



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Antartide continente del giorno

Stock#: 66696
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1930 circa
Place: Italy
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 15.5 x 19.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Race for The South Pole

Fine large, early twentieth-century Italian image illustrating the race for the South Pole and a map of Antarctica.

The map depicts the race for the South Pole, where explorers from various nations sought to be the first to trek to the South Pole. In the upper left corner is the victorious party led by the Norwegian Roald Amundsen. In the lower left is the unfortunate British expedition led by Robert Falcon Scott. Penguins waddle in the lower right.

The majority of the image is taken up by a map of the continent of Antarctica. Covered in snow and ice, the Ross and Weddell Seas are marked. The Magnetic South Pole is also indicated, as is the settlement of Little America, which is located in a section controlled by New Zealand. This station was first established by the American explorer Robert Byrd on his first Antarctic expedition on 1928-1930. Byrd led the first successful flight over the South Pole on November 29, 1929.



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At this time, the continent was segmented into claims by Norway, Britain, the United States, New Zealand, Australia (two sections), and France. Today, the continent is partitioned further, with claims by Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom. Additionally, some of these claims overlap and states such as the United States and Russia have research stations on the continent without claims.

Amundsen and Scott and early-twentieth century Antarctic exploration

By the early twentieth-century, the cultural trope of the valiant explorer was at a high point. However, actual geographic regions which Europeans and Americans could claim to “discover” were waning. In the early nineteenth century, the focus was on the Arctic and the Northwest Passage. A century later, all eyes were on the Antarctic and the South Pole.

No explorers were more primed to reach the South Pole than Robert Falcon Scott and Roald Amundsen. Amundsen was part of the crew of the first ship to winter in the ice of the Antarctic, the Belgian ship *Belgica*, in 1899. Scott, a Royal Navy officer, led his first expedition to the Antarctic from 1901 to 1904 in the purpose-built ship *Discovery*. Scott, Ernest Shackleton, and EA Wilson journeyed overland to within 410 miles of the South Pole before having to turn back. Shackleton returned on another attempt on the Pole from 1907-1909. This time he and his men reached within 97 miles of the Pole, but they nearly died on the return trip to their ship, *Nimrod*.

In 1910, the race was on. Robert Falcon Scott left from Cardiff on the *Terra Nova* on June 15, while Amundsen left from Kristiansand on the *Fram* on August 9. Interestingly, Amundsen had been intended for the North Pole. However, he heard that two separate American explorers claimed to have reached it, so he instead sailed south, to the surprise of this crew.

Amundsen landed in Antarctica and prepared his sleds and dog teams to travel overland to the South Pole. He left on October 15, 1911 with four sleds and 52 dogs. Scott left two weeks later from his own base camp; he set out on November 1. Amundsen and his party arrived at the South Pole, the first humans to do so, on December 15 at 3PM. They left equipment and notes for Scott and turned back, arriving at their base camp on January 26. Only 12 dogs made it back with them, but no human life was lost.

Scott and his four men reached the South Pole five weeks later, on January 18, 1912. They found Amundsen's tent and knew they had been beaten. They left the following day for their base camp. On February 17, the first man, Petty Officer Edgar Evans, died in his tent. On March 16-17 Captain Lawrence Oates succumbed; he walked out into the cold with the words, “I am just going outside and may be some time.” The three remaining men, Scott, Lieutenant Bowers, and Dr Wilson, died just 11 miles from their final supply depot. Their bodies were discovered seven months later.



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Despite the tragedy, the world was fascinated by both Amundsen and Scott, not to mention Shackleton, who would lead another two Antarctic expeditions. This poster is a testament to the popularity of Antarctic exploration in particular, and exploration in general, in the 1930s. Indeed, the title calls Antarctica, "the continent of the day."

Rarity

The map is apparently unrecorded. This is the first example of the map we have ever seen.

Detailed Condition: