



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

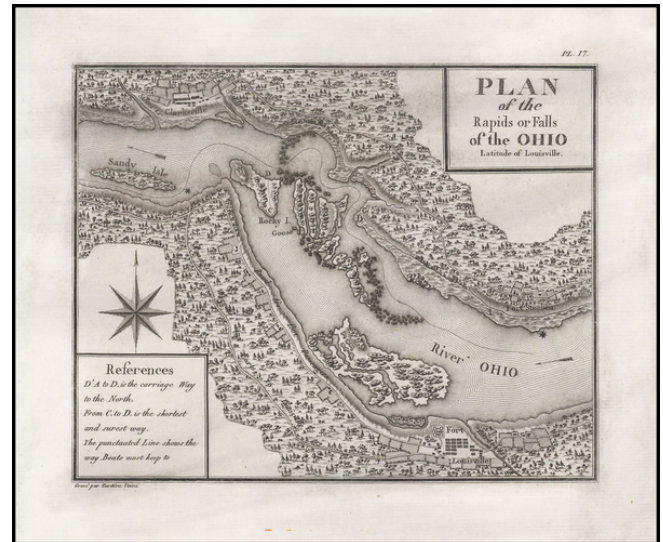
7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Louisville] Plan of the Rapids or Falls of the Ohio

Stock#: 50055
Map Maker: Collot
Date: 1804
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 6 x 7.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Important Early Map of the Louisville, Kentucky Area By A French Spy

Fine, detailed engraved map of the falls of the Ohio River, including as part of the image a very early plan of Louisville, Kentucky.

The Plan shows Clarksville, Silver Creek, Mill Creek, Sandy Isle, Rocky Island, Goose Island, Fort Louisville, Fort Stenben, a road for foot passengers, a wagon road, and various anchorages and other details.

The area is depicted at a point when Louisville was just obtaining its first post office and becoming a real trading town.

Louisville History

Colonel George Rogers Clark made the first Anglo-American settlement in the vicinity of modern-day Louisville in 1778, during the American Revolutionary War. He was conducting a campaign against the British in areas north of the Ohio River, then called the Illinois Country. Clark organized a group of 150 soldiers known as the Illinois Regiment, after heavy recruiting in Virginia and Pennsylvania. 80 settlers also joined the expedition. On May 12, they set out from Redstone, Pennsylvania and arrived at the Falls of the Ohio on May 27, 1778. It was a location Clark thought ideal for a communication post. The settlers helped Clark conceal the true reason for his presence in the area.



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Louisville] Plan of the Rapids or Falls of the Ohio

A year later, at the request of Clark, the settlers began crossing the river and established the first permanent settlement. By April, 1779, they called it "Louisville", in honor of King Louis XVI of France, whose government and soldiers aided colonists in the Revolutionary War.

During its earliest history, the colony of Louisville and the surrounding areas suffered from Indian attacks, as Native Americans tried to push out the encroaching colonists. As the Revolutionary War was still being waged, all early residents lived within forts, as suggested by the earliest government of Kentucky County, Virginia. Richard Chenoweth began construction of a fort in late 1780 and completed by March 1781. The fort, thought to be capable of resisting cannon fire, was considered the strongest in the west after Fort Pitt.

On May 1, 1780, the Virginia General Assembly and then-Governor Thomas Jefferson approved the town charter of Louisville. Clark recruited early Kentucky pioneer James John Floyd, who was placed on the town's board of trustees and given the authority to plan and lay out the town. Also, during 1780, three hundred families immigrated to the area, Louisville's first fire department was established, and the first street plan of Louisville was laid out by William Pope. Shippingport, incorporated in 1785, was a vital part of early Louisville, allowing goods to be transported through the Falls of the Ohio. The first church was built in 1790, the first hotel in 1793, and the first post office in 1795.

During the 1780s and early 1790s, the town was not growing as fast as Lexington in central Kentucky. Factors were the threat of Indian attacks (ended in 1794 by the Battle of Fallen Timbers), a complicated dispute over land ownership between John Campbell and the town's trustees (resolved in 1785), and Spanish policies restricting trade down the Mississippi to New Orleans. By 1800, the population of Louisville was 359 compared to Lexington's 1,759.

From 1784 through 1792, a series of conventions were held to discuss the separation of Kentucky from Virginia. On June 1, 1792, Kentucky became the fifteenth state in the United States and Isaac Shelby was named the first Governor.

Overview of Collot's Spy Mission, Report & Maps

Acting under instructions from Citizen Adet, French Minister to the United States, General George Henri Victor Collot undertook a secret reconnaissance in 1796, of the western American frontier. Collot traveled from Pittsburgh down the Ohio to the Mississippi, up the Mississippi to the Missouri and Illinois Rivers, and then back down the Mississippi to New Orleans. During his journey, he constructed a large number of exceptionally detailed manuscript maps and views of the region that he traversed. Many of these were groundbreaking, containing never before recorded information about a wilderness that was just beginning to undergo settlement.



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Louisville] Plan of the Rapids or Falls of the Ohio

Completed at nearly the exact time that Lewis & Clark were departing St. Louis, up the Missouri River, Collot's maps were engraved in Paris in 1804, but publication was suppressed due to Napoleon's sale of Louisiana to the United States the previous year. The Louisiana Purchase effectively ended any possibility that the region could be acquired by France. As a result of the changing politics and Collot's death, his report and maps did not come to market until 1826, when they were issued in a limited number under the title *Voyage dans l'Amerique Septentrionale* . . .

A nineteenth-century bookseller called Collot's work "one of the most famous, most important, and rarest of all books of Mid-Western Explorations." Eberstadt pronounced it "extraordinarily rare." Its rarity is due to the supposed deliberate destruction of all but three hundred French and one hundred English copies by the publisher, who had purchased the edition from Collot's estate, hoping to increase its value.

The Suppression of Collot's Report & Maps

Following his return to France, Collot set out to prepare his report and maps from notes and sketches taken during his journey. In 1800, Napoleon acquired Louisiana from Spain, Collot, and Adet were named two of the commissioners of the new French territory. However, before they could cross the Atlantic to take up their assignments, Napoleon had a change of heart and decided to sell Louisiana to the United States.

Napoleon Bonaparte's decision to sell Louisiana to America brought a practical end to Collot's work on behalf of the French Government. As a result, the impetus to publish Collot's work disappeared and, to the contrary, it became expedient to suppress his reconnaissance, rather than publish its results and overtly admit to the Americans the full scope and extent of Collot's espionage work during his visit.

Ironically, the suppression of Collot's maps has a simultaneous parallel during Thomas Jefferson's administration, when 4 expeditions were sent out by Jefferson to explore the Louisiana Purchase and the Transmississippi West (Lewis & Clark, Zebulon Pike, Dunbar-Hunter and Freeman-Custis expeditions). In April 1806, Thomas Freeman, surveyor, and Dr. Peter Custis, naturalist, undertook an expedition at the request of Thomas Jefferson's administration through parts of Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma. They were accompanied by a military escort under the command of Capt. Richard Sparks. At the same time that Zebulon Pike was exploring westward into the Louisiana Territory, Freeman and Custis traveled along the Red River to a site in present-day Texas in the vicinity of the old Caddo villages, where they were stopped by a force of Spanish cavalry protecting the Spanish claims to an ill-defined boundary of the Louisiana Purchase. After a brief skirmish, Freeman and Custis withdrew.

While a report of the 1806 Freeman-Custis expedition was published and a map prepared by Nicholas King, the political sensitivity surrounding the expedition was such that the report of this southern



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Louisville] Plan of the Rapids or Falls of the Ohio

expedition into Texas was kept secret, with only a few copies printed. Nicholas King's map of the expedition, which provided physical proof of the US Government's encroachments into Spanish Texas, was suppressed completely, with no known examples of the map surviving until an example was discovered in about 1877 in the Custis papers and a second example was discovered in the past decade, which had been owned by another early American explorer, Washington Hood (1808-1840).

Detailed Condition: