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Hemisphere Occidental Dresse en 1720 pour l'usage particulier du Roy sur les Observations Astronomiques et Geographiques . . .

Stock#: 85888
Map Maker: De L'Isle
Date: 1724
Place: Paris
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 19.5 x 19.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A Map Fit for A King

Striking example of the first state of Guillaume De L'Isle's map of the Western Hemisphere. De L'Isle prepared the map for the King of France, Louis XV, in 1720 and published it in 1724.

Importantly, the map includes one of the earliest peninsular projections of California after the popularization of the work of Eusebio Kino, a configuration adopted by De L'Isle in his later maps and one that was widely used by other mapmakers.

While California is no longer an island, other quasi-myths remain. For example, Hudson's Bay is open-ended to the west, suggesting a possible Northwest Passage. In the Atlantic, an inscription reads, "*Isle de Bus cidevant Frisland*." This refers to two chimeric islands, Bus and Frisland (see below). To the southeast is the *Roche de Bresil*, another changeable feature (see below). In the North Pacific, a coastline meanders from the western edge of the hemisphere; this is De Gama Land, yet another specious landmass that supposedly stretched to the size of a continent (see below).

Near the Californian coast is Quivira, which 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,



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wandering from east to west.

All of these places that are now understood as mythical were still up for debate in the eighteenth-century. De L'Isle was one of the most discerning geographers of his day, so their inclusion here underlines just how conjectural map compilation was. The map remains an excellent example of cartographic practice from one of the leading practitioners of the period.

The map also offers a good overview of the history of exploration of the hemisphere. It includes the tracks of important voyages, including:

- Ferdinand Magellan commanded what became the first known circumnavigation of the world (1519-1522), although he died in the Philippines.
- Juan Gaetano (here Gaetan) crossed the Pacific from east to west in 1542.
- Alvaro de Mendaña led a Spanish expedition to the Solomon Islands in 1567-9, but his crew forced his return to Peru. Another attempt was made from 1595-6 to return to the Solomons, but they had not been charted accurately. Mendaña died on Santa Cruz, leaving his wife in charge of the settlement they had started. She decided to return to Spanish dominions and they arrived in the Philippines in early 1596.
- Pedro Fernandez de Quiros accompanied Mendaña on his second voyage and was a skilled pilot. After returning to Spain, he convinced authorities that he could find *Terra Australis*, the southern continent, if they gave him ships and supplies. He set out in 1605 and eventually landed on what is today Vanuatu. He mistook one of the islands for the fabled continent and called it *Austrialia de Espiritu Santo*. Quiros intended to set up a colony, but his crew forced him to leave.
- Jacques Le Maire, along with Willem Schouten, circumnavigated via Cape Horn in 1615-1617, the first to sail round South America instead of through the Straits of Magellan.
- Abel Tasman's first expedition (1642-4) is shown here, the first to contact New Zealand.
- Edmond Halley commanded two South Atlantic expeditions in the late-seventeenth century to study magnetic declination. He also famously described icebergs, which are included on this map.
- The *St. Louis*, in 1708, was a French merchant enterprise. It was the first ship to cross from Cape Horn to the Cape of Good Hope.
- The *St. Antoine* was a French merchant vessel, the first non-Spanish voyage across the Pacific from west to east. The ship, commanded by Nicolas de Frondant, traded with Chile and Peru in 1709.

This example is a first state and an excellent example of De L'Isle's detailed mapping work.

Detailed Condition: