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North America Drawn from the best authorities . . .

Stock#: 78134
Map Maker: Kitchin

Date: 1780 circa
Place: London
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 9 x 7.5 inches

Price: SOLD

Description:

Political Map of North America From the Time of the American Revolution

Fine map showing the entirety of North America, with the British Colonies, showing political boundaries after the Seven Years' War. The map was originally engraved by Thomas Kitchin in 1779 for *A New Geographical, Historical, and Commercial Grammar*, and here reissued in an undated later state (most likely from the early 1780s) in which the cartouche has been re-engraved.

The present map shows the whole of the North American continent, with British territories separated from Spanish and unknown lands by dotted lines. Most of the geography is similar to Kitchin's *North America Drawn from the latest & best authorities*, which had been published prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution, and thus the map displays an interim post-French and Indian War geography. In particular, Britain's American Colonies have been extended west from the Appalachian Mountains to the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers as a result of French territorial cessions at the conclusion of the Seven Years War in the Treaty of Paris (1763), as well as subsequent treaties with Indian tribes.

The Treaty of Paris also compelled France to cede all territory west of the Mississippi to Spain, which is depicted in the present map. Spain ceded Spanish Florida to Great Britain in this same treaty, and East Florida and West Florida can be seen in the present map as British possessions. Only the southeastern part of Canada is outlined here, although the Treaty of Paris gave all of French Canada to Great Britain. However, they exercised little control over much of that territory.

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The northwestern part of Canada is left un-delineated, with a note stating, “Parts unknown.” Part of Greenland can be seen in the northeastern corner of the map.

Beyond the large Louisiana territory, the present-day American West is dominated by a massive New Mexico, with New Albion situated in present-day Northern California. Sir Francis Drake’s landing is noted near present-day San Francisco. In New Mexico, a number of settlements are shown on the Rio Grande, including a note regarding the Apaches of Seven Rivers. Many Indian names are present throughout the interior, including the Osages, Black Padoucas, and Kansez in Louisiana; the Choctaw in Georgia; the Chickasaw and Creek in South Carolina; the Cherokee in North Carolina; and the Outagamis and Mascouten in present-day Wisconsin and Illinois.

As mentioned above, this map depicts North America’s political boundaries after the 1763 Treaty of Paris as a result of the French and Indian War. However, by the time this map was published in c. 1780, the aftermath of the war had created escalating tensions between Great Britain and the American colonists and the American colonists had broken free from British rule. While the treaty had given Great Britain and the colonists a significant amount of new territory, the war had been very expensive, and colonists resisted Britain’s attempts to impose taxes and tariffs to cover expenses. This, combined with colonists’ resentment of British attempts to enforce frontier policies limiting westward expansion, created increasing tension that would eventually lead to the American Revolution. Thus, the geography shown on the present map captures a precise and volatile moment in history in the lead-up to revolution.

Teguayo and Quivira

The present map contains several conjectural or mythical elements. To the east of New Albion is Teguayo and Quivira, roughly in the area of present-day Utah. Starting in the sixteenth century, the legendary Seven Cities were believed to be located in as yet unexplored areas of New Spain—the seven cities of Cíbola and Gran Quívira.

In 1540, this belief, likely combined with various Indian legends, led Francisco Vázquez de Coronado to embark on an (unsuccessful) expedition to find these mythical cities. Coronado gave the name Quívira to parts of Kansas, Nebraska, and Utah. The mythical kingdom of Teguayo, first mentioned in the mid-sixteenth century, seems to have emerged out of the legend of Cíbola. The location of these mythical kingdoms full of gold and silver continued to shift as more territory was explored.

Western Sea and River of the West

The present map also depicts the conjectural Western Sea and River of the West. The Western Sea appears to the north of New Albion, south of the unknown lands of northwestern Canada. It is depicted

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opposite the Strait of Juan de Fuca, although without a coastline in the north and east.

South of the Western Sea is the River of the West. Early explorers of North America theorized that a channel ran through the entire continent from east to west. The entrance to such a channel is named here for Juan de Fuca, the Castilianized name of Greek navigator Ioánnis Fokás (Phokás). Little archival evidence survives of Fuca's career, but a chance meeting with an English financier, Michael Lok, in Venice in 1596 gave birth to rumors of Fuca's voyages in the Pacific. Fuca reported that he had been sent north from New Spain twice in 1592 in search of the Strait of Anian. The Spanish Crown failed to reward Fuca's discovery of an opening in the coast at roughly 47° N latitude and Fuca left the Spanish service embittered. His story lived on in Lok's letters and eventually was published in Samuel Purchas' travel collection of 1625.

On many eighteenth-century maps, including this one, Fuca's Strait is linked with a River or Sea of the West. The idea of a large sea in the American West was popularized in French maps and spread to those of other European mapmakers. In 1787, the present-day Juan de Fuca Strait was named by the wife of naval explorer Charles William Barkley, making permanent a label that had previously just been conjecture.

The theory of a River of the West comes from several sources. One is a suspect 1703 account of a voyage by Baron Lahontal, who claims to have seen a large *Rivière longue* running from the Rocky Mountain region eastward to the upper Mississippi. Another, is the tale of Martín Aguilar, whose inlet is shown on this map. This navigator was a Spanish captain who sailed with Sebastian Vizcaino on a reconnaissance expedition up the California coast in 1602-3. Aguilar, commanding the *Tres Reyes,* was blown off course, to the north. When the seas calmed, Aguilar reported that he had found the mouth of a large river.

Many eighteenth-century cartographers, including Kitchin, reproduced this sort of dubious, but hopeful, information in maps. Here, Kitchin connects Aguilar's inlet to a large River of the West running to the Mississippi. The Western Sea to the north could point to a Northwest Passage, which was still a topic of immense interest during this time.

Detailed Condition:
Scant original hand-color in outline.