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## Plan de Charleroy . . . 1706 (Battle Plan)

**Stock#:** 29915
**Map Maker:** de Fer

**Date:** 1700 circa
**Place:** Paris
**Color:** Hand Colored
**Condition:** VG+
**Size:** 18.5 x 14 inches

**Price:** SOLD

**Description:**

Detailed battle plan of the area around Charleroi, showing the battle fought in the area in 1693.

The plan is one of the most detailed accounts of the siege and shows in great detail the fortifications and troop positions of the combatants, with annotations.

In July 1693, French troops under Marshal Luxembourg inflicted a servere defeat on the Dutch under William III of Orange at the Battle of Neerwinden. Following this victory Luxembourg moved to take the Spanish fortress of Charleroi, despite the fact that the campaigning season was nearly over.

The task was made harder by the fact that Charleroi, a strong fortress that had belonged to France until a few years before, had been recently strengthened by the skilled engineer Vauban. He now found himself leading an attack against its defences. William III had expected an attempt on Charleroi after Neerwinden so he sent the garrison reinforcements, bringing the total number of defenders up to 4500 troops.

The fortifications were of the form of a regular bastioned'hexagon with various outworks. To the south of the river lay the fortified lower town. Luxembourg's troops arrived before Charleroi in early September and the trenches were opened on the night of the 8th-9th September.

Vauban opted to attack the town from the high ground to the north, as there was water protecting the other three sides of the town (see map above left). A secondary attack was driven towards a lunette'on the far side of the western inundation. The first target for the batteries was an advanced lunette to the north of the upper town. The siegeworks were frustrated by a number of sorties made by the garrison, but the

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lunette was finally breached and then carried by assault on the 16th September. The garrison had planted three large mines there, but were surpised by the assault and so were unable to detonate them.

After the fall of this lunette, the trenches could move forwards towards the defences of the town proper. Vauban chose to attack it from the west, driving trenches between the fortifications and the inundation. The ground here precluded the construction of a regular system of parallels', but Vauban used the dead ground on the reverse slope of the glacis to protect his batteries.

Despite the French being able to exploit this dead ground, the siege dragged on into October. Frustrated with the slow pace of events, Luxembourg ordered an assault on the covered way on the 10th October, which was successful. Following the capture of the covered way, 12 heavy guns were brought up to breach the main walls of the upper town, opening fire the following day. The garrison, seeing that there was no hope of further resistance, surrendered on the 12th - a month after the siege had begun.

The siege gave Vauban an opportunity to test his work and the test revealed the weakness of the dead ground to the west of the upper town. In his subsequent improvement of the fortifications this ground was protected by a series of works connecting the covered way with the western inundation.

During the siege of Charleroi Vauban was criticised for his slow, methodical attack but he retorted with the words "The more powder we burn the less blood we loose". According to some estimates the siege of Charleroi cost the garrison 3000 casaulties (out of 4500 at the start of the siege), while the French lost only 500-700 men.

**Detailed Condition:**