



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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America

Stock#: 95364
Map Maker: Thomson
Date: 1815
Place: Edinburgh
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 20 x 18 inches
Price: \$ 295.00



Description:

America, a striking map of the Americas published by John Thomson in 1815 in Edinburgh, conveys a compelling blend of known and speculative geography during a period of rapid exploration and discovery. One of the most distinctive characteristics of this cartographic piece is its representation of the Missouri River's headwaters and the extensive network of speculative tributaries leading to the Rocky Mountains.

In the early 19th century, the Americas remained a territory of fascination and uncertainty, a vast, largely uncharted space rich with potential for exploration and expansion. Thomson's map bears witness to this intrigue, especially in its portrayal of North America's interior. Drawing heavily from the reports of Peter Fidler, a cartographer and surveyor for the Hudson's Bay Company, the map traces a myriad of possible river courses westward, suggesting the possibility of a water route or portage through the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean—a notion that held significant implications for commerce and territorial claims.

While the North American interior leaves much to conjecture, the South American geography is rendered with considerable precision, indicative of the era's scientific progress and colonial engagements. Another noteworthy feature is the depiction of the South Pacific, where a cluster of islands is labeled as the "Dangerous Archipelago," suggesting the hazards faced by maritime explorers in this remote region.

The map also acknowledges the recent discovery of the Hawaiian archipelago, designated as the "Sandwich Isles," honoring Captain Cook's designation. The inclusion of the coastlines of Europe and



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northwest Africa further situates the Americas within a broader global context. As such, Thomson's *America* serves not only as a navigational tool but also as a document reflecting the ongoing quest for knowledge and control during the Age of Exploration.

Detailed Condition:

Original hand-color. Minor wear and toning at the centerfold.