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**Carte Reduite des Isles Philippines Pour Servir Aux Vaisseaux du Roy Dressée au
Dépôt des Cartes Plans et Journaux de la Marine. Par Ordre de M. Rouillé Ministre et
Secrétaire d'Etat ayant le Département De la Marine. . . 1752**

Stock#: 53140
Map Maker: Bellin

Date: 1752
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 34.5 x 21.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

The First Large Format Sea Chart of the Philippines

Striking example of Jacques-Nicolas Bellin's *Carte Reduite des Isles Philippines*, one of the fundamental maps for collectors of Philippine cartography and one of the earliest obtainable large format maps of the islands.

This large and finely engraved sea chart is one of the seminal works of the mapping of the Philippines. It



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was printed by Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (1703-1772), the official Hydrographer to the Royal French Navy. The elegant composition features the entire Philippine Archipelago, with the seas traversed by numerous rhumb lines, and features a large title cartouche of a transitional rococo-neo-classical style. Based on the very finest sources, it is highly detailed, labeling all major settlements, as well as details in the interior such as rivers and lakes.

Bellin's map includes a description beneath the cartouche which gives a brief account of the history of the Philippines, but which also gives credit for the map to its source. As stated, Bellin relied on the work of Padre Pedro Murillo Velarde (1696-1753), a Jesuit scholar, who worked for many years to acquire the best geographic sources to create the first broadly accurate map of the islands, the *Carta hydrografica y chronographica de la Islas Filipinas*, printed in Manila in 1734. Perhaps the largest and most beautiful of all maps printed in any European colony to date, it was issued in very few copies and is today considered virtually unobtainable. A reduced version, the *Mapa delas Yslas Philipinas*, printed on rice paper, was issued in Manila in 1744 and is considered today to be an extreme rarity.

Bellin's map is drawn directly from Murillo Velarde's 1744 map of the Philippines. Although Bellin was a great admirer of Murillo Velarde, he notes on the map that his work is not a "Copie servile", or a straight copy, for he includes several additions. Ironically, Bellin's most obvious "improvement" is that of the mythical island of "St. Jean", to the east of Mindanao, which appeared in earlier maps, but which Velarde went to great efforts to exclude from his maps. While such a decision by Bellin may seem strange in modern times, the process of trial and error reconciliation of modern and older information was a hallmark of 18th Century scientific mapmaking in France in the 18th Century, most notably the 75-year struggle which French mapmakers had with the so-called "Bay of the West."

The present map is the second of the three states of Bellin's chart. It was produced during a period of great political tension in which France, a close ally of Spain (the ruler of the Philippines), was soon to be drawn into another global conflict with Great Britain, which became the Seven Years' War (1756-63). The French Navy urgently required updated sea charts of all possible theaters of altercation. It was in this context that Bellin drew upon Murillo Velarde's groundbreaking work to devise the *Carte Reduite*, which was included in Bellin's great maritime atlas, *Hydrographie française* (Paris, 1753).

Bellin's *Carte Reduite* is considered to be one of the fundamental elements of any collection of Philippine cartography, and the present map is an especially fine example.

Detailed Condition: