



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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America, Quae est Geographiae Blavianaes.

Stock#: 47504
Map Maker: Blaeu / Wolfgang
Date: 1690 circa
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 22.25 x 14 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A superb exemplar of the practically unknown circa 1690 edition of Blaeu's atlas of the Americas. Perhaps the only known in private hands.

Hand-colored engraved allegorical frontispiece, and 23 double-page engraved maps finely hand-colored in outline.

[2], 19, [2], 20-287, [3] pages of text in Latin.

Folio, 22 1/4 x 14 inches, fine original full calf blindstamped in the Dutch scheme.

An extremely handsome example -- the tallest we have seen -- of the most important atlas of the Americas from the Dutch Golden Age -- this example representing a little-known effort to resurrect Johannes Blaeu's *magnum opus*, the *Atlas maior*, during the 1690s.

The Atlas Arms Race of the 17th Century

No discussion of the *Atlas Maior* or its constituent books would be complete without an appraisal of the rivalry between the firms Jansson and Blaeu.

For decades in the middle of the 17th century, the firms Jansson and Blaeu were engaged in ongoing one-upmanship in the atlas market. If Blaeu published a two-volume atlas with 210 maps, Jansson would closely follow with a three-volume 300-map atlas. This process continued on and on.

After the death of Willem Jansz. Blaeu in 1638, the competition picked up still more; both firms issued a



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new multi-volume atlas: the *Atlas novus*. At that point, they did not hesitate to issue more and more volumes and to copy one another's maps. By the end of 1658, Bleau had published an *Atlas novus* with six volumes and 400 maps, while Jansson had published a six-volume *Atlas novus* with 450 maps.

A new weapon was needed in the atlas wars, and so Jansson issued his 10 to 11 volume German-language *Novus Atlas absolutissimus*. The set had a huge complement of maps, between 500 and 550, and when combined with Cellarius's celestial atlas, and Jansson's eight-volume town book, his firm was the first to realize a complete description of the countries, towns, oceans, and heavens, following the 16th century Mercator concept.

Johannes Blaeu was not to be outdone, however. In 1662, Blaeu issued his *Atlas maior* (Major Atlas) in eleven volumes, with approximately 600 maps. He would follow it with French and Dutch editions and attempt to complete a Spanish edition. The Americas volume was the last volume included in the *Atlas maior*. The set was the largest, most impressive, and most expensive publication of the 17th century, and it stands as the pinnacle of printed atlases.

In 1672, a fire broke out in the Blaeu firm workshop, decimating the stock and the business, and bringing an end to the in-progress publication of the Spanish language edition of the *Atlas Maior* at 10 volumes -- it was originally supposed to run to 12. Johannes Blaeu died the following year, and the family business declined thereafter.

In many bibliographies, the story of the *Atlas maior* ends there. However, a little-explored episode in the history of the book involves the attempted republication of the *Atlas maior*.

After Joan Blaeu's death, his assets were sold at public auction. Abraham Wolfgang purchased copperplates from the estate on April 20th, 1677. Based on the current evidence, it seems that Abraham Wolfgang made an effort to reissue the *Atlas maior* as an exact replica of the 1660s edition. Perhaps this effort reflected the value of the original edition as a status symbol and the continued demand for it, which was unsatisfied after the collapse of the Blaeu dynasty. Abraham Wolfgang was known for his composite atlases and publishing efforts in Amsterdam from the 1660s to the 1690s.

Maps Included in the Atlas:

1. Novissima et Accuratissima Totius Americae Descriptio. per N. Visscher. (
<http://www.raremaps.com/maps/large/47504a.jpg>)



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America, Quae est Geographiae Blavianae.

2. Extrema Americae Versus Boream, ubi Terra Nova Nova Francia, Adjacentiag.
3. Nova Belgica et Anglia Nova. (<http://www.raremaps.com/maps/large/47504b.jpg>)
4. Nova Virginiae Tabula.
5. Virginiae partis australis, et Floridae partis orientalis, interjacentiumq regionum Nova Descriptio.
6. Nova Hispania et Nova Galicia.
7. Yucatan Conventus Iuridici Hispaniae Novae Pars Occidentalis, et Guatimala Conventus Iuridicus.
8. Insulae Americanae In Oceano Septentrionali, cum Terris adiacentibus.
9. Canibales Insulae.
10. Mappa Aestivarum Insularum, alias Barmudas dictarum, ad Ostia Mexicani aestuarij jacentium in latitudine Graduum 32 Mintorum 25. Ab Anglia, Londino scilicet versus Libonotum 3300 Miliaribus Anglicans, et a Roanoack (qui locus est in Virginia) versus Euronotum 500 Mill. accurate descripta.
11. Terra Firma et Novum Regnum Granatense et Popayan (<http://www.raremaps.com/maps/large/47504d.jpg>)
12. Peru
13. Chili
14. Tabula Magellanica, qua Tierrae del fuego, cum celeberrimis fretis a F. Magellano et I. Le Maire detestis novissima et accuratissima descriptio exhibetur.



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15. Paraquaria Vulgo Paraguay. Cum adjacentibus.
16. Nova et Accurata Brasiliae totius Tabula, Auctore Ioanne Blaeu I.F. [Abraham Wolfgang executit]
17. Sinus Omnium Sanctoru.
18. Praefectura De Ciri, vel Seregippe Delrey cum Itapuama.
19. Praefecturae Paranambucae Pars Borealis, una cum Praefectura de Itamaraca.
20. Praefecturae Paranambucae Pars Meridionalis.
21. Praefecturae de Paraiba, et Rio Grande.
22. Guiana sive Amazonum Regio
23. Venezuela, cum parte Australi Novae Andalusiae. (<http://www.raremaps.com/maps/large/47504c.jpg>)

The book includes many of the foremost Dutch atlas maps of the Americas from the time.

The atlas includes a suite of five maps related to Brazil, which first appeared in Caspar Barlaeus's *Rerum per Octennium in Brasilia et alibi nuper gesserum sub Praefectura Illustrissimi Comitis I. Mavritii, Nassoviae, &c...* published by Blaeu in Amsterdam in 1647.

Dating the Book:

The book is a fascinating production, the text having been reset to be almost identical to that of the 1662 edition. The signature numbers are slightly offset, the first giveaway that something has been changed, but almost all of the rest of it, indeed, even a pagination error -- including two unnumbered text pages between 19 and 21 -- has been replicated.



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On page 34, a new paragraph has been added making reference to Coronelli. The text includes a reference to Coronelli's 1688 map of America, conclusively dating the book to 1688 or thereafter.

"Petrus Coronellus Publicus Cosmographus in Charta Geographica novi orbis. Venetiis 1688."

The book has two maps that are not characteristic of the 1662-65 America volume:

- The usual Blaeu Americas map with carte-a-figures panels has been replaced by the Visscher Americas map.
- The Brazil map, "Nova et Accurata Brasiliae totius Tabula, Auctore Ioanne Blaeu I.F.", has been replaced with the Abraham Wolfgang imprint example. According to Peter van der Krogt this state of the map can be dated to 1691-1693.

Based on the physical evidence, all of the maps in this volume were printed for this volume; they are not supplied, nor were they pasted over previously bound-in maps, nor were they otherwise modified.

When compared to the 1662 edition, this book has a monogram ("CVS") added to the printed title device. We have been unable to decipher the maker, but this almost surely means that the device was re-engraved for the new issue.

Rarity

Atlantes Neerlandici (volume II, pages 355-356) records seven institutional examples with the modifications to maps 1 and 16. We are unaware of any similar books being offered in dealer catalogs or at auction.

Provenance

- Private (possibly aristocratic) leather library shelf label on spine;
- Harrington Bros., London;
- Private New York City collection

Detailed Condition:

Overall very fine.