



18th century illustration of the Sceptrum Imperiale constellation and Milky Way

THOMAS, Corbinianus.
Sceptrum Imperiale. Via Lactea.

Frankfurt, 1730. Original colour. 135 x 130mm.

£300

A chart of the 'Sceptrum et Manus Iustitiae' constellation with the Milky Way, engraved by Johann Christoph Berndt for the celestial atlas 'Mercurii Philosophici Firmamentum Firmianum', named for Thomas's patron, Leopold Anton von Firmian, Archbishop of Salzburg. The constellation was created by Augustin Royer in 1679 to honour king Louis XIV of France. Corbinianus Thomas (1694-1767), a Benedictine monk, was Professor of Mathematics and Theology at the University of Salzburg. His star atlas was first published in 1730 at Frankfurt, with a second edition at Augsburg the following year. He used an odd system for nomenclature: Greek letter for the star, Roman numeral for the magnitude and Arabic numeral for the star catalogue reference.

KANAS: 7.7, 'beautiful illustrations'; WARNER, p.251.

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