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Title in Cyrillic [A General Map representing the convenient ways of increasing Russian trade and navigation in the Pacific and southern Ocean - translation from the Russian]

Stock#: 21267
Map Maker: Shelikov
Date: 1787
Place: St. Petersburg (?)
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 31.5 x 23.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare map of the northern Pacific region by Grigorii Shelikov, showing the Russian discoveries along the Northwest coast of America.

Grigorii Shelikov (also Schelichow or Shelekhov) was an prominent figure in the Russian-American Fur Trade and among the most important explorers of Russian America in the 18th Century. Shelikov financed and led a number of important expeditions between 1775 and 1783. In 1784, he established a factory on Kodiak Island in 1784 at Three Saints Harbor, the first non-Native American settlement in Alaska. he later set up other settlements on Afognak and Atka Islands, and on the Kenai Peninsula. In 1792, the factory on Kodiak was moved north to St. Pauls Harbor after Three Saints Harbor was destroyed by an earthquake. He was also one of the founders of the Russian American Company in 1799.

Shelikov's map shows the very latest Russian intelligence in the region and most notably Shelikov's lengthy personal experiences exploring the region. The map even includes Shelikov's route to Kodiak Island. During the 17th Century, Russia advanced its borders eastward to reach the North Pacific Ocean. This expansion was accelerated during the reign of Peter the Great, who ruled from 1682 to 1725. Shortly before his death, Peter signed the decree authorizing the first expedition of Vitus Bering in Russia's Far East. After Peter the Great's death in 1725, exploration slowed. Following Catherine the Great's ascent to power in 1762, there was renewed activity in strengthening the Russian Navy and its position in the Pacific waters. There followed Lieutenant Ivan Sindt in 1764, Petr Krenitsyn and Mikhail Levashev in the late 1760s. The latter charted much of the Aleutian Islands and the western portion of the Alaskan peninsula. From 1774-79 Potap Zaikov explored the Aleutian Islands further. Following his meeting with Cook in 1778, Gerasim Ismailov explored the region even more in the 1780s, along with Dimitrii Bocharov



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and Shelikov himself.

Shelikov, encouraged by Czarina Catherine the Great, established the first colony in Alaska, in 1784, at Three Saints Bay on Kodiak Island. The settlement was relocated to Kodiak in 1792, after an earthquake and tidal wave of 1792. Shelikov's colonial administrator, Alexandr Baranov, oversaw the colony from 1790 to 1818 and came to be known as "Lord" of Russian America. In 1794, the Czarina established an Russian Orthodox Church mission in Alaska and in 1795, Baranov established the first Russian Orthodox Church in Kodiak. Thereafter, in 1799, Czar Paul I awarded Shelikov's Russian American Company monopolistic control over trade and government, the same year as the establishment by Baranov of a settlement at Sitka.

A superb large scale inset of Kodiak Island at the entrance to Cook Inlet is orientated to the west. This is featured as it was the site of the first permanent Russian settlement in North America. A prominent Lake Athabasca is shown in the north west. The title above is decorated with a very fine cartouche. Kershaw cites only the known example, in the collection of Yale University.

Detailed Condition:

Original outline color. Laid on linen.