



The Fries edition of Wäldseemüller's map of the Americas

WALDSEEMULLER, Martin.
 [Tabula Terrae Novae .]

Vienne: Gaspar Treschel, 1541. Woodcut, printed area 285 x 430mm.

£8,500

A fine example of one of the earliest obtainable maps to show the New World, this example being the fourth and last issue of the Fries reduction of Wäldseemüller's famous map, which is the first printed atlas map devoted to the Americas and said to have been compiled with the assistance of Columbus himself. It shows the eastern coasts of America and the western coast of Europe & Africa 55° North to 35° South, with a rudimentary 'Florida', Cuba, Hispaniola and Jamaica. In his version Fries added a Spanish flag over Cuba and a vignette scene in South America depicting cannibals and an opossum, both reported by Vespucci. It was Wäldseemüller's world map of 1507 that first used the name 'America', placing in southern South America, after Vespucci, who explored that region and proved it was not part of Asia. When the name began to be used for the entire landmass Wäldseemüller used this map to emphasise Columbus's importance: a Latin text above 'Terra Nova' reads 'This land and the adjacent islands were discovered by Christopher Columbus on the mandate of the King of Castile'. This map was originally intended not for an edition of Ptolemy but for a new 'Chronica mundi' being written by Wäldseemüller: his death c.1520 caused the project to be shelved, so the woodcuts were used to publish a smaller sized and so cheaper edition of the 'Geography'. The title, as above, is on the



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reverse. This edition was one of two with a text edited by Michael Servetus, who would later be burned at the stake for heresy, on a pyre of his own books, on the behest of John Calvin.

BURDEN: 4.

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