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Cette Carte De Californie et Du Nouveau Mexique...1705 [California as an Island]

Stock#: 21313
Map Maker: de Fer
Date: 1705
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 13.5 x 9 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

De Fer's Map of the Southwest Based Upon the Earliest Reports of Father Kino -- One of the Few Regional Maps to Show the Island of California

Second state of the scarce first edition of De Fer's map of California. This is one of a select few regional maps to feature the island and it is also one of the first to show Father Eusebio Kino's highly-detailed findings from his expeditions to what is now the American Southwest and northern Mexico.

The map shows the entire southwest of North America, with the island of California prominently featured. California appears with an indented northern coast and is labeled "*Californias ó Carolinas*."

Taking up most of what is now Texas and the Plains States is a massive list of 314 names, which correspond to places in the New Mexico area. The names include Santa Fe, Taos, Pecos, El Paso, and numerous New Mexican pueblos and haciendas; twenty-three place names on the map are entirely new. These toponyms are the result of Kino's travels and represent the most up-to-date information about the geography and settlements of the area. For example, the *Casa Grande descubierta la 27 Nov. 1694* refers to a site found by Kino that is just south of the location of Phoenix, Arizona.

On the mainland, to the north, is the toponym *Gran Quivira*. This is another great cartographic myth of the early modern period. 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.



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The title, in the lower left, explains that a Spanish gentleman sent a version of the map to the *Academie Royale des Sciences*, from which de Fer made this example. This is believed to refer to a 1696 map by Kino now in the Jesuit Library in Rome, according to Burden. This is the second of two states of this map; their only difference being the date of issue. The first state is from 1700 and the second from 1705, which was when the atlas it was intended for, *L'Atlas Curieux*, was finished. The first state also appeared in de Fer's *Cartes et Descriptions Generales et Particulieres...d'Espagne* (1701).

Kino's explorations in the Southwest

De Fer's map is one of the few regional maps to focus exclusively on California during the period it was mapped as an island, and one of the largest depictions of an insular California. Ironically, the map is primarily a product of the information reported back from California by Father Kino (1645-1711), who had arrived in Mexico as a missionary in the late seventeenth century. In addition to setting up missions and converting indigenous peoples to Catholicism, Kino also wanted to verify if California was really an island, as reported in an earlier Spanish account.

Some of Kino's earliest reports included updated cartographic descriptions of the southern portion of Baja California, as he awaited his chance to proceed north to the source of the Sea of Cortez. This map and Scherer's maps of California and Baja California were heavily influenced by Kino, who would later shatter the island myth. The map was engraved by Inseln, who also engraved Father Kino's seminal 1705 map which re-attached California to the mainland.

California as an Island

From its first portrayal on a printed map by Diego Gutiérrez, in 1562, California was shown as part of North America by mapmakers, including Gerardus Mercator and Ortelius. In the 1620s, however, it began to appear as an island in several sources.

This was most likely the result of a reading of the travel account of Sebastian Vizcaino, who had been sent north up the shore of California in 1602. A Carmelite friar who accompanied him later described the land as an island, a description first published in Juan Torquemada's *Monarquia Indiana* (1613) with the island details curtailed somewhat. The friar, Fray Antonio de la Ascension, also wrote a *Relacion breve* of his geographic ideas around 1620. The ideas spread about New Spain and, eventually, most likely via Dutch mariners and perhaps thanks to stolen charts, to the rest of Europe.

By the 1620s, many mapmakers chose to depict the peninsula as an island. These included Henricus Hondius, who published the first atlas map to focus solely on North America with the island prominently featured in 1636. Hondius borrowed his outline of California from another widely-distributed map, that of



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Henry Briggs printed in Samuel Purchas' *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625).

Other prominent practitioners like John Speed and Nicolas Sanson also adopted the new island and the practice became commonplace. Father Kino initially followed along with this theory, but after extensive travels in what is now California, Arizona, and northern Mexico, he concluded that the island was actually a peninsula. Even after Kino published a map based on his travels refuting the claim (Paris, 1705), California as an island remained a fixture until the mid-eighteenth century.

This is a fascinatingly-detailed map of California as an island, as well as a well-documented and accurate picture of the settlement history of New Mexico and southern Arizona.

Detailed Condition:

Minor toning.