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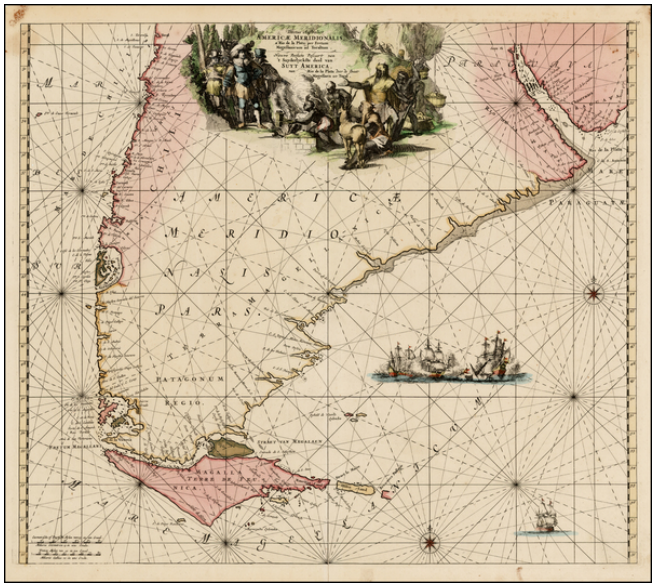
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Tractus Australior Americae Meridionalis a Rio de la Plata per Fretum Magellanicum ad Toraltum

Stock#: 18483
Map Maker: De Wit

Date: 1675
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 22 x 19 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

The Ends of the Earth

Fine example of De Wit's chart of the southern part of South America, from his *Orbis Maritimus ofte Zee Atlas*.

The chart is part of a series of southern South American regional charts by several Dutch makers in the second half of the seventeenth century. The first, with an incomplete coast of Tierra del Fuego, was by Pieter Goos. Doncker's chart followed, with a tentative shoreline in southwest Tierra del Fuego. This more dramatic chart by De Wit was issued a few years later.

The chart is covered in rhumb lines, which allow a navigator to plot their course, as well as the grid of latitude and longitude. Important ports include Port Desire, San Julian, Castro, Osorno, and Valdivia. The island of Juan Fernandez, which was a convenient stopping place for ships passing around the south of South America, is in the northwest.

This chart includes striking decorative details. The large cartouche features an encounter between Indigenous peoples and Europeans. In the South Atlantic is a solitary ship and a deadly battle between two squadrons.

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The chart emphasizes the Dutch voyages to the region around the turn of the seventeenth century. The first of these were part of the attempt to trade with China and the Spice Islands and the creation of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Of the fourteen fleets that set out from Dutch ports for the East Indies between 1598 and 1601, only two did so via the Strait of Magellan.

The first of these was commanded by Jacques Mahu and Simón de Cordes. With five ships and 490 men, Cordes battled the elements to winter at Cordes Bay in the western Straits. He lost 120 men there to privation and encounters with local people. One of the ships were commanded by Sebald de Weert, who turned back. On his way north, he sighted islands that were likely the Falklands, but which appeared on charts for over a century as the Seebald de Weerts (here the *Sybold de Waerds Eylanden*).

The second of the fleets was in the charge of Olivier van Noort. After killing tens of Selk'nam peoples in the Straits, they eventually caught up to parts of Mahu and Cordes' ragged squadron. Van Noort set out west and eventually completed a circumnavigation, the first Dutch venture to do so.

The third significant Dutch voyage had the most impact on the geography shown here. The VOC had declared the Straights of Magellan as their own, disallowing non-VOC ships from entering. In an attempt to circumvent these restrictions, the merchant Isaac LeMaire financed a voyage to find an alternative route in 1615. William Schouten and Isaac's son, Jacob Le Maire, entered the Pacific via a straight that sent their ships around Cape Horn, which they named for their port of departure in the Netherlands. Le Maire's name was chosen for the strait, while the island they passed by received the name of Staten Land. The Schouten and Le Maire expedition also named the Barnevelt Islands after Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, governor of the province of Holland.

The chart is one of the most elegant and detailed charts of South America published in the seventeenth century. The map was likely engraved by Romein de Hooghe and was re-issued by Renard and by Ottens in the early-eighteenth century.

Detailed Condition:
A bit of discoloration in the upper left and right margins, far from the printed image.