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[Blaeu Atlas of America] *America, Quae Est Geographiae Blavianae Pars Quinta Liber Unus Volumen Undecimum*

Stock#: 66852

Map Maker: Blaeu

Date: 1662

Place: Amsterdam

Color: Hand Colored

Condition: VG+

Size:

Price: \$49,500.00



Description:

A Beautiful, Clean Example in the Publisher's Gilt-Vellum Binding.

Johannes Blaeu's atlas of the Americas is an attractive and important atlas that deftly blended contemporary geographical knowledge with rich decorative imagery. Blaeu's maps set the standard for the quality of the engraving, paper, and color, as well as a fine depiction of contemporary geographical knowledge. While other atlases covered the Americas in comparable detail, none of them held the same august position achieved by Johannes Blaeu's great work.

The atlas was originally published as volume eleven of Blaeu's famous *Atlas maior*, perhaps the greatest printed atlas ever made.

The Atlas Arms Race of the 17th Century

No discussion of the *Atlas maior* or its constituent books would be complete without an appraisal of the rivalry between the firms Jansson and Blaeu.

For decades in the middle of the 17th century, the firms Jansson and Blaeu were engaged in ongoing one-upmanship in the atlas market. If Blaeu published a two-volume atlas with 210 maps, Jansson would closely follow with a three-volume 300-map atlas. This process continued on and on.

After the death of Willem Jansz. Blaeu in 1638, the competition picked up still more; both firms issued a



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new multi-volume atlas: the *Atlas novus*. At that point, they did not hesitate to issue more and more volumes and to copy one another's maps. By the end of 1658, Blaeu had published an *Atlas novus* with six volumes and 400 maps, while Jansson had published a six-volume *Atlas novus* with 450 maps.

A new weapon was needed in the atlas wars, and so Jansson issued his 10 to 11 volume German-language *Novus Atlas absolutissimus*. The set had a huge complement of maps, between 500 and 550, and when combined with Cellarius's celestial atlas, and Jansson's eight-volume town book, his firm was the first to realize a complete description of the countries, towns, oceans, and heavens, following the 16th century Mercator concept.

Johannes Blaeu was not to be outdone, however. In 1662, Blaeu issued his *Atlas maior* (Major Atlas) in eleven volumes, with approximately 600 maps. He would follow it with French and Dutch editions and attempt to complete a Spanish edition. The Americas volume was the last volume included in the *Atlas maior*. The set was the largest, most impressive, and most expensive publication of the 17th century, and it stands as the pinnacle of printed atlases.

In 1672, a fire broke out in the Blaeu firm workshop, decimating the stock and the business, and bringing an end to the in-progress publication of the Spanish language edition of the Atlas Maior at 10 volumes -- it was originally supposed to run to 12. Johannes Blaeu died the following year, and the family business declined thereafter.

Collation

Complete. 23 hand-colored, double-page engraved maps. [2], 19, [2], 20-248, 251-254, 253-287, [2] pages of Latin text. This is apparently an early text setting with the mistaken numbering in around 250.

Maps

1. Americae Nova Tabula
2. Extrema Americae Versus Boream, ubi Terra Nova Nova Francia, Adjacentiaque
3. Nova Belgica et Anglia Nova
4. Nova Virginiae Tabula
5. Virginiae Partis Australis, Et Floridae Partis Orientalis
6. Nova Hispania et Nova Galicia
7. Yucatan Conventus Iuridici Hispaniae Novae Pars Occidentalis, et Guatimala
8. Insulae Americae In Ocenao Septentrionali cum Terris adjacentibus
9. Canibales Insulae



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10. Mappa Aestivarum Insularum alias Barmudas dictarum . . .
11. Terra Firma et Novum Regnum Granatense et Popayan
12. Peru
13. Chile
14. Tabula Magellanica qua Tierrae del fuego, cum celeberrimis fretis a F. Magellano et I. Le Maire detectis novissima et accuratissima descriptio exhibetur
15. Paraquaria vulgo Paraguay cum adjacentibus
16. Brasilia . . .
17. Sinus Omnium Sanctoru
18. Praefectura de Cirili vel Seregippe delrey cum Itapuama
19. Praefecturae Paranambucae Pars Borealis, una cum Praefectura de Itamaraca
20. Praefecturae Paranambucae Pars Meridionalis
21. Praefecturae de Paraiba, et Rio Grande
22. Guiana sive Amazonum Regio
23. Venezuela cum parte Australis Novae Andalusiae

Detailed Condition:

Folio. Publisher's gilt-vellum with characteristic large arabesque tool at the center of the covers and in the corners of the interior gilt frames. Almost imperceptible marginal dampstaining at top corners at the beginning of the book.