



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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**(The First Map of North America) Il Disegno del discoperto della nova Franza, il quale s'e havuto Ultimamente dalla Novissima Navigatione de' Franzesi in quel Luogo: nel quale si Vedono Tutti l'Isole, Porti, Capi et Luoghi fra Terra che in quella sono. . .
M.D.LXVI**

Stock#: 94850
Map Maker: Forlani / Zaltieri

Date: 1566
Place: Venice
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 16 x 11.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

The First Map of North America -- Jacques Cartier's Discoveries

Exceedingly rare map of North America first published by Paolo Forlani in 1565. This is an example of the second state of the map, published in 1566. It is the first separately-published map of North America and only the second to include the Strait of Anian and is thus a landmark in the history of cartography.

In the early 1560s, Forlani also published a map of South America and the West Indies, [*La descrizione de tutto il Peru*](#), the only map of South America ever completed by the Lafreri school. With this North America map, Forlani completed his coverage of the New World. The map stretches from Greenland down the coast of Canada and the Atlantic Seaboard to the West Indies, including a corner of South America, and from the coast of China in the west to the Azores and Cape Verde in the east.

Forlani's scarce and finely engraved map of North America is one of the most significant early maps of America. It is the earliest printed map devoted solely to North America, the first to portray that landmass as a separate continent and the second to show the so-called Strait of Anian separating America from Asia. The title of the map translates as "Mapping of the Discovery of New France, which was recently obtained from the Latest French Navigation in that Place: in which are Seen All the Islands, Ports, Capes, and Places on Land that are there".

The French Discoveries referenced in the title are likely those of Jacques Cartier in his three voyages to North America. The early phase of French exploration in the New World was prompted by a blend of



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curiosity, the allure of wealth, and the quest for an elusive Northwest Passage to Asia. Jacques Cartier, the first notable French explorer, embarked on three significant voyages between 1534 and 1542. His first expedition in 1534 led to the discovery of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. On his second voyage a year later, Cartier sailed up the Saint Lawrence River, reaching the Iroquoian village of Stadacona (Sladacone on the present map), the site of present-day Quebec City. The Native village of "Ochelaga," the future site of Montreal, which was also first encountered by Cartier, is also shown.

Cartier's most notable achievement came during his third voyage in 1541, where he ventured further inland and established a settlement named Charlesbourg-Royal near the modern-day city of Quebec. It was here that he identified a hill rich in iron pyrite and quartz crystals and named it Mont Royal, laying the groundwork for the future city of Montreal. Although the settlement didn't last long, his discoveries set the stage for future French incursions into the region.

The geography of Forlani's North America

The geographic features Forlani chose to include reveal how much, and little, was known about the continent in the late-sixteenth century. Certain places are familiar to the modern eye. Labrador is included, near *Terra de Baccalos*, a reference to the cod fisheries that made the area one of the first to see European ships. *La Florida* covers the entire southeast, with a nascent peninsula jutting into the Gulf of Mexico. California is not labeled, but it is readily recognizable.

Another familiar name is *Apalchen* which, although nearly in the center of the continent, denotes the Appalachian Mountains. This reveals a source for Forlani, for this feature first appeared on maps with the Gutiérrez-Cock map of 1562. Another source is revealed in the use of the city name *Ochelaga*, or Montreal. It is placed on a river other than the St. Lawrence, which is itself confused with a *Gamas* River. This misplacement of Montreal appeared in Ramusio's important travel collection.

Other representations appear strange to the modern reader, such as the placement of a squat Japan in the middle of a horizontally-shrunk Pacific, or *Mare del Sur*. Two unfamiliar mountain ranges cut east to west, while there are no lakes beyond an un-named body of water in Canada and a large lake in the center of Mexico, most likely meant to be Lake Texcoco.

Canada Pro and *La Nova Franza* mark the presence of French colonists, a process that began in 1534. In the northeast is *Larcadia*, a reference to Acadia, which was not permanently settled by the French until



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early in the seventeenth century. Just to the west is *Terra de Norumbega*, which first appeared as *Oranbega* on Giovanni da Verrazzano's 1529 map. Soon after this map was made, the place would gain a mythic reputation based on the stories of David Ingram, a marooned English sailor. He described silver thrones and vast cities, but his story was doubted by both Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas.

Farther west still is *Quivira Pro*. Quivira refers to the Seven Cities of Gold sought by the Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado in 1541. In 1539, Coronado wandered over what today is Arizona and New Mexico, eventually heading to what is now Kansas to find the supposedly rich city of Quivira. Although he never found the cities or the gold, the name stuck on maps of southwest North America, wandering from east to west. Here it is used to describe the entire western half of the North America.

Strait of Anian

One of the most important features of the map is the *Streto de Anian*, which is the name of the thin channel that separates *Parte di Asia* and North America. This is only the second map to use the place name. Forlani based his map on Giacomo Gastaldi's 1561 and 1546 world maps. Gastaldi had been the first to formulate the concept of the Strait of Anian and included it in his nine-sheet world map of 1561 that survives in only one example, at the British Library.

Anian derives from Ania, a Chinese province on a large gulf mentioned in Marco Polo's travels (ch. 5, book 3). The gulf Polo described was actually the Gulf of Tonkin, but the province's description was transposed from Vietnam to the northwest coast of North America. After Gastaldi and Forlani included the feature, it became common as a shorthand for a passage to China, i.e. a Northwest Passage. It appeared on maps until the mid-eighteenth century.

States and Rarity

Until the late-twentieth century, this map was attributed to Venetian publisher Bolognino Zaltieri, whose name and imprint appear on the second state, like this example, and was published in 1566. As David Woodward has demonstrated, however, authorship should be ascribed to Forlani, who sold some copperplates—including, presumably, the one used to print this map—to Zaltieri sometime around late 1565 or early 1566.

The present example is a second state, as evidenced by the publisher's imprint in the upper left corner. Both states are seldom found in institutional collections and are rare on the market. This rarity, and the



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importance of the map as the first stand-alone map of the North American continent, mark it as an extremely important document for the history of cartography and for the histories of exploration and of the Americas.

Detailed Condition:

Engraving on laid paper with watermark Woodward 222 ("Shield with three chevrons above a wolf in a circle under a six-pointed star B"). Wide margins on left, right and bottom, margin ample from platemark at top edge. This is unusual, and desirable, as most Lafreri School maps were trimmed to the image and remargined at the time they were added to composite atlases.