



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

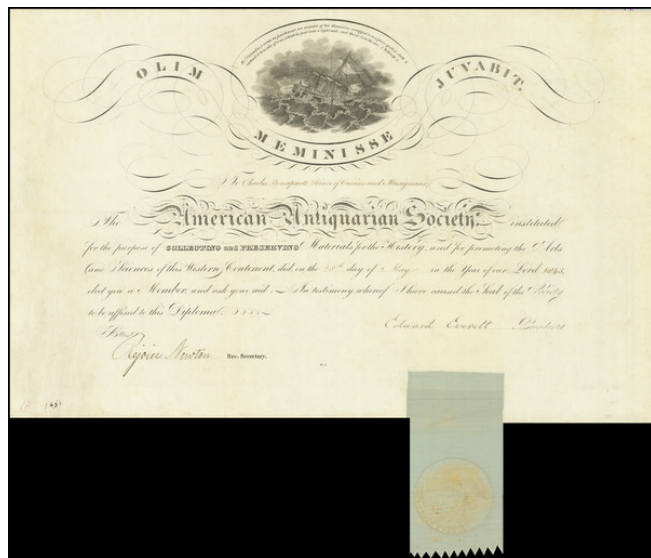
7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

**[ American Antiquarian Society Membership Certificate -- Charles Lucien Bonaparte,  
Prince of Canino and Musignano ] Olim Meminisse Juvabit**

**Stock#:** 84482  
**Map Maker:** Bonaparte / Everett  
**Date:** 1845  
**Place:** Philadelphia  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 16.6 x 10.4 inches  
**Price:** \$ 3,400.00



**Description:**

***Ornithologist Charles Lucien Bonaparte is Elected to the American Antiquarian Society***

***Beautiful Engraved Membership Certificate***

This is the original certificate of membership in the American Antiquarian Society, granted to noted French biologist and ornithologist Charles Lucien Bonaparte, 2nd Prince of Canino and Musignano. Bonaparte, who was Napoleon I's nephew, was a pioneering naturalist in America who discovered several birds and published the important *American Ornithology* (1825-1833), updating Alexander Wilson's earlier classic, *Ornithology, History of the Birds of the United States*.

While his publication of the four-volume *American Ornithology* (1825-33) established his scientific reputation, Bonaparte was also engaged in politics. In 1848-49 he took part in the political agitation for Italian independence against the Austrians, which caused his scientific career to be put on hold. In July 1849 he was forced to leave Italy. He went to Holland and then to France. Besides his book on American birds, his principal works are a general zoological conspectus, *Conspectus systematis ornithologiae, mastozologiae, reptologiae et amphibologiae, ichthyologiae* (1850); a work on hummingbirds, *Tableau des oiseaux-mouches* (1854); and one on extinct birds, *Ornithologie fossile* (1858).

The elegantly printed certificate is illustrated with a fine engraved vignette of a ship at sea, crowned with a passage attributed to Jeremy Belknap which makes reference to Columbus' foresight in recording his



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discovery on a sheet of parchment encased in a cake of wax, lest he fail to make the return voyage to Europe:

*He (Columbus) wrote on parchment an account of his discoveries, wrapped it in a piece of oiled cloth & enclosed in a cake of wax, which he put into a tight cask, and threw into the sea (Belknap.)*

The certificate is signed by AAS president Edward Everett, who went on to hold a variety of top posts during his career, including Secretary of State (1852-1853), United States Senator from Massachusetts (1853-1854), Governor of Massachusetts (1836-1840) and President of Harvard University (1846-1848). Rejoice Newton (1782-1868) has also signed the certificate as Secretary of the Society.

Membership in the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) has been a prestigious mark of distinction for over two centuries. Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and several other presidents and countless other worthies have been elected to membership since the Society was founded in 1812 by prominent early American printer and publisher Isaiah Thomas. The purpose of the Society, according to the text on the present certificate, was to engage in the

*...collecting and preserving materials for the History, and for promoting the Arts and Sciences of this Western Continent.*

AAS remains a vital and active institution and continues to collect early examples of American printing and ephemera, which it safeguards in a treasure trove of a library in Worchester, Massachusetts.

**Detailed Condition:**

Printed engraved sheet, completed in manuscript. Vignette of a ship at sea. With original AAS seal (ribbon) attached at lower right edge. Signed by Edward Everett and Rejoice Newton. Sheet exhibits some age toning. Overall very good.