of the war, at the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), French losses in Europe compelled Louis XIV to cede both St. Christopher and peninsular Acadia (Nova Scotia), to Britain.

The unfortunate result of the war nevertheless spurred France to redouble its efforts to shore up its position in the Americas. Most notably, the French founded New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1718, and the fortress of Louisbourg, on Cape Breton Island (Canada), in 1720. Importantly, the present map would have been a definitive source for French officials when deliberating their plan in the southern colonial regions of North America.

Guillaume de L'Isle (1675-1726) was the Geographer Royal to both Kings Louis XIV and Louis XV. Of a brilliant and precocious mind, while still only in his 20s, De L'Isle established himself as the leading cartographer in France, then the epicenter of mapmaking in Europe. With his unrivaled access to both official French government and Jesuit sources, De L'Isle was able to devise maps of North America which were dramatically more advanced than those of his contemporaries, of which the present map is a prime example.

The states of the map can be identified as follows:

- State 1 bears De L'Isle's first address on 'Rue Des Canettes'
- State 2 includes a later address 'Quai de l'Horloge and the additional imprint of Louis Renard
- State 3 removes the Renard imprint and adds the engraver's name (Simoneau)
- State 4 includes the name Philippe Buache and the date 1745
- State 5 includes a new title, references the "Etats-Unis" and the date 1783, among other features

One of the most important and influential maps of the region during the early 18th Century.

Detailed Condition: