



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[First Map of the Mississippi River] Carte de la decouverte faite l'an dans l'Amerique Septentrionale

Stock#: 50224
Map Maker: Thevenot / Jolliet
Date: 1681
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 15.5 x 6.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The First Map of the Mississippi River, Based Upon The Works of Jolliet and Marquette

Fine example of Melchisedech Thevenot's map of the Mississippi River. The earliest separate map to depict the expedition of Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette down the Mississippi River.

In 1663, the French government began a more systematized effort to search for furs, minerals, and a shorter route to China. The initial objective was locating the Mississippi River, whose existence was known through Indian reports. An expedition was sent out under the command of Louis Jolliet, a fur trader and explorer, and the Jesuit Father Jacques Marquette. Jolliet and Marquette left Green Bay in May 1673, and by following the courses of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, reached the upper Mississippi River. Continuing south, they discovered the mouths of the Missouri, Ohio, and Arkansas rivers, before turning back out of fear of encountering a Spanish force. On the return trip, they found a short cut to Lake Michigan by following the Illinois and Des Plaines rivers to a portage at Chicago.

Several manuscript maps survive based on the discoveries of the Jolliet and Marquette expedition. This map was first adapted for inclusion in Melchisedech Thevenot's *Recueil des Voyages*, Paris, 1681. It shows for the first time on a printed map the Mississippi and its tributaries north of the Arkansas based upon first-hand observation. The depiction of the river between the Arkansas and the gulf is based on speculation. It is also the first map to include the place name Michigan ("Mitchigami").

A second edition of the map (with a different title) appeared in the rare 1689 German book which included an edition of Hennepin's *Description de la Louisiane*, to which Thevenot's account of Jolliet and Marquette's expedition was appended. Both editions of the map are rare. The cartography in the second edition is identical to the first, but in the second state the title and one or two legends have been



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

**[First Map of the Mississippi River] Carte de la decouverte faite l'an dans l'Amerique
Septentrionale**

translated from French into Latin.

Rarity

The Jolliet map is very rare on the market. While the book appears occasionally, this is only the second example of the map we have seen on the market in the past 15 years.

Detailed Condition:

Trimmed a little close at the bottom edge, with latitude numbers just touching the edge of the paper in a few places.