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Hunting of the Grizzly Bear.

Stock#: 77690
Map Maker: Bodmer

Date: 1842 [but printed later]
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 17.5 x 14.5 inches (including text)

Price: SOLD



Description:

Hunting Grizzly Bears by Karl Bodmer

A beautiful hand-colored engraving of a frontier scene on the Missouri River, after Karl Bodmer, and originally issued as Tab 36. in the atlas to Prince Maximilian of Wied's famous travel account of the Western Plains, *Travels in the Interior of North America* (1839-43).

Prince Maximilian and his party left Fort Union on July 6, 1833 aboard the 60-foot keelboat *Flora*, arriving at Fort McKenzie on August 9, 1833. This image shows the events of July 18, 1833. Prince Maximilian describes in his journal a ravenous bear devouring a buffalo, half-buried in the sand on the riverbank, with the bear's mate moving away from the scene, as a member of the party (Deschamp) 'a bold and experienced hunter', stalked the bear along the shore of the river, pursued by a small rowboat containing Bodmer, Dreidoppel and David Mitchell (the company manager for Fort McKenzie). Ultimately, Mitchell fired 'the first mortal shot', the others also fired on the bear. This image shows an early moment in the hunt.

This print has the three captions, in German, French, and English; a reference to Bodmer can be seen in the inscription in the lower left "Ch. Bodmer pinx. ad nat."; the print is dated: "1th [sic] December 1842," which conforms to the second state of this print (per Rudd).

Maximilian's monumental account first appeared in German (1839-41), followed by a French translation in 1840-43 and an English edition in 1843. The Paris-issued pictorial atlas contained eighty-one aquatint plates (48 "imperial" folios and 33 smaller "vignette" plates often called quarto in size),



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engraved and etched on metal sheets, after paintings by Karl Bodmer, and which accompanied all three editions. The plates are outstanding authentic depictions of the western plains and Native Americans by a highly skilled European artist. Bodmer avoided romanticizing his subjects, and attempted to record the people and places he encountered as true to life as possible.

The atlas was reprinted in 1844 by the London engraver Edward Lumley. There was also a later 1922 Leipzig edition with the plates restruck on thicker sheets.

The present print appears to be one of the reissues.

Detailed Condition:

Engraved hand-colored print. Some age-toning to sheet.