



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Memoires et observations geographiques et critiques sur la situation des pays septentrionaux de l'Asie et de l'Amerique, d'apres les relations les plus recentes

Stock#: 90201
Map Maker: Engel
Date: 1765
Place: Lausanne
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 7.5 x 9.5 inches (29 x 19 inch map size)
Price: \$ 5,400.00



Description:

"California is not an island, but a peninsula"

Rare first edition of Engel's *Memoires Observations Geographiques*, published in Paris in 1765.

First edition of Engel's important and influential work on the geography of the arctic regions, which is also noteworthy for Engel's rejection "of the persistent belief held by many of his contemporary geographers and cartographers that California was an island. He unequivocally asserted. that (in translation), 'California is not an island but a peninsula'" (Lada-Mocarski).

Engel "examined diligently the maps and writings of Kirilov (the compiler of the first Russian atlas), Buache, Delisle, Muller, Gmelin, and others - and invariably, with some justification, found something wrong with each of them. He examined these works with regard to the northern parts of both Asia and America. Most of the questions he raised were valid and the present-day student of these regions would profit by reading his work with a modern maps before him, to see who was right or wrong - and when wrong, how wrong" (ibid). The two folding maps are also important, the first map "Carte de la partie Septentrionale et Occidentale de l'Amerique " is "chiefly interesting for the remarkable imagination displayed by the maker about the rivers entering the northwest coast. Lahotan's geography is followed, but the famous Lake Tahuglauk is almost thirty degrees of longitude removed from the coast" (Wagner).

The work includes two maps, (1) *Carte de la partie Septentrionale et Occidentale de l'Amerique* and (2) *Carte de la partie Septentrionale et Orientale de l'Asie*. The first map is a format map of North America, which was the model for Diderot's map of North America, which was issued in 1770 and after one of the most recognizable maps of the North America from the latter part of the 18th Century.



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The North America map includes a marvelous series of rivers which traverse the continent, hopefully, but ultimately futilely searching for a continuous waterway from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

While the Diderot editions of the 2 maps are quite well known, the original maps rarely appear on the market.

Detailed Condition:

Quarto. Contemporary speckled boards. Spine with some rubbing and wear (especially at head and base of spine). Corners worn. xxii, 268, [8] pages plus 2 folding engraved maps. Complete. The map of North America detached, with separation tear along nearly entire upper horizontal fold (with sympathetic older partial repair on verso and more recent archival tape repairs). Occasional fox mark to the text leaves. The map sheets very clean and nice. A fresh, entirely unsophisticated copy.