



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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L'Amerique Meridionale et Septentrionale Dressee selon les dernieres Relations et suivant les Nouvelles Decouvertes . . .

Stock#: 50788
Map Maker: de Fer
Date: 1699
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 23.5 x 18 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare, Original Color De Fer Map of the Americas

This is a fine old color example of the rare first state of Nicolas De Fer's map of the Americas, engraved by Hendrick van Loon and first published in Paris in 1699. Examples of the first state of the map are very rare on the market, especially in such exceptional old color.

De Fer's map of America provides a finely engraved and heavily annotated depiction of North and South America at a time when the French were still very much in control of large areas of North America and actively engaged in its exploration. It is based on a wall map De Fer released a year earlier, the famous beaver map, *L'Amerique Divisee Selon Letendue de ses Principales Parties...* (1698). This is folio sized with largely the same geographical details and annotations, quite a feat for a reduced size map.

The corners of the map are filled with decorative cartouches. In the upper left is a dedicatory cartouche depicting two indigenous men on a frame that is decorated with feathers and wheat. The map is dedicated to the children of France. In the lower left is an elaborate title cartouche with a vignette surrounding it. Two indigenous men are again draped around a frame which holds the title and a scene of Europeans meeting a large group of native peoples. To the left is a country scene with a town and windmills splayed on a hill. In the lower right is a cartouche holding the scale and publishing information, surrounded by the tools of a geographer's trade: globe, dividers, compass, schematics, ruler, and pen. In the upper right corner is a blank cartouche with flowers and arrows around it. In later editions this cartouche would be



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filled with text on the division of America.

The central part of North America is dominated by the proposed drainage of the Mississippi River (with the mouth of the river too far west) and its tributaries, based upon a revised configuration conceived by Guillaume De L'Isle in manuscript maps dating to the last decade of the 1600s, but not reduced to print until 1700. The course of the Rio Grande is shown correctly flowing into the Gulf of Mexico, with no cohesive understanding of the existence of the Colorado River system.

French Canada: early discoveries and wandering missionaries

An innovative aspect of the map, and its 1698 brother map, is that Hudson Bay is correctly aligned over the Great Lakes, while the Lakes are in proper relation to the East Coast. This is a configuration many contemporary mapmakers failed to achieve and is especially impressive as much of the information about Hudson Bay and the East Coast was under English control. Most of the information came from a 1681 manuscript map by Jean Baptiste-Louis Franquelin of Montreal, a businessman turned mapmaker who became New France's official cartographer in 1688.

There are a number of annotations to the east of Hudson's Bay, most of which address early discoveries in French Canada. The annotations mention Verrazano, Cartier, Hudson and even Jean Cabot's contact with the Great Banks in 1497. The strangest of these references notes a discovery by one "Antonio Zen," a reference to the apocryphal discovery of America by the Zeno brothers of Venice in the late fourteenth century. This legend stems from the publication in 1558 of the Zeno voyage by a descendent, Nicolo Zeno. The alleged contact with America was debated for centuries and was, at the time this map was produced, again being studied and given some credence, as French mapmakers such as the De L'Isle brothers, De Fer and Philippe Buache sought to reconcile the disparate reports from earlier centuries with the recent French discoveries in North America.

One of the more unique features of this map is the placement of a Recollet mission near Lake Assinibouels, or Lake Winnipeg. The Recollects were a French reform branch of the Franciscan Order. As Franciscan friars took a vow of poverty and had already established missions in Japan and South America, they were a cheap and pragmatic choice of missionaries for the merchants who funded Samuel de Champlain's seventh voyage to Canada. They were some of the first missionaries in New France (Jesuits had been in Acadia, but were expelled) and the first in the province of Quebec. After two decades there, the Recollects, along with the Jesuits, were forced to leave New France. After many petitions, which fell on the deaf ears of Cardinal Richelieu, the Recollects turned to the pope instead. They were given permission to return to New France, but were denied passage on French ships. Due to such political intrigue, the Recollects did not return to their Quebec missions until 1670, re-establishing the missions at Quebec, Trois-Rivieres, and Montreal.



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The mission included on this map is farther north and west from the missions normally attributed to the Recollects in the Saint Lawrence Valley, Quebec, and Montreal area, but perhaps represents a pioneering mission. Many priests, like Louis Hennepin (1626-1701), travelled extensively. Hennepin explored the west with La Salle and was captured by the Sioux in 1680. He was later released and published a book about his travels in 1683; a revised edition was published in 1697. In the latter he introduced the world to Niagara Falls and Saint Anthony Falls, the only waterfall on the Mississippi River.

