



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

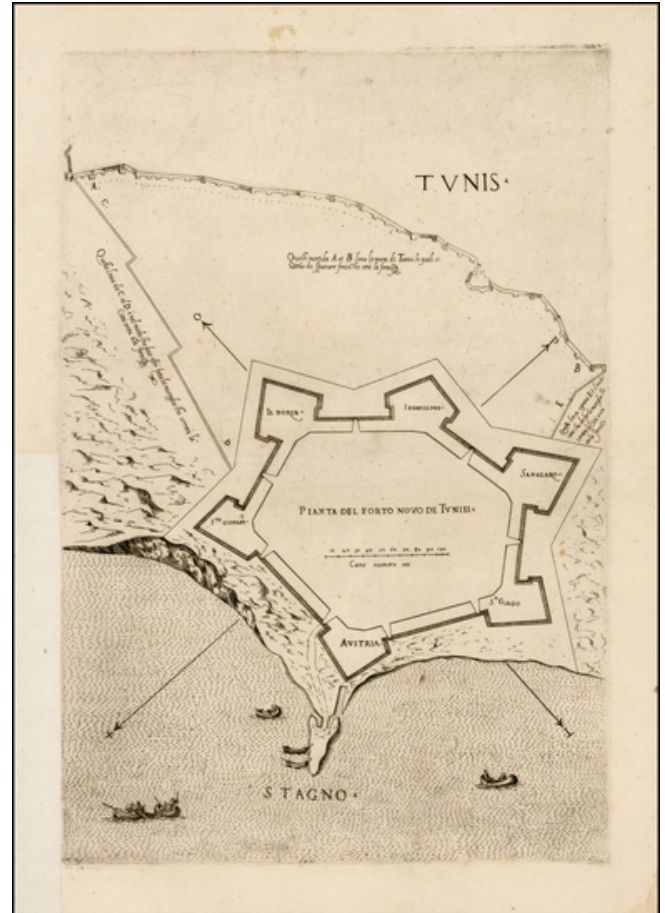
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Tunis

Stock#: 41834sb
Map Maker: Anonymous / Lafreri School
Date: 1574
Place: n.p.
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 18 x 12 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine Large Plan of the New Fort at Tunis, at about the time of the Final Ottoman Siege in 1574.

Finely engraved Lafreri School Plan of the Fortifications at Tunis.

This plan shows the new fort of Tunis, located parallel to the fort of La Goulette across the bay. The main body is hexagonal, built with slanted diagonal walls and a low profile, because of the introduction of gunpowder. Slanted walls give is deflection capabilities against the current solid stone and the possibilities of solid iron cannon balls. Two sides of the fort face inland toward Tunis, two others face the coastal lands and the beach. The last two face North and East directly into the bay and to the other fort across. The interior of the fort was about two hundred meters is diameter. The towers are located fifty meters from each other, the main fort is about 420 meters in circumference.



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The letters on the map (A-E) show the walls on the outside of the main body facing inland. C to D is the wall side that goes along the coast going west connecting the main body to point A of the inland facing wall. The wall A to B is facing southwest inland, it goes east all the way back to the main body where wall E connects the two together.

At the time of the creation of the map, Tunis and North Africa were at the end of a period of religious conquest and many years of warfare. Tunis was first a peaceful little kingdom until the 1500s. In 1534, Hayreddin Barbarossa captured it in the name of the Ottoman Empire. The next year the Spanish conquered Tunis and following this in 1569, Uluj Ali Pasha captured it again for the Ottoman Empire, but then John of Austria managed to take Tunis in October of 1573.

In 1574 Charles IX of France and William of Orange wanted to undermine Spain and open a new front against King Phillip II. The Ottoman Empire was happy to oblige. That same year Selim II sent a force of about 250-300 ships and about 75,000 men, which combined with forces from Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis resulting in a total force of over 100,000 men. The Army attacked Tunis and La Goleta. The fort of La Goleta, defended by 7,000 soldiers, held till August 24, 1574. The new Fort of Tunis held until September 3, 1574 and was the last pocket of Christian resistance in this conquest.

Don Juan of Austria tried to rescue the city, and under his command was a soldier by the name of Miguel de Cervantes. Cervantes says that the Fort of Tunis held against 22 Ottoman assaults, losing 25,000 men in the process. During this battle all but 300 Christians were killed. This battle marks the final and permanent establishment of Ottoman rule in Tunis till the early 18th century, and an end to the Hafsid Dynasty and Spanish presence in Tunis.

Detailed Condition: