



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

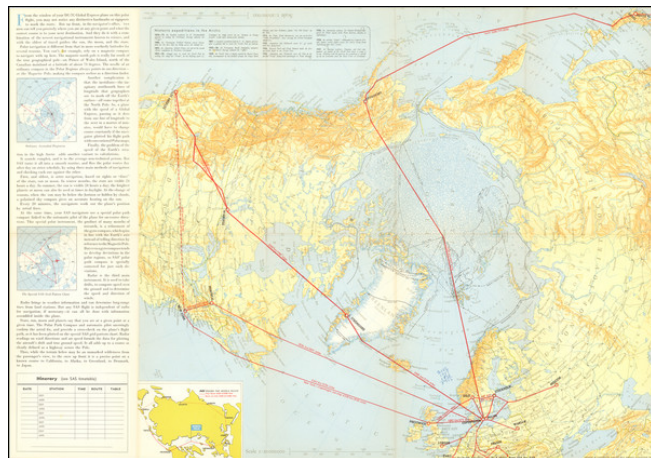
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[SAS -- Polar Airline Route]

Stock#: 68412
Map Maker: Scandinavian Airlines Systems
Date: 1960
Place: Stockholm
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 25.5 x 18 inches Including text
Price: SOLD



Description:

This is a fascinating polar map, produced by the first airline to fly commercially over the North Pole. The many routes in the region operated by SAS, the Scandinavian carrier, are shown, and detail is provided from Los Angeles to the Caspian Sea. The polar routes had a special geopolitical significance in the Cold War and are now, for the most part, defunct.

The map is elegantly detailed and carries an extensive amount of information. All of SAS's flights in the regions are shown, with mileages provided for some of them. In addition, the routes of polar explorers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries are shown. In the bottom left an inset shows the two ways travelers can reach Tokyo from Copenhagen: either a circuitous route through the Middle East (avoiding Soviet airspace) stopping in such places as Karachi and Manila, or the polar route the map focuses on.

Text further details the nature of this route. The methods that pilots use to stay on course are detailed, and these are complex, little different than the ways of early mariners. Much pain is taken to reassure the passenger that the SAS are competent in flying this difficult route. The verso presents extensive information and imagery regarding the polar regions, with a specific focus on Scandinavian roles in exploration and colonization.

SAS (Scandinavian Airlines System) is the flag carrier for three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. Founded immediately after World War II, it soon became one of Europe's leading carriers. The introduction of the first transpolar route, from Copenhagen to Los Angeles via Kangerlussuaq and Winnipeg further increased the airline's fortunes in 1954. The route became immensely popular with Hollywood stars, enticed by the prospect of flying over Greenland, as with American tourists who enjoyed the tariff-free extensions provided by SAS through Europe. In 1957, the company decided to further



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cement its fortunes by offering a new route from Europe to the Far East, via Alaska and the North Pole.

Since the beginning of the Cold War, flights from Europe to Japan and Korea had been prevented from flying over the USSR and China. As such, airlines operated a very circuitous route via the Middle East and India. SAS decided to supplement its route from Copenhagen to Tokyo with a flight via Anchorage, serviced by Douglas DC-6Bs. The route apparently goes slightly out of its way to cross directly over the North Pole, likely further increasing popular interest in the route. This was their first round-the-world service.

The map carries a manuscript notation near Trondheim, likely summing the cost of a flight and connections.

Detailed Condition:

Fold toning.