



A striking 18th century map of the Russian Empire

SEUTTER, Matthäus.

Spatiosissimum Imperium Russiae Magnae..

Augsburg, c.1735. Original colour. 495 x 565mm

£1,000

A map of the Russian Empire with an elaborate title cartouche surmounted by the portraits of the Empress Anna Ivanovna, who reigned from 1730-1740, and Anton Ulrich and his wife, Anna of Brunswick, and flanked with representatives of the subjects of the Empire paying homage and offering gifts. Anna of Brunswick (known as Anna Leopoldovna) has an interesting history, in 1739 she married Anton Ulrich (1714 - 1776), son of Ferdinand Albert, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. On 5 October 1740 the Empress Anna adopted their new-born son Ivan and proclaimed him heir to the Russian throne. A few days after this proclamation the empress died (28 October 1740), leaving directions appointing her favourite Ernest Biren, Duke of Courland, as regent. As Biren was detested by the people, Leopoldovna had little difficulty in overthrowing him (8 November 1740), assuming the Regency and taking the title of Grand-Duchess. On the map are some interesting cartographic anomalies: Novaya Zemlya is wider than it is tall; Kamchatka reaches down to Japan; and large islands feature in the region of the Bering Strait.



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