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Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Geographica Ac Hydrographica Tabula Auct. Henr: Hondio. . . . 1663

Stock#: 41764
Map Maker: Hondius

Date: 1663
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 21.5 x 15 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Most Famous and Ornately Detailed World Maps of the Seventeenth Century

Excellent example of the first state of Henricus Hondius' decorative world map, first issued in the 1630 edition of the Mercator-Hondius Atlas. It includes unique geographic features and lush detail throughout.

The cartouche at bottom right includes the date 1663, marking this as the third state of the map. Four states of this map have been noted between 1630 and 1666. As a result of its popularity, the map served as a base for other cartographers. The Hondius examples, however, remain some of the most detailed and decorative.

The embellished cartouches and whimsical illustrations make this map an excellent example of baroque-style Dutch cartography. Bordered by mythical scenes and fantastic beasts, the world map itself includes charming illustrations of sailing vessels and fish, adding further visual interest to an already engaging tableau.

The mapmaker Henricus Hondius was the son of famed cartographer Joducus Hondius, whose portrait appears at bottom left. The map also includes portraits of Gerardus Mercator, Claudius Ptolemy, and Julius Caesar. These portraits are not only eye-catching and historically relevant, but also serve to establish Dutch cartography (exemplified by Hondius and Mercator) alongside the Roman cartographic tradition.

In addition to the numerous beautiful illustrations and map details, several geographic features included on this map are notable, including California as an island, the riverine networks and lakes of North

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America, and the coastline of Australia.

California as an island

California is shown here as an island, reflecting a widespread belief among Europeans from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The inclusion of California as an island here is noteworthy as it breaks from the earlier tradition of Gerardus Mercator and Abraham Ortelius, who correctly depicted Baja California as a peninsula after explorers' accounts in the mid- to late-sixteenth century disproved early-sixteenth century claims of a sea separating California from the rest of the North American continent. Indeed, from its first portrayal on a printed map by Diego Gutiérrez, in 1562, California was shown as part of North America by mapmakers.

The creation of California as an island 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 this map's author, 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 Henry Briggs and printed in Samuel Purchas' *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625). The contemporaneous popularity of British cartographer John Speed's 1626 world map, which included the island of California, may have also influenced Hondius' decision to deviate from Mercator's earlier depictions.

Other prominent practitioners like Nicolas Sanson also adopted the new island and the practice became commonplace. Father Eusebio 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 map is an excellent representation of this history.

The Americas: new portrayals of geographic features

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In North America, the northeast section of Canada has been redrawn significantly from previous maps and now includes Baffin Island, referred to on this map as “Queen Anne’s forland.”

An early conception of the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes are present on the North American continent. Virginia and Florida are prominently named, and to the north, the newly-discovered regions reached by Henry Hudson are identified with his name.

A large western landmass identified as Nova Albion (popularized by Sir Francis Drake’s accounts) is shown, with Cape Mendocino reaching within a few hundred miles of Japan. In the Sea of Cortez, a curious double set of rivers empties out of the Southwest, with an unnamed Rio Grande draining into the Sea of Cortez rather than the Gulf of Mexico.

In South America, the Le Maire Strait now appears east of the Strait of Magellan. The Le Maire Strait had been discovered only fifteen years before the first state of this map was published, when Jacob Le Maire and Willem Schouten led a circumnavigation to undermine the trade monopoly of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Their strait marked a new passage into the Pacific that avoided the Strait of Magellan, which was the exclusive purview of the VOC.

Terra Australis Incognita **and a notable early rendition of Australia’s coast**

Sketched out in fainter lines at the bottom of the map, the mythically massive “Unknown Southern Land” appears, as was popular in maps of this time period. The place name Beach is included at the top of *Terra Australis*, a common misplacement of an area later understood to be in Indo-China or the Malay Peninsula. The toponym originated with the writings of Marco Polo.

Setting this map apart from its contemporaries, it also includes an early appearance of Australia's northern coastline. The industrious colonial trading efforts of the VOC in the East Indies pushed company merchants to continue charting the waters south and east of the VOC trading bases on Java, in search of natural resources. Evidence of Dutch exploration south of New Guinea to Australia is clear with the inclusion of multiple coastal place names, including the name “*Keerweer*,” drawn on this map as part of New Guinea.

Dutch navigator Willem Jansz (Janszoon), aboard his ship the *Duyfken*, became in 1606 the first (documented) European to make contact with Australia. Jansz failed to see the Torres Strait separating New Guinea and Australia, so he mistook the Australian coast as a continuation of New Guinea. Jansz charted part of the western side of what would come to be known as Cape York and the Gulf of Carpentaria, making landfall a few times and skirmishing with the indigenous population. *Keerweer*,

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Dutch for “turn back,” was so named as the site that Willem Jansz decided to turn back to Java with what remained of his crew after a particularly deadly encounter with Aboriginal peoples.

Following Willem Jansz, the first half of the seventeenth century marked a period of continuous Dutch exploration of the Australian coast. This map is based on VOC explorer Jan Carstenz’s 1623 charts and accounts of the Gulf of Carpentaria area. Evidence of the Carstenz expedition is dutifully transcribed on this map, as all the place names included on this map (Valsche Caep, Hooghe land, R. Batavia, etc.) were established by him. Riverine features on the Australian coast were of particular interest to the VOC, as possible inland routes would be important in the search for natural resources, which explains the numerous named rivers included on this map.

The inclusion of the Australian coast on this map traces the beginning of Dutch knowledge of the Australian continent, preserving a moment in time when “The Unknown Southern Land” was quickly becoming known.

Asia: Increasingly Accurate Depictions

The Dutch presence in Southeast Asia at this time was significant, which is easily seen on this map through its superb detail of the area. VOC merchants were tasked with charting what they encountered, collecting spices, minerals, or any other sellable goods, and claiming resource-rich land for the Dutch. The VOC, established in 1602 by the Dutch government as a conglomeration of independent merchants, began its trading missions in India and quickly expanded its empire eastward. While some explorers employed by the VOC were encountering Australia, others were headed north of the company base in Java, encountering the Philippines, Japan, and beyond.

Of note on this map is the excellent early rendition of the Philippines, as well as the identification of Korea as an isthmus, not an island as was earlier believed. The sea referred to as *“Mare Lant Chidol”* is correctly placed below Java, although the inaccurate transcription of the Malay-Javanese term “*Laut Kidul*” (South Sea) would persist in European cartographic tradition for quite some time.

The Mercator-Hondius atlases and states of the map

The Mercator-Hondius atlas was first published by the mapmaker’s father, Joducus Hondius. Joducus Hondius secured Mercator’s map engravings from Mercator’s relatives and republished them, along with his own work. The atlas was incredibly commercially successful, and its world map remained unchanged from Mercator’s depiction until the creation of this map by Henricus Hondius and partner Jan Jansson. This Hondius-Jansson version of the Mercator world map was included in all issues of the Mercator-

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Hondius atlases from 1633 until at least 1658.

This map is known to come in four distinct states, as distinguished by the dates on the map:

State 1: 1630

State 2: 1641 (with *Amstelodami Excudit Ioannes Ianssonius* added at the bottom)

State 3: 1663 (in *Atlas Contractus* of Jan Jansson and in sea atlases of Van Loon)

State 4: 1666 (in *Atlas Major* of Jan Jansson)

Henricus Hondius' world map is as historically important as it is aesthetically pleasing. Full of unique geographic details and whimsical illustrative elements, this map is sure to interest any collector of notable world maps. Those particularly interested in the Dutch cartographic tradition, early depictions of Australia, or maps with California as an island will be delighted by this map.

Detailed Condition: