



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

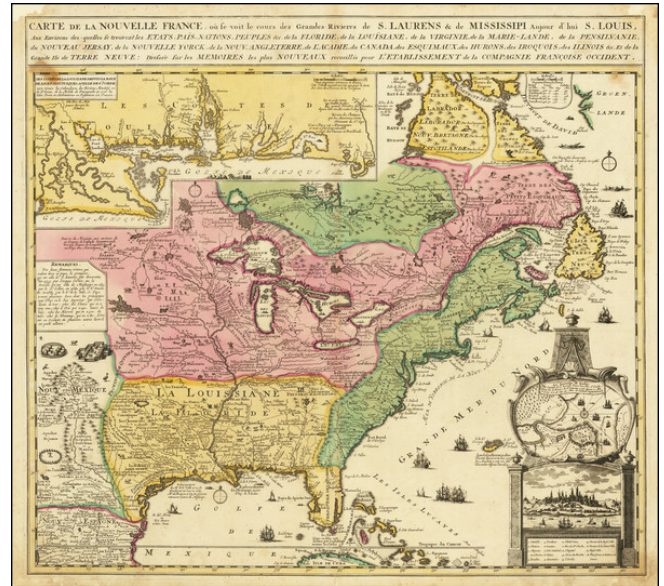
7407 La Jolla Boulevard
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Carte De La Nouvelle France, ou se voit le cours des Grandes Rivières de. S. Laurens & de Mississipi Ajour d'hui S. Louis, Aux Environs des-quelles se trouvent les Etats, Pais, Nations, Peuples &c. de la Floride, de la Louisiane, de la Virginie, de la Marie-Lande . . .

Stock#: 78609
Map Maker: de Fer
Date: 1718
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 21.5 x 19.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Single Sheet Edition of De Fer's Landmark 1718 Wall Map --- Le Cours du Missisipi, ou de St. Louis Fameuse Riviere de l'Amerique Septentrional

Striking old color example of De Fer's rare single sheet map of the inhabited parts of North America, based upon Nicholas De Fer's landmark 4-sheet map published in 1718.

The present example includes manuscript notes on the verso regarding the population of the 13 colonies as of 1783.

De Fer's 4 sheet map is one of the rarest and most important printed maps of the period, providing a remarkable synthesis of the French discoveries on North America at the moment in time when Scottish Financier John Law was the celebrated savior of the French economy, through an investment scheme in French Louisiana, which would come to be known as the Mississippi Bubble (1718-1720).

At the top left of the map is large scale map of the Mississippi Delta and Mobile Bay, based upon the 1699 voyage of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville. The inset also appears on De Fer's 4 sheet map and Guillaume De L'Isle's 1718 *carte de la Louisiane*. D'Iberville explored the mouth of the Mississippi and its many tributaries, including the Red River in Arkansas.



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Heidenreich and Dahl surmised that that the map was issued to promote the recently established Compagnie Françoise Occident and reinforce French opinion in the 1713 boundary settlement. The Compagnie Françoise Occident, under John Law's leadership was initially successful in promoting investment and French emigration to America. However, the financing side of the company, conceived by John Law to help finance the debt left by Louis XIV, led to a wild burst of speculation and ultimate collapse. This episode is often referred to as the Mississippi Bubble.

The map includes a nice plan and view of Quebec, fine detail in the Great Lakes and Mississippi and small vignettes and notes throughout the map. As noted by McCorckle:

This map is frequently confused with a similar map appearing in Chatelain's Atlas Historique ... They have several distinguishing characteristics. The map appearing in Chatelain has ornamental borders around all three insets; this, the slightly larger map, has a rectangular border around the 'Costes' inset, and two posts framing the 'Veue' inset.

De Fer's Wall Map of Le Cours du Mississipi, ou de St. Louis Fameuse Riviere de l'Amerique Septentrional

De Fer's 4 sheet map *Le Cours du Mississipi* . . . is perhaps the most important and influential regional map of the period, providing significantly updated cartographic information in a number of regions. The map is the first printed map to provide the updated treatment of the Mississippi River later made famous by De L'Isle in his *Carte de la Louisiane et du cours du Mississipi* . . . (pre-dating De L'Isle's map), the first to include the updated information along the Gulf Coast transmitted to France by Françoise Le Maire and the first to incorporate the revised and improved mapping of the Great Lakes derived from Jesuit missionary sources in the north.

While its cartographic details rival the contemporary maps of Guillaume De L'Isle for primacy, De Fer's *Le Cours du Mississipi* . . . was almost certainly the more influential work at the time it was published, having been commissioned by John Law's Compagnie d'Occident (Company of the West), to provide a graphic depiction of the vast and rich commercial potential of French Louisiana, for which commercial rights had just been ceded to Law's Company of the West.

De Fer first began work on his map in 1715, when he issued his single sheet map entitled *La Riviere de Mississipi, et ses Environs, dans l'Amerique Septentrionale* ..., based upon a 1701 manuscript map by



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Guillaume De L'Isle: <https://www.raremaps.com/gallery/detail/59953>

The 1715 *La Rivière de Mississipi* . . . is essentially the proof state for the southwestern portion of the 4 sheet wall map, lacking the internal embellishments intended to demonstrate the wealth of the region. With the founding of John Law's Company of the West and Law's being granted by the King of France the rights to commercial control of Louisiana in August 1717, Law commenced an advertising and promotional campaign to attract investors for his new company. A visual tool was undoubtedly needed to help potential investors understand the scope and commercial potential of France's holdings in Louisiana. To fill the need, De Fer was commissioned to create such a map.

De Fer's *Le Cours du Mississipi*, which bears the "Armes de la Compagnie," states in the title "jusques en 1717 qui est l'année de l'établissement de la compagnie d'occident et pour laquelle cette carte a été dressée. . . " (1717 is the year of the establishment of the Compagnie d'Occident and the reason this map was drawn up). While the 1715 map had been quite plain in its depiction of the the southern regions, the 1718 edition is expanded to include the Upper Mississippi and Great Lakes, and lavishly embellished with vignettes highlighting the rich hunting grounds, fur trade and ample watercourses which could be found in the region, undoubtedly to persuade potential investors of the commercial potential of the region and Law's enterprise.

Utilizing the most recent information transmitted back to France by Jesuit Missionary Françoise Le Maire and others, De Fer updated his 1715 map and added a second sheet to the north, bearing the title " Le Cours du Mississipi, ou de St. Louis Fameuse Rivière de l'Amerique Septentrionale. . . " Later, De Fer added two additional half sheets to the east, completing a 4 sheet wall map which depicted the rest of the Colonies. De Fer's map was immediately copied by Gerard Van Keulen in 4 sheets (Carte de la Nouvelle France ou se Voit le Cours des Grandes Rivières de S. Laurens & de Mississipi Aujour d'hui S. Louis, aux Environs), and was also reproduced in single sheet versions by Chatelain and Ottens (Carte de la Nouvelle France, ou se Voit le Cours des Grandes Rivières de S. Laurens & de Mississipi).

De Fer's map was of great contemporary importance. Among its most important features, it is the first printed map to depict Françoise Le Maire's manuscript copies of the best available Spanish manuscript charts, including the Enriquez Barroto - Bisente manuscript charts of the Gulf Coast (the large inset at the top of the map), which significantly improved the cartographic details of of the Gulf Coast and its principal Bays. Henry Popple would later utilize De Fer's map to delineate Spanish settlements on the Rio Grande and territory west of the Mississippi Valley. De Fer's Great Lakes model was utilized well into the 18th Century, most notably serving as the model for the first edition of John Mitchell's monumental map of



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North America. Perhaps of greatest historical significance, it was undoubtedly a very useful selling tool for John Law, helping him raise significant sums of money for his venture, which would later end with a massive commercial failure known as the Mississippi Bubble.

