



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## Plan of the City of Washington [First Plan of Washington DC]

**Stock#:** 45162  
**Map Maker:** Vallance & Thackara  
**Date:** 1792  
**Place:** Philadelphia  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 10 x 8.5 inches  
**Price:** \$ 6,500.00



### Description:

#### *The First Map of Washington D.C.*

Nice example of the first printed plan of Washington DC, based upon Andrew Ellicott's manuscript plan.

The present example is the so-called "*Columbian Magazine*" edition of Thackara & Valance's printing of Ellicott's plan of Washington, the first printed plan of Washington, D.C.

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. Bannaker was the son of a free African-American woman and a former slave; he was a surveyor, naturalist, farmer, astronomer, and almanac author. 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 Thackera and John Vallance and Boston's Samuel Blodget Jr., were hired to produce engraved versions of Ellicott's manuscript plan. However, prior to the release of the large official



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plans, both engravers also engraved and printed a smaller version of the map. An edition of the map was also printed from Hill's map in red on linen, as a keepsake.

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

**Detailed Condition:**

Minor paper reinstatement in top center section of grid. Minor marginal restoration. Several reinforced fold splits.