



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Mapa y Tabla Geografica de Leguas comunes, que ai de unos à otros Lugares, y Ciudades principales de la America septentrional . . .

Stock#: 49298ba
Map Maker: Nava
Date: 1755 (1800 ca)
Place: Pueblo de Los Angeles
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 12 x 8 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Nineteenth-Century Reproduction of a Rare Presentation Map Meant to Acquaint New Viceroy to New Spain

This is a modern copy of rare map of Spanish North America, printed in Mexico for presentation to the newly appointed Viceroy of New Spain, Agustin de Ahumada y Villalón, Marqués de las Amarillas.

The map's dedication is written on a scroll and held by a young woman with indigenous headdress. Interestingly, although she was meant to be an indigenous woman, she has been colored here with blond hair and very light skin. She holds a scepter and has her foot on an urn whose contents are spilling out-the riches of New Spain runneth over. Scrolling from her mouth is the Latin phrase, "*Luce tibi exoritur nunc Sol: tunc Gloria nobis*," or "The sun now rises to the light, then we glory." After the title are the initials P.J.E.

Next to the dedication is an inset of North America which shows the area from what is now the US-Canada border to Virginia, down to Florida. It includes Cuba and extends as far south as Panama. To the west is California (as a peninsula, not an island). Cities are marked by red dots and include Santa Fe, Mobile (Mobila), and the major cities of New Spain. The inset suggests Spanish mastery of the North American continent, an idea more aspirational than actual when the map was made.

In the upper right corner is an elaborate vignette. The symbol of New Spain, and later Mexico, an eagle with a serpent in its claws on a cactus, is holding up a coat of arms surrounded by cannons, drums, and battle standards. Behind the eagle is an idealized view of the area between Mexico City, Zaragoza and

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Veracruz. A large Spanish ship is sailing into Veracruz, watched over by the sun. This symbolism supports the triumphant view of New Spain communicated in the dedication and inset.

The rest of the document's space is taken with a table of the principal cities of New Spain, their zodiac signs, the latitude and longitude coordinates, and the distances between the cities. At the right are small descriptions of each. For example, Guanajuato is associated with its silver mines, "Californias" with missions, and Queretaro is a "city of commerce, and passage to interior lands."

All of this information-the map, symbols, and table-were meant to serve as a useful primer to the new Viceroy of New Spain. As noted in the John Carter Brown description of the map:

The main purpose of this piece was to acquaint the new Viceroy with the extent of his empire and its relationship with the rest of North America.

Agustin de Ahumada y Villalón

The maps is dedicated to Agustin de Ahumada y Villalón (1715-60). As a young man, Agustin distinguished himself in military service in wars in Italy, earning the title the first Marqués de las Amarillas. Later he was appointed to the post of governor of Barcelona before being ordered to New Spain as Viceroy.

Ahumada y Villalón arrived in Mexico City on November 10th, 1755, where he remained until his death on February 5th, 1760. He was charged with repairing and maintaining safety on the roads of New Spain, in addition to creating necessary public works in cities and major towns in his district (*Instrucciones y Memorias de los Virreyes Novohispanos. Estudio preliminar, coordinación, bibliografía y notas de Ernesto de la Torre Villar*, n.º 37, p. 886). He also designated the *Virgin de Guadalupe* as the patron saint of New Spain, suppressed corrupt priests in Puebla, and sent aid to the Philippines to combat non-Christians. One of the most interesting moments of his term was to resettle refugees from the eruption of Jorullo, a volcano in Michoacán. Hopefully this document helped him to prepare for these diverse tasks.

The map was engraved by Joseph Nava in the pueblo of Los Angeles in 1755. Nava was an engraver working in New Spain in the mid-eighteenth century. In addition to aiding Viceroys, he also engraved religious images.

Rarity

Maps printed in Mexico in the eighteenth century are extremely rare. The present map's survival is even more exceptional in that it was made for presentation to the Viceroy and was therefore produced in a



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small run and almost certainly was not available for sale or disseminated to the general public. This copy was most likely made in the mid-nineteenth century.

Detailed Condition: