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(Flathead Lake / Clark Fork) Nouvelle Carte Des Sources De La Riviere Tete-Plate, dressee par le R.P. De Smet de la Compagnie de Jesus. 1846

Stock#: 51010
Map Maker: De Smet
Date: 1846
Place: Ghent
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 8 x 6 inches
Price: \$295.00



Description:

Pierre De Smet's map of the Flathead Lake, Flathead River & Clark Fork Region

Scarce map of Northwestern Montana and Northern Idaho, showing the route traversed by Pierre De Smet on his mission into Oregon Territory.

Pierre De Smet

Pierre De Smet was born in Termonde, Belgium on January 31, 1801. He attended a seminary school where he met Father Charles Nerinckx - a missionary from Kentucky. During his visit he told stories of his travels and about the opportunities available to minister to the tribes in America. This is when De Smet decided to accompany Father Nerinckx on a mission trip.

In 1839, De Smet met an Iroquois Indian by the name of Ignace Los Angeles Mousse. He had married into the Flathead tribe, and told the Flatheads about the Catholic priests in the east. The Flatheads decided they wanted these men to come and minister to their tribe. When De Smet met Ignace, he decided to go west with his mission right away. In July 1840, he journeyed to the Flathead camp in the Bitterroot Valley. Arriving at their village, he realized that the tribe had already built him a tent. In addition, the whole tribe of 1,600 people came out to give him a warm welcome.

De Smet was uplifted by the tribe's welcoming gestures and began to make plans for building a permanent mission on the site. On August 20, 1840, Pierre traveled to St. Louis to obtain money and men to build the mission. On April 24, 1841, De Smet, along with two priests and three lay brothers, departed from St. Louis to return to the Flatheads, where he remained for several years.



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One of De Smet's longest explorations began in August 1845, in the region then known as Oregon Country to Americans, and Columbia District to the British. He started from Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho, and crossed into the Kootenay River Valley. He followed the valley north, eventually crossing over to Columbia Lake, the source of the Columbia River. He traversed a portion of that valley north to Windermere Lake (British Columbia), and Radium Hot Springs.

De Smet then followed Sinclair Pass east, recrossed the Kootenay, and continued east and upstream along the Cross River (British Columbia) to, and over, the Continental Divide, using Whiteman's Pass, into the Bow River valley near the site of present-day Canmore, Alberta. The Cross River was named for the large wooden cross he built at the top of the pass. From there he headed upstream again, traveling northwest along the Bow, past modern day Banff, Alberta, to its source Bow Lake (Alberta), and then east along the Saskatchewan River to Rocky Mountain House. By this time it was October and he fulfilled one of his goals; to meet with the Cree, Chippewa, and Blackfeet of the area. At the end of the month, De Smet traveled further east to search for more Natives. He was fortunate to find his way back to Rocky Mountain House and was guided from there to Fort Edmonton, where he spent the winter of 1845-1846.

In the spring, De Smet returned to Jasper House and, with terrible suffering he re-crossed the Great Divide, by Athabaska Pass, to the Columbia River and eventually onto Fort Vancouver. He returned to his mission at Sainte-Marie on the Bitterroot River. Finally he returned to St. Louis, Missouri. His time as a missionary in the Rockies was over.

Detailed Condition: