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Amerique Septentrionale

Stock#: 51852
Map Maker: Walch
Date: 1790 circa
Place: Augsburg
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 23 x 17.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

This unusual map of north America is a historical gem, reflecting the continent's story in the throes of transformation and discovery. Drawn in the wake of American Independence and of Captain James Cook's final voyages and preceding George Vancouver's journey and the wider dissemination of Spanish information regarding its missions in Upper California, it maps a terrain rich in indigenous culture, colonial influences, and the rise of a fledgling nation.

In the eastern expanse, the recently formed United States is designated as "Republique Des XIII," pointing to the original thirteen colonies that broke away from British control. This representation predates the inclusion of Vermont, Maine, Kentucky, and Tennessee into the union, marking an embryonic phase in American history.

To the west of the Mississippi River, a vast territory christened "Louisiane" reflects French dominance, its reach extending north nearly to the Lac de Bois, or Lake of the Woods. Within its boundaries, New Orleans emerges as a key city, a cultural and economic hub born of diverse influences. Near New Orleans, the "Presidio de los Adaes" (Los Adaes) is prominently marked. Los Adaes is the site of a presidio and mission the Spanish built in 1721 to protect their landholdings from potential French encroachment on the northeastern frontier of New Spain. The Spanish named the presidio - *Nuestra Senora del Pilar de los Adaes*, and the mission - *San Miguel de Cuellar de los Adaes*, after the Adaes Tribe, a group of Caddo American Indians who inhabited the area at the time of its construction. The settlement quickly became the administrative capital of the Spanish province of Texas (Tejas) in 1729 and served as the first capital of Texas until 1770.



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Further west lies the mysterious expanse titled "Nouvelle Mexique." Its northern reaches were largely unexplored in this era. The map makes mention of the "Teguaio Grande ou Teguas," possibly referring to the Tewa Pueblo Indians, a nation known for their agrarian culture and complex social organization.

To the south, the land of the Apaches can be discerned along the upper parts of the Colorado and Rio Grande rivers. Spanish settlements including Taos and Santa Fe dot the Rio Grande, reflecting the Spanish frontier's shifting boundaries.

Further west still, we encounter the realms of "Nouvelle Albion" and "California." Nouvelle Albion was an archaic name used by the English to signify their claims to the west coast, dating back to the explorations of Sir Francis Drake. The missions established by Spanish missionaries and the discovery of San Francisco Bay are still unknown.

In the territory that would come to be known as Texas, the "Presidio del Norte" is denoted. This fort, established in the mid-18th century, was a strategic Spanish outpost guarding the crossing point on the Rio Grande.

Traveling north and west of Hudson Bay, we find the domain of fur trappers and traders of the Hudson Bay Company. These areas were charted by explorers like Alexander MacKenzie, bringing European awareness to the region's wealth in furs.

Finally, the extreme northwestern reaches, modern Alaska—designated as "Alaschka"—and the Pacific Northwest show limited coastal detail due to minimal exploration. The features noted, such as "Deux Volcans," likely refer to the volcanic peaks sighted by early explorers. It also mentions "Cook's River" and "Bristol River," tributes to the famed Captain Cook. The Aleutian Islands contain a reference to a Russian Establishment, a nod to Russia's presence and influence in this remote territory.

This 1790 map offers us a portal into a critical juncture in North American history, a time when the continent's vast and varied landscapes were being slowly unveiled to European knowledge and ambition. The contours, lines, and labels on the parchment represent much more than geographic information; they reflect a narrative of exploration, discovery, and the shifting territories of power.

Detailed Condition: