[Rockport Maine to Mount Desert Narrows -- Penobscot Bay]

Stock#:   51285
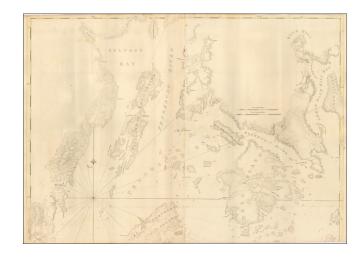**Map Maker:**   Des Barres

Date: 1776
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 30.5 x 41.5 inches

Price: SOLD

Description:

Fine Sae Chart of the Area west of Mount Desert Island to Rockport, Maine -- Penobscot Bay

Highly detailed sea chart of part of the Maine coastline.

The map illustrates the area from Blue Hill and the Mt Desert Narrows in the east to Rockport, centered on Penobscot Bay.

This is the upper sheet of a two sheet chart.

Des Barres

Joseph Frederick Wallet Des Barres (1721-1824) was born in Switzerland where his Huguenot ancestors had fled following the repeal of the Edict of Nantes. He studied under the great mathematician, Daniel Bernoulli, at the University of Basel, before immigrating to Britain where he trained at the Royal Military College, Woolwich. Upon the outbreak of hostilities with France in 1756, he joined the British Royal American Regiment as a military engineer. He came to the attention of General James Wolfe, who appointed him to join his personal detail. During this period he also worked with the legendary future explorer, James Cook, on a monumental chart of the St. Lawrence River.

Atlantic Neptune

Upon the conclusion of the Seven Years War, Britain's empire in North America was greatly expanded, and this required the creation of a master atlas featuring new and accurate sea charts for use by the Royal Navy. Des Barres was enlisted to survey the coastlines of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Gulf of St.

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Lawrence. With these extremely accurate surveys in hand, Des Barres returned to London in 1774, where the Royal Navy charged him with the Herculean task of producing the atlas. He was gradually forwarded the manuscripts of numerous advanced surveys conducted by British cartographers in the American Colonies, Jamaica, and Cuba, conducted in the 1760s.

The result of Des Barres's travels along the Atlantic seaboard was The Atlantic Neptune, which became the most celebrated sea atlas of its era, containing the first systematic survey of the east coast of North America. Des Barres's synergy of great empirical accuracy with the peerless artistic virtue of his aquatint views, created a work that "has been described as the most splendid collection of charts, plates and views ever published" (National Maritime Museum Catalogue).

The Neptune eventually consisted of four volumes and Des Barres's dedication to the project was so strong that often at his own expense he continually updated and added new charts and views to various editions up until 1784, producing over 250 charts and views, many appearing in several variations. All of these charts were immensely detailed, featuring both hydrographical and topographical information, such that in many cases they remained the most authoritative maps of the regions covered for several decades.

The atlas is of the utmost rarity; the last example sold at auction made $779,000 in 2009.

Des Barres After the Atlantic Neptune

After the Revolution, United Empire Loyalists were resettled throughout Canada. As part of this process, a new colony was created by separating Cape Breton from Nova Scotia. Des Barres served as lieutenant governor of Cape Breton Island from 1784 to 1787. He later served as governor of Prince Edward Island from 1804-1812.

He lived an exceptionally long life, even by today's standards, finally dying at age 102-years-old. Des Barres' funeral was held at St. George's Round Church in 1824. He was buried beside his wife Martha in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Des Barres was survived by his mistress Mary Cannon and their four children.

Detailed Condition: