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A Plan of the Town of Boston, with the Intrenchments &c. of His Majestys Forces in 1775 from the Observations of Lieut. Page of His Majesty's Corps of Engineers; and from the Plans of other Gentlemen . . . 1777

Stock#: 29931
Map Maker: Faden
Date: 1777
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 22.5 x 15 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Important early Revolutionary-era depictions of Boston, taken from surveys made on the spot by British forces occupying the town.

This plan is attributed to Lieutenant Thomas Hyde Page (1746-1821), a British military engineer who was severely wounded at Bunker Hill. Based on his own "observations" and likely on surveys by his fellow engineer John Montresor, Faden's plan provides one of the best contemporary plans of the attle.

The plan shows Boston proper Roxbury via Boston Neck, and the southern tip of Charlestown, with a detailed treatment of the topography, including Boston's many hills and street plan, with shading to

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indicate built-up areas. The most valuable information is the careful depiction of the numerous fortifications erected around the town, far more detailed than on almost any other map of the period. Also of interest are "Mount Whoredom" just west of Beacon Hill, so named on account of hosting the town's red-light district; the legend identifying major landmarks such as Town Hall and Faneuil Hall; and the many wharves, some of which remain important features of the Boston landscape.

According to John Montresor,

Thomas Hyde Page served eleven days and was then wounded [at Bunker Hill] and return'd home and had ten shillings per diem settled for life." (Journals, p. 146) The brevity of Page's wartime service in Boston calls into question the extent to which he had to appropriate others' work in order to complete the map. It seems plausible, even likely, that he exaggerated his own contribution by highlighting his own name while referring merely to the "plans of other gentlemen.

First among these "gentlemen" would have been Montresor, who was stationed in Boston from 1774 through the end of the siege in 1776, during which time he was the senior engineer reporting to Generals Gage and Howe. There was certainly precedent for such uncollegial behavior: during the French and Indian War Montresor himself had been caught trying to erase Samuel Holland's name from a major survey of the province of Quebec.

Detailed Condition: