



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Map of America By A. Arrowsmith. 1804

Stock#: 48822
Map Maker: Arrowsmith
Date: 1804
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 59 x 48 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

America after the Louisiana Purchase--Fine example of Arrowsmith's Map of America, in Four Sheets

This is an excellent map of the Americas on the eve of the explorations of Lewis and Clark, Humboldt, Pike, Long, and others. It offers a snapshot of the Americas on the verge of immense change, one year after the Louisiana Purchase and just prior to the discovery of the western parts of North America, the polar expeditions, and the Age of Revolutions in Latin America.

The map is an example of Aaron Arrowsmith Sr.'s clean style and embrace of open space. His maps are typically unadorned except for a cartouche, usually in the form of a vignette. The cartouche here, in the upper right corner, highlights the bounty and diversity of the Americas. On the right are palm trees and other tropical fauna, with inquisitive squirrels enjoying the riches. To the left is a pine forest where ferns blanket the ground. A moose stands watch in the middle ground, while a bay and mountains fill the background. A craggy stone bears the map's straightforward title, 'Map of America by A. Arrowsmith 1804.' The cartouche was engraved by W & G Cooke.

The map is alive with the latest geographic information, yet it also shows the state of flux that characterized the early years of inland exploration. The missions in Upper California are named. The Missouri River extends far north of its true source and references the Tall and Manders Indian Villages. There are extensive forts shown in the Mississippi Valley. The Rocky Mountains are still called the Stony Mountains, which is intriguing because on an 1802 map of North America Arrowsmith uses the former



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rather than the latter. Finally, the map reflects the updates to the northwest coast of America thanks to the voyages of Cook, Meares, Portlock and Dixon, Duncan and Colnett, and Vancouver.

One particularly intriguing feature on this map is the Columbia River, the mouth of which is placed at roughly 46° N. In a 1790 map of the world Arrowsmith had connected the Juan de Fuca Strait with a River Oregon at 50° N. By 1794, in another world map, Arrowsmith deleted the River Oregon and added an unnamed river at 46°N; this is most likely the earliest printed cartographic depiction of the Columbia River. The changes were probably inspired by early reports from the Vancouver expedition. Arrowsmith first used the term Columbia River in a 1795 map of North America. By 1798, when he reissued the 1794 world map, he included both the Oregon and Columbia Rivers. In 1798, Arrowsmith published "Plan of the River Oregon from an Actual Survey", which is none other than the Columbia River by Arrowsmith's preferred name. He continued to use Oregon instead of Columbia on later states of his map of North America. His use of Columbia on this map is one of the earliest examples of Arrowsmith's acquiescence to the more widely used nomenclature.

Arrowsmith drew from several sources while composing the map, most notably from Mackenzie's 1789 exploration of the Rocky Mountains and the Canadian Northwest, an account of which was subsequently produced in 1798. Mackenzie had been commissioned by the North-West Fur Company and, remarkably, traversed almost 3,000 miles in just 120 days.

Arrowsmith was able to learn of Mackenzie's reports before they were published because he was particularly well-connected within London's geographic knowledge community. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) had traditionally exercised a policy of secrecy with regard to their cartography. However, this policy began to change under the leadership of Samuel Wegg, Governor of the HBC from 1782 to 1799. Arrowsmith was appointed unofficial cartographer to the Company by 1795, lending him access to charts, maps, surveys, and journals from HBC employees.

Wegg and Arrowsmith were introduced by Arrowsmith's close friend Alexander Dalrymple. Dalrymple had served as the unofficial hydrographer to the East India Company since 1779 and would be named head of the new Hydrography Office of the Royal Navy (HO) in 1795. Dalrymple often passed information and materials to Arrowsmith, including the early reports from the Vancouver expedition mentioned above and a copy of his entire works up to the early 1790s, including over 600 maps and 2000 pages of text. Dalrymple also employed Arrowsmith at the HO for a short time.

Aaron Arrowsmith (b. 1750) used these relationships to build a successful cartographic firm that operated from three successive London locations throughout Aaron's career (1790 to 1823). In 1810 he was named Hydrographer to the Prince of Wales; in 1820, he became Hydrographer to the King. When he died in 1823 his sons, Aaron Jr. and Samuel, took over the business, which continued until Aaron Sr.'s nephew,



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John, died in 1873. The entire stock was sold at auction in 1874.

Detailed Condition:

Dissected and laid on linen, with original slip case.