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Chart of the N.W. Coast of America and the N.E. Coast of Asia Explored in the Years 1778 and 1779. Prepared by Lieut. Heny. Roberts under the immediate Inspection of Capt Cook . . . 1784 (The "Legendary Lost Chart of Captain James Cook")

Stock#: 42600
Map Maker: Faden
Date: 1784
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 27 x 16 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare first edition of the so called "Legendary Lost Chart of Captain James Cook," published in 1784 by William Faden.

Roberts' chart illustrates in great detail the known and unknown regions along the Northern Pacific Coastlines of America and Asia, illustrating Cook's Routes in 1778 and 1779 in Red and Blue. While not specifically noted on this chart, the areas of British, Russian and Spanish Discoveries are also coded in Red (British Discoveries), Blue (Russian Discoveries) and Yellow (Spanish Discoveries). A similar coding is employed (and annotated) on the Faden edition of Henry Roberts' *A General Chart Exhibiting the Discoveries made by Captn. James Cook . . .*, first published in 1784. `{{ inventory_detail_link('30000') }}`

This extraordinary map was prepared by Cook's primary cartographic assistant on his third voyage, Lieutenant Henry Roberts. Roberts served as the Masters Mate on the *HMS Resolution*. The chart was originally prepared by Roberts for the atlas which accompanied the official account of Cook's third voyage (*A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean. . .*, London: 1784), but because of disputes among the editors, it was not included in the final publication of the official account.

It is now known that the plate for the Robert's chart, "a version more elaborate than that in the authorized atlas", was purchased by London map publisher William Faden and published separately. In addition to showing Cook's discoveries, the Faden-Roberts chart is the first published map to show the discoveries of Samuel Hearn in the Canadian Arctic. Hearn's journal and maps were not published until 1795.

Cook's death left the production of the expedition's findings to two camps of editors. Henry Roberts and Captain King, the authors of the charts and journals and participants in the expedition found themselves at



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constant odds with Alexander Dalrymple, Cook's longtime rival, Sir Joseph Banks and Lord Keppel, among others. The production process was highly contentious. As noted by Hellen Wallis:

The maps and engravings were a major source of disagreement between the editors and the committee whose proceedings seem to have become more arbitrary with the succession of Keppel as First Lord. Banks and Webber supervised the engraving of the drawings while Alexander Dalrymple (none other) "at Lord Sandwich's desire," had direction of the charts and coastal views, with the exception of the general chart. Under the sole direction of the Admiralty this was being prepared by Lieutenant Henry Roberts, who had served as master's mate in the Resolution under William Bligh.

In a report by Captain King regarding a meeting he had with Sir Joseph Banks (King letter to Dr. John Douglas on July 25, 1782), King stated:

I was received coldly, perhaps owing to my having desired the engraver of the Genl. map not to proceed with it till further enquiry should be made whether the original plan of it should be altered in the way it was by Mr .Dalrymple . . . Sir Joseph then waited on Lord Keppel . . . the consequence was that his Lordship left the entire direction of the engraving of Mr. Webbers drawings as well as of the maps to him, upon which Sir Jos. summoned Mr. Roberts to lay before him the state of the Genl. map; desired him to give the drawings to him & told him that he had nothing further to do with it; as he should make what alterations in it he pleased, & be responsible for the propriety of those alterations & for its being engraved; Mr . Roberts finds himself very strangely treated by Sir Jos. & refused for the present complying with Sir Jos. request.

Upon finding that it was the declared intention of Sir Jos & Mr. Dalrymple to introduce tracts & alterations in this Genl. map which would rest upon Mr. Dalrymples authority only & that the motives for which, were to contradict some oppinions (sic) given by C. Cook, I begged Lord Duncannon would show Lord Keppel a few lines I wrote of the state of the publication, & that I took it for granted his Lordship would not authorise any alterations in maps without my being consulted. When I sent this to Lord Duncannon I did not know of the power that Lord Keppel had given Sir Jos. The answer I received was, that Lord Keppel could not recede from the promise he had given Sir Jos. When Mr . Roberts found that I was too insignificant to be consulted in these matters, he declared he would have nothing further to do with the map, as long as it was to be altered at the pleasure of those who had used him so ill, & who even told



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him, that it was not to be considered as a map of his drawing.

Dalrymple and Banks won out, and Roberts' chart was replaced with the less-detailed map engraved by T. Harmer. As reported by Captain King in a letter to Douglas on December 13, 1783:

The [Dalrymple] & Sir Jos. are determined to have their Polar map & not mine, & to have none of the Hudson bay Companies discoveries inserted saying that these things are only proper in the General Chart."

As noted by Helen Wallis:

This shows that the "Chart of the NW Coast of America and NE Coast of Asia" was the design of Dalrymple in collaboration with Banks, and explains the omission of any interior details of North America and of the name King George's Sound.

Roberts' "lost chart" contains a number of place names not found on the authorized version. The Roberts chart also includes important information, which had never previously appeared in print, showing the Coppermine River (information probably suppressed for commercial reasons by the Hudson's Bay Company) and the impossibility of a Northwest Passage through Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean.

It was not understood that Roberts' chart and the Faden were the same until 1985, when the British Library acquired a proof state of the map. Roberts had sold his copperplate to Faden, who published the "lost chart" a month after the publication of the official atlas. The Roberts-Faden map contains fourteen Alaskan place names not on the authorized map, including Bald Head, Cape Denbigh and Cape Darby in Norton Sound. It also shows, for the first time on any printed map, the results of Hearn's expedition in the Canadian Arctic.

In describing the Roberts chart, Cohen & Taliaferro (Catalogue 62) note:

This legendary lost chart was drawn by Henry Roberts for the authorized atlas of Cook's third voyage, but because of disputes among the editors, it was never included. It is now known that the plate for Roberts' chart, " version more elaborate than that [included] in the authorized atlas" (Campbell), was purchased by Faden and published separately.

Although a few examples of the chart were known, including one belonging to the great Americana collector, Thomas Streeter, its true importance was not recognized until 1985,



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when a proof copy was acquired by the British Library . . .

The Roberts-Faden chart also contains information on interior geography not included on the [official map]. The source for this information came from Samuel Hearne's c.1772 manuscript map of the Coppermine River, in the possession of the Hudson's Bay Company, and which had never before appeared in print. The Company suppressed Hearne's map to protect its interests in the north. This was important information because Hearne's map showed the impossibility of a Northwest Passage through Hudson's Bay, and it is curious that the Company had not released it to settle arguments over a point that continued to occupy public attention. . .

A revised edition of the "lost chart" would be issued by Faden in 1794. The 1794 edition adds information from 18th Century Russian sources. One interesting feature is the supposed course of the Columbia extending due north into British Columbia. The updated edition includes details of the region explored by Vancouver, details on the NW Passage from Hans Sloan's Japanese map of the world, information on certain arctic coastlines from Russian sources and many other annotations.

In 1794, William Faden commissioned the engraver Louis Stanislas D'Arcy de la Rochette to update Roberts' chart with new data gathered over the last decade. A note on the map states:

The Interesting Discoveries made by the British and American Ships, since the first Publication of this Chart in 1784, Together with the Hydrographical Materials, lately procured from St. Petersburg and other places, have enabled Mr. De la Rochette to lay down the Numerous Improvements which appear in the Present Edition.

An important map in the cartographic history of the Northwest Coast of America and Polar Exploration, made all the more interesting by its unique printing history.

Detailed Condition: