



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## Carte Generale De L'Amerique Septentrionale et principalement des Colonies Francoises qui s'y trouvent avec les Armes de la Compagnie Francoise des Indes Orientales et Occidentales (with Portrait of John Law)

**Stock#:** 54353  
**Map Maker:** Bodenehr / Kilian  
**Date:** 1717 circa  
**Place:** Augsburg  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 7.5 x 10 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### **Rare First State with John Law Portrait**

Rare map of North America, which includes a portrait of John Law of Mississippi Bubble Fame, published in Augsburg by Gabriele Bodenehr.

The map includes a fine portrait of John Law, who is identified as "Comte de Tancerville Conseiller du Roy dans tous ses Conseils, et Contrôleur general des Finances du Royaume de France."

The map shows California as an island and a fine depiction of the Mississippi River Valley, following the cartographic influences of Guillaume De L'Isle in his map of North America, first published in 1700, but does not adapt the more modern depiction of the Mississippi River put forth by De L'Isle in his map the Course of the Mississippi River, first published in June 1718, which radically altered the mapping of the region. The map is reminiscent of the maps used to illustrate Hennepin's *Nouvelle Decouverte d'un Tres Grand Pays*.

John Law, a Scottish financier, established the Banque Generale (central bank) in France. He was then granted control of Louisiana and founded the Compagnie de la Louisiane d'Occident, in 1717. Law developed an elaborate scheme to exploit the fabulous resources of the region, which quickly gained popularity and people rushed to invest, not just in France, but throughout Europe. This resulted in the development of several other overseas companies, such as the English South Sea Company and a number of smaller companies in the Dutch Republic. The share prices rose dramatically in a frenzy of speculation.



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In 1720 the bubble burst the subsequent run on the stock nearly bankrupted France.

McLaughlin (almost certainly incorrectly so) dates the map as 1757 and notes 3 states of the map, as follows:

- State 1: French title at top (Carte Generale De L'Amerique Septentrionale et principalement des Colonies Francoises qui s'y trouvent avec les Armes de la Compagnie Francoise des Indes Orientales et Occidentales). Engraver listed as Georg Christoph Kilian
- State 2: Title in German: *General Charte von dem Mitternächt AMERICA und sonderlich denen darin befindliche Französ Colonien mit dem Wappen und Zeichen der Orientalischen u. Occidentalischen Französische Handels Compagnie* at top left, with the engraver still listed as Kilian .
- State 3: Identical with State 2, except with different engraver's name: Gabriel Bodenehr sculps. et excudit Aug. Vind.

To this we add a fourth state (which we believe to be the real State 1) and suggest that McLaughlin's state 1 may not exist (see below).

- State 4: French title at top (Carte Generale De L'Amerique Septentrionale et principalement des Colonies Francoises qui s'y trouvent avec les Armes de la Compagnie Francoise des Indes Orientales et Occidentales). Engraver listed as Gabriel Bodenehr.

It would seem unlikely that McLaughlin's order of states is correct. Georg Christoph Kilian (1709-1781) was much younger than Gabriel Bodenehr and active much later, and it would have been very unlikely that he would have published an edition of the map prior to Gabriel Bodenehr (1673-1765). The example illustrated by McLaughlin on line in the Stanford collection has the name of the maker cut off and the title in French. We note that in the Library of Congress, in a work entitled *Curioses Staats und Kriegs Theatrum . . .*, Philips (#2814) dates this state of the map as being from 1717, and we note that the vast majority of Bodenehr's maps were published between 1704 and circa 1715.

As such, we propose that the following:

- State 1: French title at top (Carte Generale De L'Amerique Septentrionale et principalement des Colonies Francoises qui s'y trouvent avec les Armes de la Compagnie Francoise des Indes Orientales et Occidentales). Engraver listed as Gabriel Bodenehr.
  - State 2: Title in German: *General Charte von dem Mitternächt AMERICA und sonderlich denen darin befindliche Französ Colonien mit dem Wappen und Zeichen der Orientalischen u. Occidentalischen*
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*Französische Handels Compagnie* at to left, with the engraver still listed as Bodenehr.

- *State 3*: Identical with *State 2*, except with different engraver's name: Georg Christoph Kilian
- *State 4*: McLaughlin's state 1 -- possibly apochryphal (McLaughlin having erroneously assumed that his example was engraved by Kilian, as map was trimmed below the neatline). We note that the example at the University of Michigan is also cut below the neatline, but the Bodenehr's name can be detected.

**Rarity**

All states are exceedingly rare on the market.

**Detailed Condition:**