



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

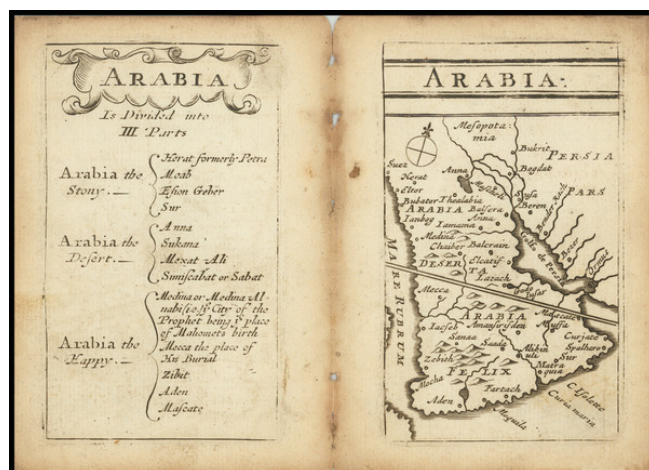
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Arabia

Stock#: 92191
Map Maker: Seller
Date: 1679
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 2.25 x 3.75 inches each
Price: \$ 575.00



Description:

Rare map of the Arabian peninsula John Seller in 1679, which appeared in his *Atlas Minimus*.

John Seller, a pioneering English cartographer of the seventeenth century, was renowned for his detailed and meticulously crafted maps that greatly contributed to the English speaker readers' geographical knowledge of his time. Among his widely recognized works is the *Atlas Minimus*, a fascinating and diminutive atlas featuring a myriad of geographical locations worldwide. Of particular interest in this mini compendium of maps is Seller's depiction of Arabia, which Seller divided into three distinct sections: Arabia Petraea (the Stony), Arabia Deserta (the Desert), and Arabia Felix (the Happy).

To fully appreciate Seller's map, one needs to understand the historical context and the sources of information at his disposal during the time of its creation. The three-part division of Arabia was not a novelty introduced by Seller; it was a prevalent classification that dated back to ancient Roman and Greek geographers, such as Ptolemy. This division provided a simplified representation of the Arabian Peninsula's vast diversity and complexity. As such, Seller's map is a testament to the endurance of these traditional classifications into the era of modern cartography.

Arabia Petraea, or 'Stony Arabia,' as represented in Seller's map, corresponds to the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula, encompassing parts of modern-day Jordan, northwestern Saudi Arabia, and southern Israel and Palestine. This region was known for its rocky terrain and was the location of the famous Nabatean city of "Herat formerly Petra." Seller's portrayal, although not extraordinarily detailed given the scale of the *Atlas Minimus*, reflects the region's topography and its stark contrast to the other two parts of Arabia.



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Arabia Deserta, 'the Desert Arabia,' corresponds to the vast desert interior of the Arabian Peninsula, which includes much of modern-day Saudi Arabia. This region is characterized by its arid climate, sparse vegetation, and the iconic sand dunes often associated with the Arabian landscape. Seller's depiction of this region in the *Atlas Minimus* is indicative of the prevailing European view of Arabia as an inhospitable desert, a notion that was, to some extent, grounded in reality but also perpetuated by the limited interaction between Europe and the interior of Arabia.

Lastly, Arabia Felix, or 'Happy Arabia,' corresponds to the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, including modern-day Yemen and parts of Oman. The term 'Felix,' meaning fortunate or happy, was used to describe the region's relative fertility and wealth compared to the rest of Arabia. This area was known for its spice trade, which was a significant source of wealth and a key factor in the region's interaction with the Roman Empire and later with Europe. In Seller's map, this region appears distinct from the other two parts of Arabia, underscoring the region's historical reputation as a land of prosperity amidst an otherwise harsh and challenging environment.

Rarity

The map is very rare on the market. This is the first example we have offered for sale.

Detailed Condition: