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L'Amerique, Divisee Selon Letendue De Ses Principales Parties, Et Dont Les Points Principaux Sont Placez Sur Les Observations De Mes.rs . . . 1698

Stock#: 82065
Map Maker: de Fer
Date: 1698
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 62 x 44 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine 17th Century Example of the Original Beaver Map -- First French Wall Map of America To Report on Hennepin's Discoveries

Rare example of the "Original Beaver Map," one of the most influential maps of North America published at the end of the 17th Century.

De Fer's wall map of America is one of the most important and well regarded maps of its time, incorporating late 17th Century Jesuit information from the Mississippi River and Great Lakes regions, as well as a massive depiction of California as an Island. The map is surrounded by images of natives and scenes from varying parts of the continents including two industries important to the old world, Beavers, for their pelts and the Newfoundland cod fishery. The two text panels describe the various regions including Louisiana, Florida and the English colonies.

The map is the first French wall map of America to highlight the French fur trading expansion into the regions west of the Great Lakes and the Upper Mississippi region. The depiction of the Illinois River, with its short Portage to the Chicago area and "Lac Illinois" (Lake Michigan) and similar treatment of the Ohio River, with a short portage to connect the river to Lake Erie, sends a clear signal supporting French trading interests in the region, with several French Forts (Fort Miamis, Fort Crevecoeur, Fort Tua, Fort Sauvage and Fort du Prudhomme and an unnamed Fort on Lake Erie), as well as the numerous Jesuit Missions in the region provide additional support for fur trading and other French interests in the region.

The map is the first map to include a vignette of Beavers in Canada, which was later used by Herman Moll for his famous Beaver Map of the British Dominions in North America. According to Dahl, de Fer's map



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was engraved by van Loon, but the decorative vignettes were all designed, etched and engraved by Nicolas Guerard. The beaver scene shows dozens of industrious creatures against a backdrop of Niagara Falls, which Guerard most likely based on Hennepin's first printed view of the falls, published a year earlier in 1697.

The present example is also one of the few states to show the course of the Lower Mississippi River based upon the discoveries of La Salle, with the mouth of the Mississippi mistakenly shown far to the southwest of its true location, prior to the changes made following De L'Isle's maps of 1700 and 1703 significantly revised the geography of the region. After 1705, a large section of the Lower Mississippi River is removed and largely left blank between the Ouabache and the Sableoniere Rivers, with the Ohio trending far south of its true course.

States of the Map and Rarity

Burden has identified at least 7 states of the map, with two states of the 1698 map from, both of which are extremely rare. Dahl calls it almost unknown. Neither Tooley nor McLaughlin cite any edition prior to 1705. We note states dated 1698 (2 states), 1705, 1713, 1716, 1717 and 1739.

The present example is the second state, which adds a decorative vignette surrounding the dedication to the Dauphin above the vignette of the Peruvian inhabitants at the bottom left, but retains the date of 1698 and is otherwise identical to state 1.

This is the first example of state 2 we have seen on the market in the past 30 years.

We note only one example of state 1 in AMPR, offered by Arkway in 2006 at \$145,000, with the same example re-offered in 2010 by Cohen & Taliaferro for \$185,000 (described as a "pristine" example in original outline color).

Detailed Condition:

Minor soiling. Expertly restored. Small areas of facsimile in the letterpress text borders (namely in the upper-right corner). A minute area of expert facsimile restoration in the engraved "Beaver" vignette. A couple of expertly mended tears here and there. Generally an exceptional example.