



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
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**[With extensive manuscript text on verso] Le Canada ou Nouvelle France &c. Ce qui set  
les plus advance vers le Septentrion est tier de dives Relations des Anglois, Danois &c. . .  
. 1656**

**Stock#:** 69092  
**Map Maker:** Sanson  
**Date:** 1656  
**Place:** Paris  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 22 x 16 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



## Description:

***A Landmark Map for the Cartography of the Great Lakes and Canada - The First Map to Name Lake Erie - With Manuscript Additions!***

Fine example of Sanson's formative map of Canada and the Great Lakes, one of the most important maps of North America from the period of French exploration in the Americas.

Sanson's map integrally shaped the cartography of the region for the next century. It was the first to label Lake Erie by that name.

**The present example includes a two-page hand-written text on the verso, covering topics including the Iroquois and Huron nations, Montreal, Quebec, Newfoundland, Trois-Rivières, and New France. Much of the text is copied from Pierre Boucher's *Histoire veritable et naturelle des moeurs & productions du pays de la Nouvelle France, vulgairement dite le Canada* (Paris, Chez Florentin Lambert, 1664). Boucher was an influential settler of New France and his published report brought much needed resources and attention to the colony.**

The map depicts Labrador and the territories of New France, including Canada and the Great Lakes, in addition to the colonies of Virginia and Florida. It shows a detailed depiction of the entire drainage basin of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.



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Sanson created this map as an improvement upon a previous map of North America from 1650, titled "*Amerique Septentrionale*." While Sanson made few changes to his depiction of the northern waters, he employed greater detail in his depiction of Hudson Bay. Additionally, Sanson improved his delineation of the eastern coast in the new map. He introduced Long Island and corrected his depictions of New Amsterdam and the Delaware River. "Mont Real," or Montreal, and Quebec are also clearly identified.

Sanson's map was the first to use the name Lake Erie for that particular Great Lake. While Europeans began mapping the Great Lakes region in the sixteenth century, early maps were largely based upon the accounts of Native Americans and used a variety of toponyms. Working on behalf of the French crown, Samuel de Champlain participated in the first great mapping effort of the Great Lakes in the early seventeenth century, gathering local accounts and drafting maps.

By 1643, Jean Boisseau, a contemporary of Sanson as well as an engraver and cartographer, denoted one of the Great Lakes as *Derie*. Here, Sanson identifies it as *L.Erie, ou du Cha*. The latter part of the toponym refers to what Sanson supposedly thought of as the "panther-like qualities" of the local Native American population (Burden). Sanson's map remained predominant for the century after its publication, although his delineation of Lake Erie was superseded in 1703 with the publication of Guillaume de L'Isle's *Carte du Canada*.

The map is significant as well because of its reflection of the contemporary French perception of territorial boundaries. New Netherlands is divided between *Nouveau Pays Bas* and *N.Hollande* and extends to Cape Cod in the east. While the map outlines the borders of Virginia, it does not include a depiction of Virginia's settlements. This omission could reflect French colonial competition with Britain in North America. The French still claimed the territory south of Virginia, despite the lack of French presence in the area for the past century. Indeed, although the English possessed less land in North America than the French, the English boasted a much larger population. French colonists numbered only about 3,000 people, while English colonists numbered nearly 50,000 people.

#### **French colonial expansion in the New World**

New France refers to the territories of North America that France colonized between 1534 and 1763. After Jacques Cartier made France's first land claim in North America in 1534, the company of New France was created in 1627, nearly three decades before the creation of Sanson's map. French presence in North America continued until the mid-eighteenth century when, after the French and Indian War (Seven Years' War), France ceded Canada and the territory east of the Mississippi River to England. The



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territory west of the Mississippi went to Spain according to the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

Early explorers such as Champlain, La Salle and Louis Jolliet expanded French territory beyond the lower St. Lawrence River to include the Great Lakes and the Mississippi Valley. Champlain was also an integral figure in the founding of the headquarters for French Canada, which is now Quebec City. While early explorers such as Champlain often created maps of the territories that they had seen first-hand, Sanson functioned as a compiler who relied upon the sketches made by explorers of newly discovered territories as he created or edited his maps.

#### **Samuel de Champlain**

The maps produced by Samuel de Champlain (c. 1567-1635) provided the foundation for Sanson's 1656 map. Champlain's cartography marked the first accurate, detailed mappings of the Atlantic coast north of Cape Cod and the St. Lawrence River Valley. Champlain also provided a cursory mapping of the eastern Great Lakes, and he was the first to create maps that combined the results of English Arctic exploration with French explorations to the south. Champlain's most significant work was *Les Voyages du sieur de Champlain*, published in 1613, which contained sixteen large-scale maps of the places he had visited. Additionally, Champlain continually revised his map of the St. Lawrence River Valley, originally published in 1612, until 1632.

