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**Carte Reduite Des Parties Connues Du Globe Terrestre Dressee au Depost des Cartes
Plans et Journaux de la Marine . . . MDCCLV**

Stock#: 46871
Map Maker: Bellin
Date: 1755
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 33 x 22 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine Mid-Eighteenth-Century World Map by One of France's Premier Mapmakers

Scarce first edition of Jacques Nicolas Bellin's large-format map of the world on Mercator's projection, depicting recent geographic encounters throughout the world and geographic theories, including the Sea of the West.

The map centers the Atlantic Ocean, and the geographic information nearest to Europe is the most certain and complete. As the viewer's gaze radiates farther afield, however, there are many unfinished coast lines. Most of these are accompanied by an explanatory note, discussing past attempts to elucidate the features of the area. For ease of reading, the map also repeats certain longitudes at both ends of the map, which means that the Solomon Islands appear twice.

In the northeastern Pacific (on both ends of this map), off the coast of the Kamchatka Peninsula is a corner of land that is flanked by dotted lines. A note explains that this feature was seen by "*Tchirikow*" in 1741. This is a reference to Aleksey Ilich Chirikov, one of the officers who served on the Second Kamchatka Expedition (1733-1743), which was led by Vitus Bering. Chirkov also served on the First Kamchatka Expedition (1725-1731), which is mentioned here with Alaskan coasts that were "seen by the Russians in 1728."

On the later expedition, Chirikov, as Bering's second-in-command, took the *St. Paul* east and eventually made landfall in what is today southern Alaska (also noted on this map), sighting many islands along the way. Bering, meanwhile, wrecked in the *St. Peter*, dying on an island now named for him. Near to



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Chirikov's island here is "*Terre vue par Jean de Gama*," *Terre de la Compagnie*, *I. des Etats*, and *Terre d'Yeco*, all persistent Pacific geographic chimeras.

To the south, Australia is outlined with solid lines in the north and west, with dotted lines suggesting a larger continent. The lines connect Australia to New Guinea, but also to *Terre du St. Esprit* in the east, *Terre de Diemen* in the south, and *Terre de Lewin*, *Endract*, and *With* in the west. The last of these and *Terre de Diemen* all trace their names to Dutch encounters with the landmass, popularly known then as New Holland. *Terre de Diemen*, now Tasmania, was named for Anthony van Diemen, Governor General of the Dutch East India Company from 1636 to 1645. Under his urging, Abel Tasman sailed on two voyages in the early 1640s that encountered Tasmania and New Zealand for the first time by a European. The westernmost names all derive from Dutch ships and voyages; for example, Pieter Nuyts (here *Nuits*) commanded the *Gulden Zeepaert* along the southern coast in 1627 and the *Eendracht* (here *Endract*) was blown off course and made landfall in western Australia in 1616.

The other connected land, *Terre du St. Esprit*, stems not from the Dutch, but a Spaniard, Pedro Ferdinand de Quiros, who led an expedition in search of the Southern Continent in the early seventeenth century. The land he found, which he called *Austrialia del Espiritu Santo*, was described as paradisiacal by Quiros when he landed there and tried to begin a colony in 1606. His crew forced him to leave, however, and the island was then shifted on maps by subsequent geographers to serve various cartographic hypotheses. In reality, it was an island in the archipelago of Vanuatu; today it is still called Espiritu Santo.

Another area of interest on this map is the interior and northern reaches of North America. A large note in the Far North explains that it is unknown if this area is made up of land or sea. Below the Arctic Circle are a series of lakes leading suggestively west from Hudson's Bay. A note explains, "The English searched in this area for a passage to the South Seas [the Pacific], but we have reason to believe there is none."

Interestingly, Bellin prefers to leave much of the space in what is today Canada blank, rather than conjecture as to a possible inland waterway. His contemporaries, most prominently Joseph-Nicolas De L'Isle and Philippe Buache, were publishing a series of controversial maps during this same period with several lakes leading across the continent—a Northwest Passage. The only of Buache and De L'Isle's ideas to be seen here is the *Mer de l'Ouest*, which he has left open to the Pacific to the west.

The map's decorative elements are saved for the title cartouche, in the lower left, and the advertisement in the lower right. In the advertisement, Bellin discusses the projection chosen for this map, the Mercator projection, and explains why it is preferable to use and view than other projections.

The present map was made just fifteen years before the voyages of Captain Cook and his contemporaries



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would radically change European understandings of global geography. A later edition, published in 1784, would be updated to include Cook's findings in the Pacific and along the Northwest Coast of America, including a very early appearance of Hawai'i and details of Cook's explorations in New Zealand and along the Alaskan coastline.

Both this and the later state of the map are part of a fascinating sequence of world maps by Bellin; however, the present map is not to be confused with a smaller version which begins with "*Essay d'une Carte Reduite . . .*".

Detailed Condition: