



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

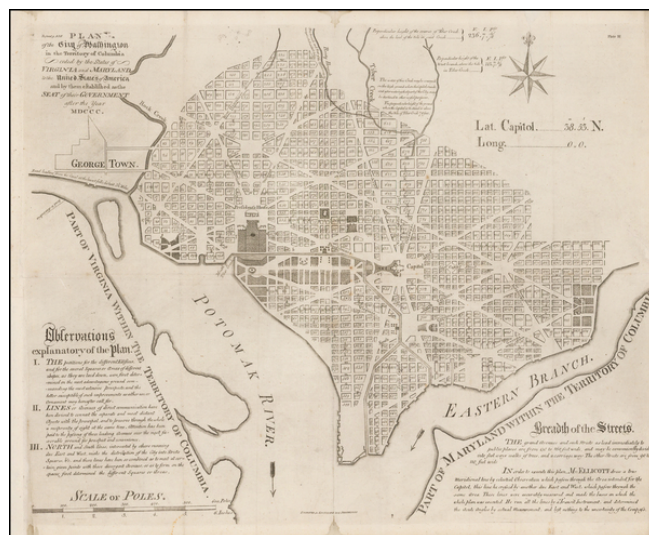
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Plan of the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia, Ceded by the States of Virginia and Maryland to the United States of America, and by them Established as the Seat of their Government, after the Year MDCCC.

Stock#: 47250
Map Maker: Hill / Ellicott
Date: 1796
Place: Perth, Scotland
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 20 x 16.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Scarce engraved folding map of Washington, D.C., representing one of the earliest derivations of Samuel Hill's version of the Ellicott plan.

In January 1791, President Washington announced that the capital district would be a diamond-shaped tract, 10 miles per side, roughly centered on the confluence of the Potomac and Eastern Branch (Anacostia) Rivers. Andrew Ellicott was engaged to conduct a topographical survey of the area, while Pierre L'Enfant was hired to develop a plan for the capital city itself. L'Enfant was a French artist and engineer who had served as a volunteer during the Revolution, and was sufficiently well connected that he had been asked to design the seal for the Society of the Cincinnati. He was brilliant but difficult, so much so that George Washington eventually fired him in 1792 and engaged Andrew Ellicott to complete the project. Ellicott, in turn, used L'Enfant's design as the basis for his plan of the city.

Upon completion of his drawings, Ellicott forwarded his manuscript plan to the firms of Thackara & Vallance in Philadelphia and Samuel Hill in Boston. Each firm was engaged to engrave and publish the plan as quickly as possible, in order that it might be distributed to facilitate the sale of land in the new city. Before publishing the large-scale "official" plans, each firm released smaller versions, which appeared as plates in The Universal Asylum And Columbian Magazine (Thackara & Vallance, published March 1792) and the Massachusetts Magazine (Hill, May 1792). The full size engraved versions of the large-scale, "official" plan were not ready until the summer of that year.



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This version of Ellicott's plan was so rare that it was not known to any of the major scholars of Washington, D.C. maps, and it was not published in Baynton-Williams, Phillips, nor Verner. It was originally issued in the first edition of the Encyclopedia Perthensis in 1796.

Detailed Condition:

Backed with Japanese tissue. Small marginal loss and few tears expertly repaired. Paper watermarked "1794".