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A Chart of the Gulf of St. Laurence, Composed From A Great Number of Actual Surveys and other Materials, Regulated by Astronomical Observations

Stock#: 42961
Map Maker: Sayer & Bennett
Date: 1775
Place: London
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 22.5 x 19 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine example of Sayer and Bennett's chart of the Gulf of St. Laurence, based on the surveys by James Cook and Michael Lane.

At the conclusion of the French and Indian War, the British needed accurate charts of the territories that had been awarded to them in the Treaty of Paris. The areas that were of particular interest to the Admiralty included Labrador and Newfoundland. "On 19 April 1763 James Cook, Master R.N. was ordered by the Admiralty to proceed to Newfoundland 'in order to your taking a survey of the Parts of the Coasts and Harbours of that Island'" (Tooley & Skelton, in Tooley's *The Mapping of America* p.177). His appointment would have been based, in no small part, on the glowing endorsement of his commanding officer, who had written to the Admiralty in December 1762 "that from my experience of Mr. Cook's genius and capacity, I think him well fitted for the work he has undertaken, and for greater undertakings of the same kind".



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"The charting of Newfoundland and southern Labrador by Cook... and by his successor Michael Lane ... was unequalled, for thoroughness and method, by any previous hydrographic work by Englishmen [and also allowed Cook to master the art of practical surveying and navigation, in a way that brought him to the attention of the Admiralty and Royal Society at a crucial moment. More immediately.] it produced the first charts of this extensive and difficult coastline that could (in the words of a later hydrographer) 'with any degree of safety be trusted by the seaman'" (Tooley & Skelton op. cit.).

Cook started by surveying the northwest stretch of coastline in 1763 and 1764, then in 1765 and 1766 the south coast between Cape Ray and the Burin Peninsula, and in 1767 the west coast. His work was interrupted by what was to prove to be the first of his three great voyages to the Pacific, and the work on Newfoundland and southern Labrador was finished by Michael Lane between 1768 and 1773. Thomas Jefferys used the charts by Cook and others to form the "Collection of Charts of 1769-70, a prototype ... for the celebrated North-American Pilot which was to be published in five English editions from 1775 to 1806" (Tooley & Skelton op. cit.).

Unlike many of the other charts in the North American Pilot which appeared in other forms in earlier publications, the present chart first appeared in the 1775 edition of that great atlas. As the title suggests, Sayer and Bennett drafted this map by compiling information from other sources, with the charting of southern Labrador and the western and southern coasts of Newfoundland entirely based on the surveys by Cook and Lane. The map would be republished in successive issues of the North American Pilot (with changes to the imprint) as well as copies of The American Atlas (with "Pl. No." added to the upper right corner in advance of "XI").

Detailed Condition: