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The World on Mercators Projection showing the Latest Explorations throughout the Globe

Stock#: 76625
Map Maker: Melish / Sherman & Smith
Date: 1846
Place: New York
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: Good
Size: 49 x 36 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare Late State of John Melish's Rare World Map

Good example of this rare late state of John Melish's rare map of the World on Mercator's Projection, first published in Philadelphia.

Melish's map of the World is one of the earliest wall maps of the world printed in America. The present example is significantly updated and improved. The title has been moved to the right, in order to accommodate a depiction of the newly discovered lands in Antarctica. The map tracks the discoveries of Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen (1819-1820), James Weddel (1819-24) John Biscoe (1830-1833), James Clark Ross (1839-1843) and Charles Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition (1840) through the Antarctic Region, establishing some of the earliest discoveries in the south polar regions.

The map also reflects the significant advances known in the Arctic regions between 1819 and the 1840s, although final confirmation of the Northwest Passage was still a decade away.

A massive pre-statehood Texas is shown, with Upper California shaded as part of the US, although the Mexican War had just begun.

Melish's World Map

John Melish, who is best known for his hugely important map of the United States, was also responsible for a large world map published in 1817. See the [Library of Congress copy of the Melish world map](#).



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We have been unable to identify any recorded editions of the Melish world map between its publication between about 1817 and 1820 by Melish, and this edition of the map. It seems likely that the plates passed to Finlayson in 1823, and then possible R. L. Wilson by the 1830s. Later, the plates would again be utilized by Lucious Stebbins in an addition dated 1859.

While there have been quite a few changes to the copper plate, it is clear that both maps were printed from the same matrix; the latitude and longitude markers are largely unchanged, the cartouche, with its Putti, has been modified to remove the title, but it is largely unchanged. Northeast of "Hudson's Bay" there has been an imperfect erasure of "North Sleepers" and most of the word "North" can still be seen.

Rarity

The map is extremely rare. We note a single example of the 1845 edition at the Boston Public Library. This 1846 edition is apparently unrecorded.

Detailed Condition:

Toned from an early varnishing. Silked edges. A few areas where cracks have formed, almost all, if not all, archivally stabilized. Original linen backing.