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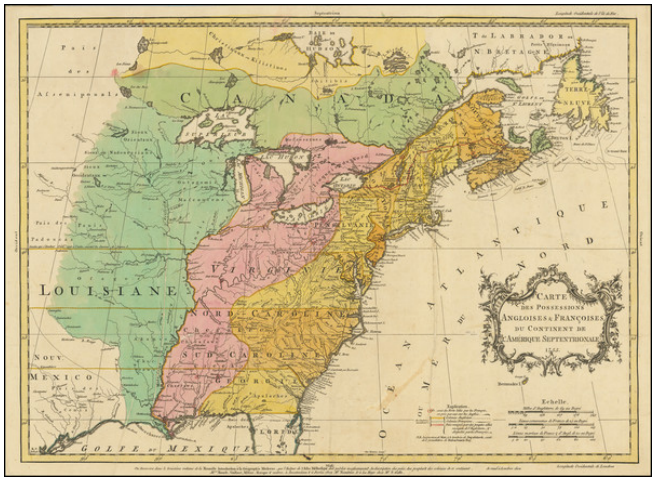
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(The Duke of York's Copy) Carte Des Possessions Angloises & Francoises Du Continent De L'Amerique Septentrionale 1755. [Rare 2nd State]

Stock#: 72634
Map Maker: Palairet

Date: 1755
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 22.5 x 16.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Striking, Rare Map of European Colonies in North America at the beginning of the Seven Years' War. From the Duke of York's Collection.

Fine example of Jean Palairet's scarce, early map of the British and French Colonies in North America, meant to accompany his pamphlet, *A CONCISE DESCRIPTION OF THE ENGLISH and FRENCH POSSESSIONS IN North-America, For the better explaining of the MAP published with that Title. BY J. PALAIRET, Agent of their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Provinces, &c.*

The map was first published in London in 1755. There are five known states of the map, all of which are seldom seen on the market. This is a second state.

The map depicts the eastern portion of North America, including Labrador and the southern portion of Hudson Bay. To the south, it includes a sliver of Florida and the Gulf of Mexico. The map extends southwest to what is here called New Mexico, part of the Spanish empire. Running along the western border is a tantalizing note labeling those lands as "*grand pais inconnus*", or a great unknown country.

While primarily a political map meant to depict boundaries and divisions, there are also many topographical details on the map. Palairet's map is one of the earliest folio sized maps of the colonies to incorporate the information from John Mitchell's seminal eight-sheet map.

Dotted lines show the extent of colonies, often with a note explaining the date and name of the treaty which created it. In addition to French, Spanish, and British claims, the names of indigenous groups are

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also included, marking their important presence on and claim to the land.

In under 70 pages in the accompanying pamphlet, Palairet explains the main areas under dispute between France and England. These were also illustrated in the map, which includes an *Explication* in the lower right corner explaining the color-coded possession of colonies in North America. In the preface of his pamphlet, Palairet notes:

> *The method in which I have coloured it, will easily discover the English and French Possessions, as well the countries that are now the subject of contest between those two nations, as the forts which the French have built, or taken in the midst of the English Colonies, and in the countries claimed by the English*.

The map depicts the English Colonies in yellow, the French Colonies in green, and the disputed territories in pink. Also marked are a series of forts built by the French or taken from the English, which are described in the n.b. annotation, below the *Explication*.

Palairet's accompanying pamphlet was published simultaneously in English and French, while the map, especially in later states, has English and French explanations. Both were intended for a broad audience; they provide a fascinating picture of the North American colonies on the eve of the Seven Years' War.

The Seven Years' War in North America

Contemporary readers would be eager to pore over this map, as it visually explains the state of affairs as two global powers embarked on what is considered by many historians as the first world war. Although the European theater of conflict centered on the possession of Silesia, which Prussia had seized from the Austrian Hapsburgs in the War of Austrian Succession (1740-48), the more famous settings of the war were in India and North America.

These were both regions where France and Britain wished to expand their global empires, and where they ran up against each other in their bids for land and trading access. Thus, although commonly called the Seven Years' War, or in North America the French & Indian War, the struggle lasted at least nine years, from 1754 to 1763.

In North America, the site of primary contention was the Ohio River Valley, but the entire swath between the British to the east and the French to the west was a point of contention, as this map shows. British colonists wished to expand west, while the French wanted to maintain their control over the Ohio River, a corridor of access between New France and Louisiana, and protect their preferred trading status with

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local indigenous groups. In 1753, the French began to construct a series of forts in the area, many of which are marked here.