The northern mission also appears on De Fer's 1698 beaver map. De Fer's source is most likely the original map published with the 1683 Paris edition of Hennepin's travels (Burden 556). The mission is also on the Italian derivation of the map (Bologna, 1686, Burden 623), the Dutch edition (Amsterdam, 1688, Burden 647), the German edition (Nuremberg, 1689, Burden 658), and on the map in an Italian voyage collection (Parma, 1691, Burden 682). Interestingly, neither of the two maps published with the 1697 Utrecht revision and expansion of the 1683 work contains the mission (see Burden 738 and 739). In the English edition of the 1697 work, only one of the two maps has the mission (compare Burden 745 and 746). Finally, the mission is missing from the map published with the 1698 and 1699 Bremen editions (Burden 747, 754), further supporting that De Fer worked from one of the maps from the earlier edition of Hennepin's travels.

The location of the Recollect mission pre-dates the French Jesuits who accompanied Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye. In the years 1731-1742, they explored the whole territory from Mackinaw to the upper Missouri and the Saskatchewan, establishing trading posts, and making alliances with the Indian tribes for the French government. These missionaries included Nicolas Gonor, who had lived among the Sioux as early as 1727, Charles Messenger, and Jean Aulneau, killed by the Sioux in 1736. Fort La Reine was built in 1738 by Vérendrye, on the Assiniboine River where present day Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, stands, serving as a fur trading post and base of operations for exploration north and west.

California as an island and the Pacific

In California, Catalina, San Clemente, Monterey, Mendocino, Point Reyes, and other early California place names appear, although neither San Diego or San Francisco are shown. Francis Drake is referenced with Drake's Bay, just to the north.

California is shown as an island, based upon Sanson's second model. De Fer consistently showed California as an island in his works, including the iconic beaver map (1698), as was common at the time. This map is no exception. In 1700, De Fer would publish a large-scale map of California. The island is labeled with names from the discoveries of Father Kino, another priest explorer whose 1701 map, when published in Paris in 1705 and in a German magazine in 1726, would definitively prove that California was



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indeed a peninsula. However, De Fer continued to depict California as an island for the rest of his career.

The extensive annotations in the Pacific discuss the discoveries of Le Maire and Schouten in 1616, on the expedition which first rounded Cape Horn. They opened a new passage to the East Indies that avoided the Straits of Magellan, the sailing of which was prohibited to all except ships of the Dutch East India Company. As well, there are notes about the Spanish discoveries originally believed to be the Solomon Islands and the sighting of land near what would become Easter Island by an English Captain named Davis in 1685. Further east, there are more islands discovered by Schouten. The map also depicts one of the coastlines of New Zealand, based upon the discoveries of Abel Tasman, which includes five place names.

Between two blocks of text is a battle between two Chinese junks, which look much like Mediterranean caravels, and a European ship. It is the only decorative element on the map outside the cartouches.

Nicholas de Fer

Nicholas de Fer (1646-1720) was the son of a mapseller, Antoine de Fer, and grew to be one of the most well-known mapmakers in France in the seventeenth century. He was apprenticed at twelve years old to Louis Spirinx, an engraver. When his father died in 1673, Nicholas helped his mother run the business until 1687, when he became the sole proprietor.

His earliest known work is a map of the Canal of Languedoc in 1669, while some of his earliest engravings are in the revised edition of *Methode pour Apprendre Facilement la Geographie* (1685). In 1697, he published his first world atlas. Perhaps his most famous map is his wall map of America, published in 1698, with its celebrated beaver scene (engraved by Hendrick van Loon, designed by Nicolas Guerard). After his death in 1720, the business passed to his sons-in-law, Guillaume Danet and Jacques-Francois Benard.

States and rarity

Burden notes the following states:

- 1699: Dated 1699
- 1705: Dated 1705
- 1717: Dated 1717
- 1720 ca: Imprint changed to *Chez i. F. Bernard*
- 1726: Cartouche in the top left corner and top right corner filled with new text
- 1742: Date updated to 1742



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The first state is very rare. We locate a copy in the Bibliotheque Nationale, but few other institutions have it, the 1717 state being more commonly held.

Detailed Condition:

Fine old color example.