



Engraved portrait.

## NICOLAS DE FER

**Nicolas de Fer Geographie de sa Majeste Catholique et de Monseigneur le Dauphin.**

### Author

[ANONYMOUS]

### Publication date

1743].

### Publisher

I.F. Benard,

### Publication place

[Paris,

### Physical description

Engraved portrait.

### Dimensions

252 by 184mm. (10 by 7.25 inches).

### Notes

Portrait of Nicolas de Fer (1646–1720), who was apprenticed to Parisian engraver Louis Spirinx, and made his first map at 23. In 1687, his father's printing firm was passed on to Nicolas, who rapidly expanded the cartographical side of the business. Perhaps de Fer's greatest work, 'L'Atlas curieux' was published from 1700 until 1705, at which point it spanned four volumes and contained 113 maps and views, many of which focused on the regions and monuments of France. The entire work can be

considered a celebration of the French empire under the reign of King Louis XIV, from whom de Fer received a royal privilege in 1703. During de Fer's period as official geographer to the King, de Fer continued to produce a great number of impressive maps which eventually won him the even more prestigious post of official geographer to the Pope, to which he was appointed in 1720.

The portrait served as the frontispiece of 'Les frontieres de France et des Pais Bas', an atlas by de Fer published by I.F. Benard in 1743. It shows de Fer in a high powdered peruke and elaborately flowing robes, holding a pen in his left hand. In the oval frame around him, his name and official roles are identified, while the plinth below reads: "A server le Public j'ay employé mes jours En habile Geographe j'ay parcouru la terre. Et si par mes travaux j'ay pu le satisfaire Qu'il demande pour moy le Celeste sejour". Flanking the plinth are all manner of geographical and astronomical equipment.

## **Bibliography**

## **Provenance**

**Price:** £400

**Inventory reference:** 17785