



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

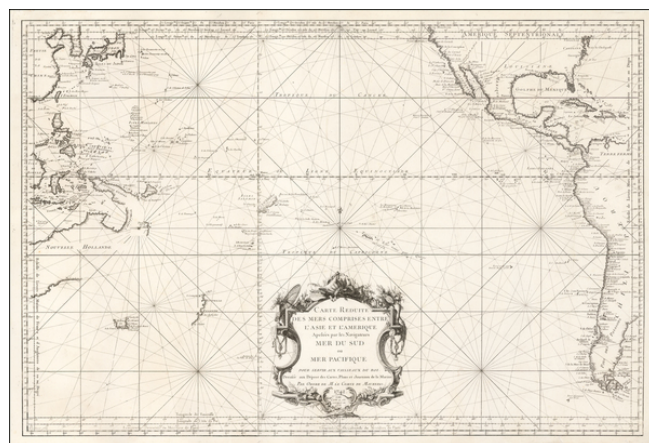
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## Carte Reduite Des Mers Comprises Entre L'Asie et L'Amerique Apelees par les Navigateurs Mer Du Sud ou Pacifique . . . 1742 Cette Carte a ete Corrigee en 1756.

**Stock#:** 50363  
**Map Maker:** Depot de la Marine  
**Date:** 1756  
**Place:** Paris  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 33.5 x 22.5 inches  
**Price:** \$1,700.00



### Description:

#### *French Chart of the Pacific Ocean on the Eve of the Great Voyages of Discoveries*

Fascinating sea chart, depicting the Pacific Ocean immediately before the wave of exploration that occurred from the 1760s to the 1790s. This fine chart, issued by the French Depôt de la Marine, depicts the Pacific world as it was known by Europeans in the 1750s, a time of their renewed interest in the world's largest ocean.

The chart depicts the entire west coast of the Americas up to roughly 40 degrees north latitude. California is correctly shown to be a peninsula, but Japan retains its horizontal depiction, a representation typical of mid-eighteenth-century maps. The Korean Peninsula takes on an exaggerated size, and the area where Japan's Hokkaido should be located is left blank; the area not been extensively explored and was subject to diverse cartographic interpretations.

In line with changing cartographic standards that preferred fewer decorative additions, especially for working charts, this chart has few embellishments. The exception is the ornate title cartouche situated in the center of the South Pacific. A large frame surrounds the title. It is topped with various items which Europeans associated with the Pacific, including a parasol, a conical hat, a feathered headdress, and a parrot.

The coasts of South America are quite well-defined, having been corrected by Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa in the 1740s. The men, both Spanish naval officers, were attached to a French expedition sent to the Andes to measure a degree of latitude as part of a larger effort to determine the shape of the earth. When Commodore George Anson's squadron rounded Cape Horn and began to menace Spanish settlements



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along the west coast of South America in the early 1740s, Juan and Ulloa came to the coast to help strengthen defenses. They later published a book about their adventures in 1748.

#### **European exploration of Australia and New Zealand**

The depiction of Australasia is reflective of the European interest in and ignorance of the area. The north coast of Australia up the western shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria reveals the discoveries of various Dutch explorers, particularly Willem Janszoon's voyage of 1605-6 in what is today Queensland. Janszoon was in command of the *Duyfken*, a Dutch East India Company (VOC) ship, and explored the eastern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria, just below the Cape York Peninsula. This venture was famously the first recorded European contact with Australia.

Another VOC expedition is also recorded on the chart, as it had one of the largest influences on Pacific cartography of any voyage before Cook. Abel Tasman was charged by the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, Antonie Van Diemen, to seek out the possible southern continent. He set out in 1642 and was the first known European to chart Tasmania, initially named for Van Diemen, and to visit New Zealand. Both coasts are included on this chart, along with Tasman's place names like Murderer's Bay in New Zealand, where Tasman lost several men in an altercation with Maori.

On his second voyage, Tasman coasted part of the New Guinea coast and the Gulf of Carpentaria, as well as the entirety of the north of Australia. Although Tasman was responsible for entirely new additions to European maps, his superiors, including Van Diemen, considered his voyages a failure and did not send further expeditions to search for the southern continent. Here, New Guinea's coasts are partially based on Tasman, Janszoon, and Luís Vaz de Torres. Torres sailed through the strait now named for him in 1606, but that knowledge was suppressed by the Spanish government and not made public until after this chart was published.