Champlain's cartographic activity resulted from demands by Henri IV in the late sixteenth century that the *coureurs de bois* operating in New France create a new settlement. Previous settlement in the region had been stifled by the extreme cold weather, fear of attack by Native Americans, and the belief that the area could not efficiently generate revenue. Thus, throughout his time in New France, Champlain acted not primarily as a cartographer but rather as an explorer in charge of resource evaluation and an administrator responsible for overseeing the fur trade and governance in New France.

#### **Jesuit exploration of New France and the Great Lakes**

After Champlain's death, Jesuits conducted the most significant exploration in New France. Their activity had been encouraged by Champlain, who was a strong Catholic and sanctioned missionary activity in Native American communities. As they moved westward, Jesuits published their findings in annual accounts between 1632 and 1680 upon which Sanson heavily relied as he created his own maps. In fact, Sanson's earlier map from 1650, in addition to this map first published in 1656, were the first printed maps based upon the Jesuit exploration of the Great Lakes.



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The outbreak of the Beaver Wars with the Iroquois Confederacy in 1648 temporarily hindered the activities of the Jesuits. During the war, the Iroquois moved through Huron territory, destroying villages and killing many Jesuits. After peace was reached in 1653, Jesuits and *coureurs de bois* who were in search of furs continued traveling west, thereby gaining the information upon which Sanson relied. After the 1660s, the mapping of the Great Lakes area accelerated as Jesuits were able to move farther west into the areas around Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. This increased activity was due not only to recent French military victories over local Native Americans but also to new policies promoting exploration by the French crown.

#### **Publication and the continuing influence of Sanson's map**

The map was separately issued from 1656 to 1658 as Sanson completed his atlas, *Cartes générales de toutes les parties du monde*. It was engraved by Jean Somer, one of the main engravers with whom Sanson worked. Then, it became an integral component of the *Cartes générales*, which was published in many editions. However, the map remained unaltered throughout. The final edition of the atlas was published in 1676, although it remained in use even after this date.

As a map whose influence integrally shaped the cartography of Canada and the Great Lakes for over a century, this map would be a fine addition to any collection of maps related to colonial North America or French Canada. Sanson's map remains a testament to the extent of French exploration in North America and the scope of French colonial ambition in the New World.

#### **States of the map**

Whereas the geographic contents of the map stayed the same, the imprint was updated.

- State 1: (1656) Imprint of Chez Pierre Mariette, Rue S. Iaue . . . 1656
- State 2: (1675 ca.) Imprint of Chez l'auteur. . . 1656
- State 3: (1679) Imprint of Chez l'auteur Re. . . 1676

#### **Context and translation of the verso text**

On the verso are several paragraphs copied from contemporary voyage accounts and travel literature. They are written in at least two trained seventeenth-century hands. Much of the text, that pertaining to New France, hails from Pierre Boucher's account of New France, published in 1664. Boucher (1622-1717) emigrated to New France as a young man with his family. He was educated by Jesuit missionaries and



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spent time with the Hurons, where he learned a local dialect. As a young man, he served as a soldier and an interpreter. Boucher impressed his superiors and, by 1644, he was the official interpreter and clerk at the fort at Trois-Rivières. In 1653 he defended Trois-Rivières during an Iroquois siege and was named Commander of the fort and town, a position he had already been filling for some time. A year later he was appointed Governor. Boucher retired in 1657, ostensibly to work his own land grants.

In 1661, he was appointed by the newly arrived Governor of Quebec, Dubois Davaugour, to deliver a report to France of the state of the colony. Once in France he met with King Louis XIV and Colbert, who asked him to prepare a report on the conditions of the settlement across the Atlantic. Excerpts from the published version of his report is what is written on the verso of this map.

Boucher's trip to France and his report were successes; they marked renewed interest by France in its North American holdings. Boucher later founded Boucherville and he is considered one of the most important of the settlers of the seventeenth century. He died in 1717 at the age of 95.

The text starts, in bold, as follows:

*Newfoundland is in general mountainous and swampy; the peoples are wild, rude, and without civility, without any religion, nor knowledge of God. On the banks of this island, we fish quantities of cod.*

The text continues by describing a number of areas, including Iceland, the Iroquois country, and Canada. The Jesuit College in Quebec is referenced. Excerpts are as follows:

*Montreal is situated on a beautiful large island named the Island of Montreal. The land is very good, everything is perfectly good, fishing and hunting is very good, all the country around is very beautiful and flat, and there is a forest with very big and extraordinarily tall trees.*

*The Iroquois country is on the border of the St. Lawrence River, which passes across a large lake, it's a nice and agreeable country, the soil is perfectly fine, and the forests are only chestnuts and oaks. Hunting is exceptional. The quantity of prairies is admirable, fishing is abundant with salmon, sturgeons, brill, eels, among which there are prodigious quantities.*

*The country of the Hurons is very beautiful and well situated on the sides of a great lake 300 leagues in circumference, which is filled with an infinite number of islands of all sorts, beautiful trees, good land, abundant hunting and fishing.*



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**Detailed Condition:**

Extensive manuscript on verso. Original outline hand-color. Minor marginal toning.