



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

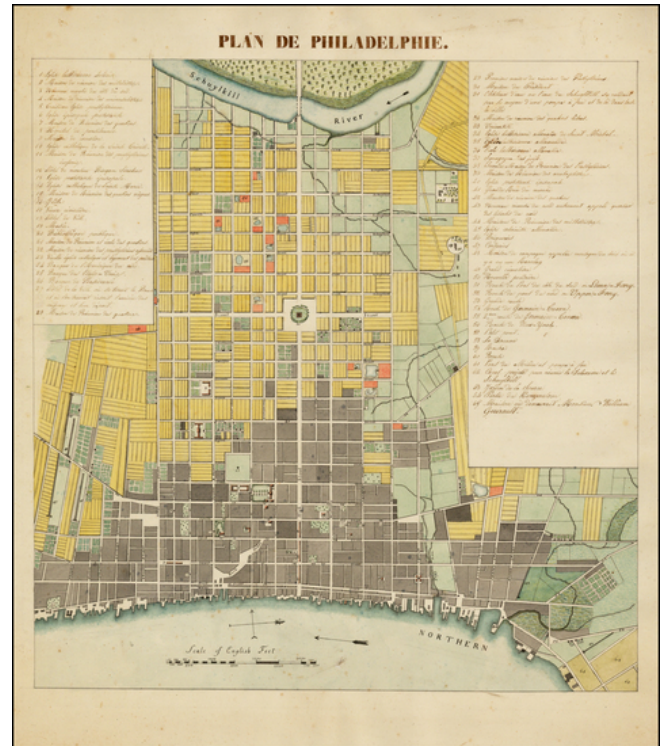
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## Plan De Philadelphie (Manuscript Presentation Plan of the City)

**Stock#:** 41303  
**Map Maker:** Folie  
**Date:** 1799 circa  
**Place:** Philadelphia  
**Color:** Pen & Ink with Wash Color  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 18 x 19 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

***Presentation Quality Manuscript Plan of Philadelphia, then Capital of the United States of America -- Presented To The Geroust Family, the Counts of Boisclaireau, residents of Philadelphia in the late 1790s.***

Finely executed manuscript map of Philadelphia, drawn at the end of the 18th Century for one of Philadelphia's French aristocratic residents. Until its purchase, the map was owned by heirs of the Geroust Family, the Counts of Boisclaireau, in Teille, Sarthe, Pays-de-la-Loire, France, whose family members fled to America during the French Revolution and resided in Philadelphia for approximately 10 years.

The map is a finely executed and updated hand drawn example of Antoine Pierre Foley's 1794 plan of Philadelphia, entitled *To Thomas Mifflin, governor and commander in chief of the state of Pennsylvania, this plan of the city and suburbs of Philadelphia is respectfully inscribed by the editor, 1794.* Finely colored in a style indicative of its presentation to a patron of great importance, the plan includes several important additions not present on the printed version of Folie's map, which indicate that it was improved



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and revised at the end of the decade, quite likely by A.P. Folie himself.

At the time the map was constructed, Philadelphia was the Capital of the United States. As such, the Folie map, which illustrates the President's House and various government buildings is the earliest printed map to illustrate the President's residence and the buildings which housed the seat of government.

While little is known about Folie, he represented himself as "a French Geographer" on his plan of Baltimore (dated 1792), and is believed to have fled to America following the Haitian slave revolts in Santa Domingo in the early 1790s. His only other engraving credit was engraving work for *Voyage de l'Ambassade de la Compagnie des Indes Orientales Hollandaises, vers l'empereur de la Chine, dans les années 1794 & 1795*, printed in Philadelphia by M.L.E. Moreau de Saint-Mery (who had also fled to Philadelphia from the Caribbean), in 1797-98.

The map locates the "Maison ou demourait Monsieur William Gueroust" (the home in which William Geroust used to live). The 1800 United States Census notes a Wm Gueroust in Philadelphia. Guillaume Jean Rene Gueroust-Boisclaireau was a prominent French resident of Philadelphia, who travelled in the same circles as the important portrait artist, Charles Saint Memin. The two acted as witnesses for the marriage of Jean Marie Raphael Villedieu-Torcy and Demoiselle Marie Julie Antoinette Lefebvre-Graffard of Sarceaux. (Gueroust was the uncle of the bride).

### Dating The Map

The map almost certainly dates to the period between about May 1799 and January, 1801. Several factors strongly point to this date:

1. The map references the "Hotel de Monsieur Bingham Senateur." William Bingham was elected Senator in 1795 and left the Senate in January 1801. Bingham built a mansion at the corner of Third & Spruce (the location on this map) in 1789.
2. The map shows the location of the Center Square Water Works, designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe in 1799. Work on this project commenced on May 2, 1799 and the first water was pumped into the city on January 21, 1801.
3. The explanatory note in the key (#31) translates as follows: "Water Tower where the water from the Schuylkill River would flow by means of a fire pump and from there to the whole city." The note is phrased in a manner which suggests that the pump system was still under construction at the time the note was written in French.
4. As described in greater detail below, #48 in the manuscript key references "Maison de campagne appelee montagne du bois ou il y a eu un Ranelag (country house called Bush Hill where there is a Ranelag. A Ranelag (or Pleasure Garden) references a then fashionable outdoor garden concert,



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popular in the 18th Century. In 1796 and 1798, a few of these outdoor concerts were advertised to have been held at Bush Hill Mansion, as shown on the manuscript map. By contrast, when the Folie map was printed in 1794, Bush Hill Mansion was then being used as a Yellow Fever Quarantine Hospital.

#### **The French in Philadelphia**

The French Revolution of 1789 created chaos among the French aristocracy, intellectuals and business leaders, causing many to flee their ancestral homes. Philadelphia, the Capital of the United States, with its cosmopolitan atmosphere, accessible port, and thriving commerce, attracted many of these French exiles. The rebellion in the French colony of St. Dominique (later Haiti) in 1789, which led to a slave revolt that overturned French power there, resulted in the flight of Francophone slaveholders and others to Philadelphia and other American seaport cities, bringing another wave of French immigrants at the same time as the French Revolution. Most of the French exiles who came to Philadelphia settled along the Delaware River in the Mulberry district (an area between modern day Market Street, Arch Street, Second Street, and Columbus Boulevard).

By the end of 1793, as many as 3,000 French immigrants were living in Philadelphia and many more would arrive in the coming years. The French established political societies and charitable organizations of their own. The Société Française de Bienfaisance de Philadelphie helped newly arriving French émigrés adjust to life in the city. The emerging salon culture of Philadelphia gained greater legitimacy with the arrival of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord (1754-1838) in 1794. Between 1794 and 1798, more than 40 French merchants advertised in the local newspapers and a number of French schools were established.

Many of the wealthiest French immigrants viewed their stay in America as temporary. Following the X Y Z Affair in mid-1798, American sentiment toward the French in America became far less welcoming. When the Reign of Terror ended, many returned home. Between 1798 and 1802, there was a mass exodus among the French residents of Philadelphia. A second exodus resulted after the Bourbon Restoration in 1814.

#### **Attributing The Map To A.P. Folie**

Little is known about Folie's life. Circumstantially, it would appear that Folie was French and at least one source references his having escaped the Slave Revolts.

Folie would seem to have been resident in Philadelphia for his entire American engraving career, which runs from about 1792 to 1797-98. The final engraving done by Folie was done for Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry (1750-1819), a Creole colonist born at Fort-Royal (present-day Fort-de-France) in Martinique. Moreau-Saint-Mery was a lawyer and writer with a career in public office in France,



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Martinique, and Saint-Domingue. He is best known for his publications on Saint Domingue and Martinique. He was a freemason and a member of the Cercle des Philadelphes - a colonial scientific society which included Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush as members- and sought to document life in the colonies.

Folie's work for Moreau de Saint-Mery as an engraver in 1797-98 would place him in Philadelphia immediately before the time this manuscript map was made. At that time, there would have been very few other highly trained French artist / surveyors, capable of executing a manuscript version of Folie's Plan of Philadelphia which such fine precision, as by the middle of 1799, the French exodus from Philadelphia was well under way.

Circumstantially, the fact that the manuscript map is a technically drawn and highly skilled copy of Folie's printed plan, with a French language key, several contemporary improvements and ephemeral additions (Latrobe's Waterworks, the Bush Hill Ranelag and Gueroust's house), is suggestive that the plan may have been done by Folie. Moreover, the marvelous wash coloring which closely resembles the full wash color example of the printed Folie plan in the New York Public Library, strongly suggests that the map was intended as a presentation piece for the Geuroust Family, drawn at the time of their return from to France or shortly thereafter, as a gift from a friend or business partner still resident in Philadelphia. The revisions to the original printed reference key made in the manuscript plan de-emphasize the churches and graveyards of Philadelphia and focus more on roads, banks, brick yards, roperies, hotels and other public places.

By 1796, Charles Varle, another French trained mapmaker, had produced a map of Philadelphia, which he revised in 1802. At least one commentator has observed that the information used by Varle in his map may actually pre-date Folie's map, pointing to the relatively incomplete information shown for William Hamilton's Woodlands home). It is also possible that Folie was working on a revised plan or simply that Folie created an improved plan as a commissioned piece. Certainly the meticulous copying and improvements to Folie's original work are in the hand of a highly skilled professional of French descent.

The only extent contemporary color example of the map which we could locate is also colored in a very similar style: [digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47da-ef94-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99](https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47da-ef94-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99). We surmise that Folie would quite likely have been the colorist for any colored versions of his own printed maps.

Interestingly, the color style also matches very closely with a full contemporary color example of the second edition of the Varle map (published in 1802) in the collection of David Rumsey.

[www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~205~20052:Philadelphia-](http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~205~20052:Philadelphia-)



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The following links to the Boston Public Library's copy of the first state of the Varle.

[maps.bpl.org/id/rb15503](https://maps.bpl.org/id/rb15503)

Curiously, on both states of the Varle map, Bush Hill is called Buthill.

The map is on paper bearing the watermark of C & I Honig. Cornelis & Jan Honig's papermill operated from 1675 to 1902 and was known to have extensively exported paper from Holland to England, which was ultimately exported to the British Colonies. This suggests that the plan was drawn in America, rather than having been made in France, where it would have been far more likely that the plan would have been drawn on paper with a French watermark.

### **A Comparison of The Printed Folie & Manuscript Map**

Comparing the two maps provides some fascinating insights into the prospective authorship and the timing of its creation. We note the following comparative issue points:

**Embellishments:** The printed Folie plan is elaborately decorated with an allegorical vignette, dedication to Governor Mifflin, "Seat of Government" vignettes and sailing ships. By contrast, the manuscript map is utilitarian in nature, without embellishment, yet highly technical in its construction. We surmise that the difference can be attributed to the intended audience. Folie's printed map was intended as a tribute to the prosperity of his adopted home (Philadelphia) and its importance as a center of commerce and seat of government. These points would not have been of interest to the Gueroust family, who had already left Philadelphia by the time the map was completed, as noted by the phrasing of Gueroust's place of residence as the place where he Gueroust "used to live."

**Technical Details:** The printed Folie plan is not overly technical in its construction. The scale is done relatively crudely and called a "Scale of Feet," and incorporates a single decorative compass rose in the Delaware River. The manuscript plan reflects greater technical detail in several respects. First, the direction of the Schuylkill River and Delaware River are noted, unlike the printed plan. The scale of feet is changed to a "Scale of English Feet," and drawn in a more technically sophisticated style in both its presentation and the illustration of unit division with alternating black and white boxes. The compass rose is replaced with a more scientific directional indicator. Of note, the choice of words "English Feet," is a refinement from the printed plan which suggests a non-English maker and intended non-English audience.

**Title Font:** While at first blush, the title font in the manuscript plan appears to be in a more modern style, the font is nearly an exact match for the words "THIS PLAN" on the printed Folie plan and the font style, while very utilitarian in appearance in comparison to the highly embellished title and dedication to Governor Mifflin in the printed Folie plan, is correct for the period.



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**Different Reference Keys:** The two maps have significant differences in the reference keys. The manuscript plan puts more emphasis on banks, public buildings, hotels, markets, roads and places where bricks, rope and other goods are manufactured, along with identifying the new Latrobe public waterworks and the Pleasure Garden at Bush Hill Mansion. The printed plan places more emphasis on churches and meeting houses. The difference likely reflects the differing interests of the maker's French audience.

**Color/Style:** The manuscript plan bears a striking similarity in coloring style to the contemporary color example in the New York Public Library. We surmise that Folie may have been the colorist for the NYPL copy. The similarities strongly suggest that the maps were either colored by the same person or that the maker of the manuscript plan had access to a full color example of the printed Folie Plan.

**Later Copy?:** While it is possible that the manuscript plan is from a later date, we believe the evidence strongly suggests that the work is contemporary to the printed Folie (and was completed between May 1799 and January 1801). The choice of French language for the reference key, technical skill of the maker, inclusion of William Gueroust's house in the key, and the unique features in the manuscript plan (Latrobe waterworks, Bush Hill Ranelag and "Senator Bingam's Hotel") are strongly indicative of a very narrow time window in which the plan could have been drawn and one that was not memorialized by any of the printed versions of the Folie plan. A later maker would not have added historical details reflective of such a narrow time window and added details not present on any of the printed editions of the plan. Similarly, it would be very implausible that details relevant almost exclusively to the Gueroust family would have been added by a later copyist. This combination of factors make it highly improbable that the plan is a retrospective work.

**Latrobe Waterworks Note:** The manuscript plan shows the addition of the Latrobe Waterworks, then under construction. Key note #31 states in French: Water Tower where the water from the Schuylkill River would flow by means of a fire pump and from there to the whole city." This is another example of a very technical and detailed observation, which surpasses the type of technical content given in the reference key to the printed plan.

**The Ranelagh on Bush Hill:** Another fascinating ephemeral note on the history of Philadelphia found on the manuscript plan is the reference to the Ranelag (explained below) at a country house on Bush Hill (manuscript key note #48). Bush Hill is named on the Folie map, but without further comment. Bush Hill was then the location of the Bush Hill Manor House. According to Thompson Wescott in *The Historic Mansions and Buildings of Philadelphia* (p.415-417), Bush Hill was purchased from the Penn Family by Andrew Hamilton in 1726 and 1729. The Bush Hill Mansion was constructed in 1740. In 1788, the Grand Federal Procession wound its way through Philadelphia, ending at the Bush House Mansion, where a reported 17,000 people gathered at the conclusion of the Parade Route. In 1790 and 1791, John Adams



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lived at Bush Hill while serving as Vice President. In 1793, during the yellow fever epidemic, Bush Hill Mansion was used as a quarantine hospital run by Stephen Girard. On March 25, 1795, the house was rented to a "citizen's committee." The Mansion reportedly burned in 1805. *The Annals of Music in Philadelphia*, p. 38 (Goepp) notes that "in 1796, concerts and exhibitions were given in Andrew Hamilton's Mansion, under the direction of John Darley." Similar concert reports can be found in 1797 for "Messrs. Bates and Darley open[ing] Bush Hill . . . with vocal and instrumental music as a feature." (The Art of Music in America... Volume 4, Mason @ p.75). We note a reference to a public music performance at Bush Hill as late as July 1798.

A Ranelag (or Vauxhall) was a "Pleasure Garden", an outdoor festival of music, lights and other performances popularized in French and English culture in the 18th Century. The two most famous English venues were the Ranelagh Gardens and the Vauxhall Gardens. As noted by Naomi Stubbs in *Cultivating National Identity Through Performance: American Pleasure Gardens* (p 31-35), the performance of these Vauxhalls (or Ranelags) became very popular in larger American Cities (New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, Baltimore, etc) and there are "a small number of advertisements for Bush Hill in Philadelphia in which [the performance] was compared to both London and Paris Vauxhalls." (p. 32).

Based upon the foregoing, the use of Bush Hill evolved from a Yellow Fever hospital at the time the Folie plan was printed, to a "pleasure garden" or Ranelag at the time the manuscript plan was drawn. This bit of ephemeral information and the invocation of an English name (Ranelag) for a cultural tradition which also derived from France, provides fascinating insight into both the timing of creation of the plan, its sources and its intended audience. Ironically, it was not until 1814 that the Vauxhall Theater was established in Philadelphia at a location the corner of Broad Street & Walnut Street.

### **Geroust Family Provenance**

The auction catalog description of the Plan noted that:

*Enfin il est mentionné une maison ou demeurait Monsieur William Gueroult [sic]. Il s'agit probablement d'un membre de la famille de Marie-Julie-Antoinette Lefebvre de Sarceau, fille de Marie Renée Gervaise de Gueroult [sic] de Boisclaireau, qui épousa en 1801 à Philadelphie, l'ancêtre de la famille, actuellement propriétaire de cette carte . . . .*

*Translation: Finally there is mentioned a house where lived Mr. William Gueroult [sic]. This is probably a member of the family of Marie-Antoinette Julie Lefebvre Sarceau, daughter of Marie Renée Gervaise Gueroult [sic / Gueroust] of Boisclaireau, who married in 1801 in Philadelphia, the ancestor of the family, which is now the owner of the map.*



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The auction catalog describes the manuscript plan's provenance as *BIBLIOTHEQUE D'UN CHATEAU DANS LA SARTHE* (Library of a Castle in the Sarthe). Chateau de Boisclaireau was the residence of the noble Gueroust family, who were the Counts of Boisclaireau, in Teille, Sarthe, Pays-de-la-Loire, France. As such, the plan was almost certainly a presentation piece, given to Guillaume Gueroust and taken back to France, where it remained in the family Castle for over 200 years, until its sale in 2015.

#### **Importance of the Manuscript Plan**

The manuscript plan is of the utmost rarity and importance, being a unique historical and cultural artifact of Philadelphia's brief period as a haven for aristocratic refugees of the French Revolution and Haitian Slave Revolts and potentially the only surviving manuscript artifacts of A.P. Folie's work. It provides an ephemeral snapshot of Philadelphia at a time not memorialized on any other map.

To date, we have not located any other examples of A.P. Folie manuscript plans of either Philadelphia, Baltimore or any other artifact of Folie's life or work in America. It is indeed quite curious that the maker of two of the most important 18th Century American City Plans would leave so little evidence of his life and work in America.

We locate the following examples of the printed map: NY Public Library, Harvard, Clements, John Carter Brown, Library of Congress (2), British Library, University of Amsterdam, Hagley Library, University of Utrecht. The Library Company of Philadelphia notes 2 examples in their on line catalog.

The catalog entry for the Edwin Babcock Holden Collection, American Art Galleries, April 21, 1910 (#4043) referred to the map as "Excessively scarce..." In modern times, we locate only the Jay T. Snider copy sold at auction on November 19, 2008 (acquired by Graham Arader) and a copy in a Private Philadelphia collection.

#### **Detailed Condition:**