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Plan of the City of Washington [Second Printed Plan of Washington]

Stock#: 23342
Map Maker: Hill / Massachusetts Magazine
Date: 1792
Place: Boston
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 10 x 8 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Extremely rare Massachusetts Magazine printing of Ellicott's plan of Washington, the second earliest printed plan of Washington, D.C., pre-dated only by the pirated magazine edition of Thackara & Vallance's edition of Ellicott's plan.

On January 24, 1791, President George Washington announced the permanent location of the national capital, a diamond-shaped ten-mile tract at the confluence of the Potomac and Eastern Branch Rivers. The original survey was performed by Andrew Ellicott and Benjamin Bannaker (a freed slave). In March of 1791, Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant was appointed by Washington to prepare a plan for the new city, with Andrew Ellicott serving as L'Enfant's assistant. L'Enfant turned out to be difficult to work with, and Thomas Jefferson and Washington ultimately suspended L'Enfant's participation in the project in 1792.

Andrew Ellicott took over the project using L'Enfant's model as his base for completing the plan of the City. Philadelphia engravers James Thackara and John Vallance and Boston's Samuel Blodget Jr. were hired to produce engraved versions of Ellicott's manuscript plan. Blodget arranged for Samuel Hill to engrave what would become known as the Boston edition of map. Both Hill and Thackara & Vallance each produced a large official map of the new Federal City. However, prior to the release of the large official plans, each also engraved and printed a smaller version of the map. In addition, an edition of the map was printed from Hill's map in red on linen, as a keepsake.

As noted above, before the completion of the official editions of the map, smaller magazine versions of both maps, engraved by Hill and Thackara & Vallance, appeared in the *The Universal Asylum And*



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Columbian Magazine (Thackara & Vallance, published March 1792) and the *Massachusetts Magazine* (Hill, published in about April 1792), thereby becoming the first and second printed maps of the City of Washington. The proof states of the larger official maps were not available until June and July of 1792.

While the Thackara & Vallance - *Universal Asylum And Columbian Magazine* edition of the map appears on the market with some regularity (AMPR notes 5 examples in dealer catalogues in the past 25 years), the Hill plan is of the utmost rarity. The only example of the map which we were able to locate in a dealer catalogue or at auction appeared in a complete run of the 1792 edition of the magazine, offered by Goodspeed's in 1908 (Catalog 64:244, priced at \$25.00).

Detailed Condition:

Folded, as issued. Some minor soiling and dampstaining. A section in the lower left is more discolored than the rest of the map and a bit of paper loss to the plate mark in the lower right corner, but far from the printed image.