The cartographers at the Dépôt have added a dotted line between Van Diemen's Land and the southern coast of Australia, as well as between Van Diemen's Land and the east coast of Carpentaria and New Guinea. Van Diemen's Land would not be proven to be an island until the very end of the century in which this chart was made. Interestingly, the west coast of Carpentaria is not attached to New Guinea, a nod to the need for more information about the area.

#### **The island geography of the Pacific**

Various islands dot the mid-Pacific. Those north and west of the equator were mostly discovered by Spanish vessels as part of the treasure galleon route between Acapulco and Manila. South of the equator,

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the various Dutch place names stem from several Dutch voyages, but especially that of le Maire and Schouten in 1615 to 1617. Jacob Le Maire, along with Willem Schouten, circumnavigated via Cape Horn, the first ship to sail round South America instead of through the Straits of Magellan.

Some of the islands here were only hypotheses or fantasies. For example, a small unfinished coastline off the coast of Atacama, in Chile, marks land seen by *David Ang* in 1686. This refers to an island purportedly sighted by the English buccaneer Edward Davis in that year and reported by the pirate-authors Lionel Wafer and William Dampier around the turn of the eighteenth century. Whereas the island became a fixture on maps, it was later proven to be a mis-identification of islands further east, due most likely to an editing error which placed the island 500 leagues, rather than 500 miles, from the Chilean coast.

The aforementioned Torres had been part of a mission commanded by Pedro Ferdinand de Quiros, whose adventures also shaped the geography shown here. Quiros, in turn, got his start in the Pacific under the command of Alvaro de Mendaña. Mendaña led a Spanish expedition to the Solomon Islands in 1567-9, but his crew forced his return to Peru. Another attempt was made from 1595-6 to return to the Solomons, but they had not been charted accurately. Mendaña died on Santa Cruz, leaving his wife in charge of the settlement they had started. She decided to return to Spanish dominions and they arrived in the Philippines in early 1596.

Pedro Fernandez de Quiros accompanied Mendaña on his second voyage and was a skilled pilot. After returning to Spain, he convinced authorities that he could find *Terra Australis*, the southern continent, if they gave him ships and supplies. He set out in 1605 and eventually landed on what is today Vanuatu. He mistook one of the islands for the fabled continent and called it *Australia de Espiritu Santo*. Quiros intended to set up a colony, but his crew forced him to leave. Quiros returned to Mexico, but his second-in-command, Torres, sailed west, through the strait now bearing his name.

On this chart, Mendaña's Solomon Islands are clearly marked, including *I. Isabella*, named for his wife. Quiros is mentioned as sighting a string of island near the Tropic of Capricorn. His *Terre du S. Esprit* is positioned here as an eastern coastline, possibly attached to Australia.

#### **The place of the Pacific in 1750s Europe**

The chart therefore depicts the Pacific just before the explorers John Byron, Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, Samuel Wallis, Philip Carteret, and James Cook began to answer many of the geographic questions raised in this chart. What was the relationship of Van Diemen's Land to the mainland? Were New Guinea and Australia connected? Where was Quiros' *Terre du S. Esprit* and how did it relate to other nearby islands?



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Many of these questions were raised in France just as this chart was being revised in the famous publication of Charles de Brosses. In 1756, de Brosses released *Histoire des Navigations aux Terres Australes*, the first voyage collection to concentrate specifically on the South Seas. De Brosses refocused the debate on South Seas space and called for further expeditions to answer lingering doubts about geographic features. He did so amidst a larger European conversation about how the Pacific fit into wider geography that revived in the 1750s. However, many of the overseas empires were embroiled in the Seven Years' War. As soon as the war ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1763, British and French voyages set out to answer de Brosses' call, the first of many.

Within a generation of this map being made, the east coast of Australia and all of New Zealand would be mapped, while a plethora of mid-Pacific islands would be discovered, most notably Tahiti and the Hawaiian Islands. This chart is thus a fascinating overview of the Pacific taken right before a transformative turning point in history.

**Detailed Condition:**