



18th century illustration of the constellations Serpens, Serpentarius and Scutum

THOMAS, Corbinianus.
 Serpens. Serpentarius. Scutum Sobiesci.

Frankfurt, 1730. Fine original hand colour. 135 x 190mm.

£350

A chart of the constellations of Serpens, Serpentarius and Scutum (formerly Scutum Sobiescianum, named to commemorate the victory of the Christian forces led by Polish King John III Sobieski at the Battle of Vienna in 1683). It was engraved by Johann Christoph Berndt for the celestial atlas 'Mercurii Philosphici Firmamentum Firmianum', named for Thomas's patron, Leopold Anton von Firmian, Archbishop of Salzburg. 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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