



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
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**Europam ab Asia & Africa segregant Mare mediterraneum, Euxinus Pontus (nunc Mare Majus) Palus Meotides, Fluminaque Tanais et Duina, continet celeberrimas regiones, Germaniam, Italiam, Galliam, Hispaniam, Daniam, Norvegiam, Suediam, Moscoviam, vel potius Rußiam, Poloniam, cum Lituania, Hungariam, Illiricum et Graeciam: Insulasque insignes, Angliam et Scotiam, Hyberniam, Sardiniam, Corsicam, Siciliam, Candiam, Euboeam et Lemnum.**

**Stock#:** 73535  
**Map Maker:** Plancius / Claesz  
**Date:** 1594 circa  
**Place:** Amsterdam  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 21.75 x 15.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### ***Plancius' Masterful Map of Europe with the Latest Arctic Discoveries***

Fine, rare map of Europe by the influential mapmaker Petrus Plancius, containing the most recent Arctic geographic information thanks to Plancius' famously efficient knowledge network.

It was engraved by Baptista van Doetecum and published by Cornelis Claesz. Plancius' authorship was confirmed by Claesz in his 1609 *Const ende de Caert-Register* (1609).

The map shows the entirety of the continent, including the Black Sea, much of Northern Africa, the Levant, and part of Greenland and Newfoundland. It is densely blanketed with towns, rivers, and mountain chains.

In the Atlantic are the Canaries and the Azores. To the north is Iceland and the mythical Frisland. Nearby are two other chimeric islands, Bus and Brazyl. These are joined by sea monsters, three large ships in full sail, and elaborate compass roses. In the Mediterranean is a smaller, single-masted ship cruising serenely. The outline of the western part of the continent was taken from Waghenaer's 1592 map of Europe.

The cartouche in the lower left corner frames the land shown within the ancient names of bodies of water,



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including the Euxine Sea (Black Sea) and the Maeotian Swamp (Sea of Avoz).

The cartouche in the upper right corrects a curious quirk of the map. Nova Zembla, in the far north, is shown as a wedge-like island, separated from the mainland. This shape was based on Plancius' world map of 1592. In the inset, the same area is shown in a higher resolution as a series of islands. The text reveals Plancius' study of earlier English expeditions and his high hopes for the expedition that left from Texel in summer 1594, the same year the map was published. Schilder and Nalis hypothesize that this map was prepared before the voyage left.

### **Plancius, Barentsz, and the mapping of Novaya Zemlya**

Also known as Novaya Zemlya, Nova Zembla was known to the Russians from the eleventh century (and to the Indigenous peoples for longer than that). During the early 1590s, the leading merchants of the Dutch Republic became very interested in opening trade routes with East Asia. Yet, they were deeply concerned that the established route to Asia, by way of the Cape of Good Hope and the Indian Ocean, was under the control of the Portuguese, who were enemies of the Dutch. Moreover, the established route was very long, and it was thought that any navigable polar route to Asia would be more expeditious.

While exploring the Northwest Passage via the North American Arctic was considered, the failure of Martin Frobisher and John Davis's various attempts to find such a route in the 1570s and 1580s discouraged any efforts in this direction. In 1553-54, the English adventurers Sir Hugh Willoughby (whose name is on an island on this map) and Richard Chancellor attempted to find a Northeast Passage to Asia, over Siberia, and while their mission ultimately failed in this regard, their progress and the nature of their reports convinced many in Amsterdam that such a passage could quite plausibly be opened, given another attempt. This torch was to be carried by Willem Barentsz.

Willem Barentsz (c. 1550-1597) was a Dutch map maker and explorer and one of the great pioneers of Arctic exploration. His first major work was an atlas of the Mediterranean, which he co-published with none other than Petrus Plancius, his close friend and colleague. Barentsz believed that the polar regions consisted of open waters above Siberia, due to the fact that they would be exposed to the sun 24 hours per day.



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In the last decade of the sixteenth century, Barentsz made three voyages to the North Polar regions. In summer 1594, Barentsz led an expedition of three ships which sailed from Texel for the Kara Sea, which is the one described in the cartouche here. On this voyage, the crew made the first ever Western European encounter with a polar bear. Barentsz's first voyage reached the west coast of Novaya Zemlya, providing the information for this inset. After coasting northward, the crew encountered large icebergs and were forced to turn back and return to Holland.

Barentsz returned north in 1595 and 1596. On the latter voyage, the ship was lodged in the ice and the crew had to escape on foot. Barentsz died in the effort, but several of his men eventually returned and told their stories.

### North Atlantic myths

Perhaps the most famous of the Atlantic mythical islands is Frisland, near Iceland, whose fascinating story and association with the Zeno Map is told below. Nearby to Frisland on many maps, including this one, is Bus (sometimes Buss) Island. This island originates in reports about Martin Frobisher's third voyage, specifically George Best's *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie of a Passage to Cathaya* (1578). One of Frobisher's ships, the *Emmanuel*, which was a busse, hence the island's name, supposedly sailed along the island on its homeward journey in 1578. Hakluyt included a description of the island in his *Principal Navigations* (1598). It was variably sighted and sought by seventeenth-century navigators and John Seller charted it in his *English Pilot* (1671). The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) sent an expedition in search of it in 1675, but they found nothing. By the eighteenth-century, cartographers supposed the island was fabulous or sunken, demoting it to a navigational hazard. A further voyage in 1791 finally proved its non-existence.

Hy Brasil (here Brazyl) is an enduring Atlantic chimera emerging from Celtic folklore. It ranges on maps from just off the west coast of Ireland to the area around the Azores. The island was initially described as a rich paradise not unlike Atlantis; it emerged from the depths for a short period and then would disappear. It started to appear on portolan charts in the fourteenth century and continued to be a stalwart of maps and charts into the nineteenth century. The island was the subject of a fanciful pamphlet by Richard Head in 1675. Despite no accurate reports of its whereabouts, the island appeared on Admiralty charts and other reputable maps for centuries, usually in the latitude of 51°N and at a longitude of 17°W.



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**States of the map**

There are three states of the map.

- State 1 (1594): Map dated 1594. Text boxes blank, with text pasted down on paper and glued onto the map.
- State 2 (1594): Map dated 1605 (Schilder). Text boxes completed.
- State 3: (after 1594): David de Meyne's name added to the end of the text in the cartouche in the upper right and was issued later.

The second and the third states sometimes appear in the first edition of Paulus Merula's *Cosmographia generalis* (Leiden, 1605). Merula's work was a geographic description of Europe, with an especial emphasis on the ancient Mediterranean empires.

**Rarity**

The map is rare. OCLC locates only two examples of the second state, at the University Library of Amsterdam and the Utrecht University Library.

We note a single example of the second state of the map at auction in the past twenty years and one example of the third state.

**Detailed Condition:**

A few minor stains.