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Universale Descrittione Del Mondo

Stock#: 73593
Map Maker: Arnoldi
Date: 1601
Place: Siena
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 31.5 x 20 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare Two-Sheet Lafreri School World Map

Striking original-color example of the first state of Arnold di Arnoldi's two-sheet world map, published in Siena in 1601.

Arnoldi's map is the earliest obtainable multi-sheet map based upon Petrus Plancius's highly influential 18 sheet wall map of 1592, which survives today in a single example in Spain.

Arnoldi's world map includes a stout South America and an extensive North America. Eurasia is well delineated, although Japan is peculiarly curled. Asia and the Americas are separated by a narrow Strait of Anian, an important feature in the history of cartography.

There are many notes augmenting the named mountain ranges, lakes, rivers, cities, and polities. In South America, the reader is warned of Patagonian giants. Another note explains that the continent was named for Amerigo Vespucci and that it is filled with proud people who were converted to Christianity by the Spanish.

North America includes several geographic points of interest. One of these is *Quiuera reg.*, or Quivira Regio. This toponym refers to the Seven Cities of Gold sought by the Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado in 1541. In 1539, Coronado wandered over what today is Arizona and New Mexico, eventually heading to what is now Kansas to find the supposedly rich city of Quivira. Although he never found the cities or the gold, the name stuck on maps of southwest North America, wandering from midwest to southwest to northwest. Lake Conibas is shown, often considered a foreshadowing of the Great Lakes, above which is a remarkable depiction of the Northwest Passage.



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The North Pole is split into four islands, per Mercator's conception. Mercator's interpretation, explained in one of his letters to cartographer John Dee, is based in part on a report by the traveler Jacobus Cnoyen van Herzogenbusch describing a lost fourteenth-century work, *Inventio Fortunata*. The *Fortuna* tells the story of an English friar who traveled to the northern regions. Although many believed a rock placed at the North Pole to be magnetic, Mercator and Arnoldi preferred to place a magnetic rock near the Strait of Anian (*Polo della Calamita*), possibly in an attempt to explain magnetic variation. This was a good early explanation for the location of the North Magnetic Pole.

The most arresting feature on the map is the massive southern continent that stretches across the bottom of the world. *Terre Australe Incognita* is connected to Tierra del Fuego. As with Plancius' 1592 map, upon which this map is based, in the east New Guinea is seemingly attached to the continent. In the west, New Guinea is shown as an island. A single beach is marked on this continent south of Java.

Just east of the insular New Guinea are the Solomon Islands. Alvaro de Mendaña was sent to the western Pacific in search of the so-called "Isles of Fortune" rumored to have been visited by the Inca hero Tupac Yupanqui. Mendaña left Callao, Peru in 1567 and landed on the Solomons and islands farther east (*Ysabella*). However, the crew encountered cannibals and they returned to Peru. At the end of the seventeenth century, Mendaña returned to the Pacific to search for the Solomons but contacted the Marquesas instead. The Solomons, whose longitude was not correctly recorded, would wander the Pacific on maps until the late eighteenth century.

South of the East Indies is an extension of the landmass with three cities: *Beach*, *Lucach reg.*, and *Maletur*. These names would be familiar to anyone who has read Marco Polo's *Travels*, as the nearby note attests. These three places were regions in Java. As can be seen, a *Giava minore*, or Java Minor, is near to Maletur. This conflation of Java with the southern continent stemmed from an error. Initially, Polo used Arabic usage of Java Major for Java and Java Minor for Sumatra. After a printing mistake made Java Minor seem the largest island in the world in the 1532 edition of Polo's *Travels* (Paris and Basel), mapmakers started to tailor a southern landmass to accommodate Java Minor, Beach, Lucach, and Maletur.

The Atlantic is dotted with islands. Some are real, like Bermuda, and others, like the famed Frisland (shown here as nearly the size of Iceland), are less fixed. In the middle of the Atlantic is *Sept Cite*, the Island of the Seven Cities. Sometimes known as Antillia, the island was supposedly the refuge of seven bishops who fled from the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century.

In the north Atlantic is *S. Brandam*. St. Brendan, hearing of a promised land from St. Barrind, decided to take a group of monks to find paradise in the sixth century. After 43 days the monks landed on a deserted island. This is only the first of a series of islands that they encounter, before facing a frozen sea. They have more adventures and eventually return home. The island itself initially appeared near the Canary Islands,



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but by 1570 Abraham Ortelius placed it near Newfoundland, where it stayed until slowly disappearing from maps in the seventeenth century.

The stippled seas include many sea monsters, as well as intrepid sailing vessels. An ornate title cartouche in the lower left carries the dedication to the young Federico Borromeo. Filling the corners of the oval projection are delicate scrollwork designs. Running along the bottom of the map is a description of the world in Italian.

Sources for and production of the map

Arnoldi's map is based on the extremely rare eighteen-sheet cylindrical map of the world (1592) by Petrus Plancius, which survives in a single example at the Colegio del Corpus Cristi in Valencia, Spain. Cartographically, the map combines the work of Gerard Mercator's 1569 wall map of the world with the Portuguese manuscript map of Pedro de Lemos. Plancius' map was the first large wall map of the world published in the Netherlands and it ushered in an era of dominance for the Dutch map trade. The map was regularly copied by other mapmakers, who periodically added additional expeditions to the map.

In 1600, Arnoldi made a 10-sheet world map, which was then the second known large-scale map to copy the 1592 Plancius. He was preceded only by Hendrik van Langren's map of 1599, for which the only known surviving example was destroyed in 1945.

The present 2-sheet map is reduced from Arnoldi's ten-sheet map of the world which stretches to over six feet wide. Arnoldi was a Belgian artist who began engraving work with Giovanni Antonio Magini. In 1600, Matteo Florimi used a larger salary to lure Arnoldi away from the Magini workshop in Bologna to Siena. The dedication of the ten-sheet map describes how it was started in the former city and finished in the latter. Here, Arnoldi has also changed the projection, using an oval projection rather than a planisphere.

The Lafreri School

The Lafreri School is a commonly-used name for a group of mapmakers, engravers, and publishers who worked in Rome and Venice from ca. 1544 to 1585, with some later examples. The makers, who were loosely connected via business partnerships and collaborations, created maps that were then bound into composite atlases; the maps would be chosen based on the buyer or compiler's interests. As the maps were initially published as separate sheets, the style and size of maps included under the umbrella of the "School" differed widely. These differences can also be seen in the surviving Lafreri atlases, which have maps bound in with varying formats including as folded maps, maps with wide, trimmed, or added margins, smaller maps, etc.



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The most famous mapmakers of the school included Giacomo Gastaldi and Paolo Forlani, among others. The School's namesake, Antonio Lafreri, was a map and printseller. His 1572 catalog of his stock, entitled *Indice Delle Tavole Moderne Di Geografia Della Maggior Parte Del Mondo*, has a similar title to many of the composite atlases and thus his name became associated with the entire output of the larger group.

States of the map

The present example is the first known state of the map and was published in 1601, with a dedication to Christoforo Chigi. It is possible that an earlier example of the map existed, as the area around date in the cartouche shows evidence of plate reworking.

The second state is dated 1634 and was published by Giovanni Florimi in Siena. It includes a new dedication to the seventeen-year-old Federico Borromeo the Younger (1617 - 1673), who was then studying in Siena and would go on to become a cardinal.

Shirley reports that the map was reissued by Pietro Petrucci in 1640 and 1669. We suspect that the Petrucci maps are in fact later states of the ten-sheet map and not the two-sheet map.

Rarity

Shirley reports three known examples of state 1 (British Library, NMC Ottawa, and Newberry Library); Bifulco and Ronca add the example at John Carter Brown Library, and the present example.

RBH lists one example of state 1 at auction in the past forty years (Sotheby's 1985).

Detailed Condition:

Old folds. Some small losses at folds replaced in facsimile (e.g., in South America, north of "Nuova Fran.", in central Africa, along the fold in Siberia and India). Manuscript annotation between "Descritio" and "Universalle".