The map provides credits to some of the most important French explorers and missionaries in America in the late 17th and early 18th Centuries, whose work is incorporated in the map, including Hennepin, de La Salle, Tonti, Justel, des Hayes, and Jolliet. Perhaps most notable is the contributions of Francois le Maire, a Jesuit Missionary in Louisiana, whose job from 1706 to 1720 included the review and transcription of explorers' journals, accounts (and maps), which were recorded in his memoirs and then transmitted back to France. Many of these reports and maps were obtained from Spanish sources. One noteworthy example of the Spanish source maps utilized by Le Maire is a manuscript chart illustrated by Jackson in *Flags Along The Coast* (opposite page 59) and attributed to "a [Spanish] pilot named Soupar (or Soupart)." As noted by Jackson (p. 60):

Francois Le Maire arrived in [Louisiana] in 1706 and devoted himself to a study of its geography. Le Maire collected the accounts of various explorers, analyzed the data, and then forwarded them to France in the form of memoirs and maps. Le Maire's work enabled De L'Isle to produce one of the most influential maps of North America ever made, his 1718 *Carte de la Louisiane et du cours du Missisipi*.

The large inset at the top of De Fer's map is an almost exact copy of the Soupar / Le Maire chart (*Carte de la Cote de La Louisiane depuis la Cote-de Ouest de la Floride iusqu'a l'Ouest de la Riviere du Missisipy par moy Sovpar 1716*), with two notable exceptions, the shape of Pensacola Bay and the shape of the "Baye de Ste. Rose," to the east. For these two features, De Fer's map more closely resembles a manuscript map by Valentin Devin, entitled *Carte de la cote de la Louisiane, depuis l'Embouchure de Mississipi . . .*, which states that it was prepared based upon the observations of M. de Serigny in 1719 and 1720. The Devin map, illustrated as plate 27 in *Flags Along The Coast*, provides a nearly identical model for De Fer's "Baye de Ste. Rose," but its treatment of Pensacola Bay is very different, as is its treatment of the course of the Lower Mississippi, Lake Ponchartrain and other parts of the map.

Examples of the map are extremely rare . The 2 eastern sheets (not present here) appear to have been hastily created after the completion of the northwestern sheet, as the engraver seems to have made a significant error in the scale of the 2 eastern sheets map, placing Lake Ontario and 3 of the rivers a full degree to far north, causing the engraving of the Lake and the 3 rivers to veer abruptly south, in order to meet up with the northwestern sheet. We are aware of only 2 examples of the De Fer's map on the market in the past 30 years.



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Dating The Map

While historically, this single sheet map has always been assumed to have been printed after the publication of De Fer's Wall map, there is no firm evidence to suggest the earlier printing date. The only notable difference in the present map is that Lake Ontario is referred to as Lac Frontenac.

It is believed the first European to reach the lake was Étienne Brûlé in 1615. Early French explorers introduced other names for the lake. In 1632 and 1656, the lake was referred to as Lac de St. Louis or Lake St. Louis by Samuel de Champlain and cartographer Nicolas Sanson respectively (likely for Louis XIV of France). In 1660, Jesuit historian Francis Creuxius coined the name Lacus Ontarius. In a map drawn in the Relation des Jésuites (1662-1663), the lake bears the legend "Lac Ontario ou des Iroquois" with the name "Ondiara" in smaller type. A French map produced in 1712 (currently in the Canadian Museum of History), created by military engineer Jean-Baptiste de Couagne, identified Lake Ontario as "Lac Frontenac" named after Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac et de Palluau, a French soldier, courtier, and Governor General of New France from 1672 to 1682 and from 1689 to his death in 1698.

Rarity

The De Fer map is quite rare on the market. This is the first example of the map we have had in nearly 10 years.

The map was later copied in smaller size and published by Henri Chatelain in Amsterdam, with a different vignette of Quebec.

Detailed Condition:

Small spot at top left corner and minor marginal restorations at top left and right corners. Minor soiling in corners