Twenty-one-year-old George Washington, then a Lieutenant Colonel in the Virginia militia, was dispatched to deliver a letter to the French at Fort Le Boeuf, which is included on this map (without its full name, one of two forts near the shores of Lake Erie in the Pennsylvania colony). Washington reported to his superiors that the French were not willing to leave the Ohio Country, and he was then ordered to raise a militia regiment where the Ohio River joins the Allegheny and the Monongahela Rivers, the site of present-day Pittsburgh. While he was en route to the site, a smaller unit of colonists already there were attacked by the French, who took over their nascent fortification and renamed it Fort Duquesne (which is on this map).

Washington met Captain Trent, the leader of the defeated force, while traveling toward the frontier zone. Together with his Indian ally, Tanacharison, Washington attacked a French encampment, killing several, including their commander, Jumonville. Washington then went on the defensive, consolidating his men at the quickly-assembled Fort Necessity. Outnumbered, Washington was unable to fend off the French attack on July 3, 1754; he surrendered, the only time he did so in his career as a soldier.

These skirmishes began the war in North America. The following year, the British sent a large expedition of soldiers to dislodge the French from the Ohio Country. After years of fighting on land and at sea in North America, Europe, the Caribbean, Africa, and India, the Treaty of Paris ended the violence in 1763. Over one million people had been killed worldwide. France was forced to fall back globally, leaving Canada to the British, Louisiana to the Spanish, as well as losing territory in India, Africa, and the Mediterranean. This map shows the beginning of this important conflict, as the powers were consolidating their manpower and knowledge for the war ahead.

States of the map

Henry Stevens records three states of the Palairet map. However, recent research by Ashley Baynton-Williams concludes that there are five states.

> **State 1**: 1755. The Explication is in French only. The southern border of “VIRGINIE” which forms the northern border of “NORD CAROLINE” extends to the left-hand border of the map.
>
> **State 2**: 1755 [ca. 1755]. Date and imprint are unchanged from State 1. Note about Maine and Sagadahook Bay has been added to the key. The note, “Limites qui s'étendent d'une mer à l'autre, suivant les Chartres de Jaques I”,' has been added to the westernmost extent of the line of “40.o” Latitude. A southern boundary for “SUD-CAROLINA” / northern boundary for “GEORGIE” has been

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inserted extending from “Savannah” to the left-hand border. The boundary between the English colonies and the area occupied by allies of England but claimed by France is now engraved on the map, extending from “Pensacola B.”, on the Gulf Coast, to “Niagara F.t” on Lake Ontario. The boundary between South Carolina and Georgia is now engraved, extending from Savannah to Augusta and then in a horizontal line to the western border of the map.

State 3: 1755 [ca. 1756]. Sayer’s and Covens & Mortier’s names have been inserted into the imprint, which has been re-engraved. The English key has been added to the French key, and the note about Maine has been erased. The existing boundary note against the northern limit of Virginia has been erased and replaced by “Borne septentrionale de la Virginie suivant la Chartre du 23 du May 1609, & méridionale de la Nouvelle Angleterre | suivant la Charte du 3 Novembre 1620, d'une mer à l'autre”; the existing boundary between North Carolina and Virginia is now labelled “Borne entre la Virginie & la Caroline”; a new boundary note, “Limites suivant la Chartre,” has been engraved against the border running across the Florida peninsula; in the northwest, two boundaries are marked; the untitled boundary from the Mississippi through “LAKE MICHIGAN”, “LAC HURON” to the “R. Outaouias” and “MONTREAL” is now labelled, “Borne des pais qur les 6 nations Iroquois ont vendus au Roi d'Angleterre en 1701, & dont le contract a eté renouvellé en 1726 & en 1744”. Finally, the label for “LOUSIANE” has been re-engraved as “LOUI-| SIA | NE”.

State 4: 1756. Title has been re-engraved with Palairet’s name included. The date has been changed to 1756. Thomas Kitchin Sr.’s name has been added to the list of mapsellers, while “M.rs” has been changed to “Mess.rs”. The boundary note engraved against the border running across the Florida peninsula now reads “Limites suivant la Chartre du Roi Charles II”.

State 5: 1759. Date changed to 1759. Title above the map in English, with Rocque’s imprint as the only imprint.

There are several extant examples with the year 1763 written in, but all of these changes are in manuscript.

The pamphlet which explains the map was published in English in 1755, with a second edition in 1755 and 1763. It is likely there was also a 1759 printing but no examples survive. In French, the pamphlet was printed in 1755, and a third edition is known to exist dated 1756.

This is a scarce and informative map that details the beginning of a consequential moment in American, and world, history.

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Detailed Condition:
Original wash hand-color. Printer's crease or misfold running through the Atlantic with a matching crease west of the Mississippi, as illustrated. Minor stain in the Atlantic.