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Gandavum, Amplissima Flandriae urbs . . .

Stock#: 55539mp2
Map Maker: Braun & Hogenberg
Date: 1575
Place: Cologne
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 19 x 13 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Decorative early view of Braun & Hogenberg's view of Ghent.

The following is the translation of the text on front of map: Ghent, the most splendid city in Flanders, was founded by Julius Caesar and called Gaius after his forename, as the Brabant chroniclers relate. The city is distinguished by its rivers, altogether delightful, magnificent, spacious, never confined, nowhere stifling. The houses are innumerable and well-kept, the men richly talented, the customs venerable. A double wall amplifies the beautiful appearance of the place, which - like Louvain - also has quiet corners for reflection and study. Ghent also possesses famous schools and magnificent churches; the climate is excellent. The people, it can be said, are more frugal than parsimonious. Ghent is embellished by the relics of several saints and two famous monasteries dedicated to St Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and St Bavo; each has an abbot and a sizeable annual rental income.

Text on verso:

"Ghent has a circumference of three German miles, possesses 20 islands, which lie in the surrounding lakes and rivers and are also inhabited, 98 bridges, including three that have more than two spans and beneath which even the biggest ships can pass. There are 100 windmills that can grind even the largest produce. In this city alone there are seven parish churches, five abbeys, two collegiate churches, 25 monasteries and seven general hospices. On the site where the new castle now stands, lay in olden times the village of Ganden, from which the city also took its name, and a magnificent Benedictine monastery of St Bavo, which was constructed from an old fortress and which in 1540 was enlarged by Emperor Charles V into an even bigger palace."



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The view of Ghent shows the city from the northwest in plan view from a great height. The historical core of the city occupies the peninsula between the two Rivers Schelde and Leie. The cathedral of Sint-Baafs (51) is almost at the very centre of the map: it houses the famous Ghent Altarpiece painted by Hubert and Jan van Eyck. Together with the Gothic church of Sint-Niklaas (57) lower down and the nearby Sint-Jacobskerk (43), Sint-Baafs serves as one of the three main orientation points inside the city centre. Within this triangle stands the 14th-century belfry (55), 118 m high, which forms part of the cloth hall. The former Sint-Baafs monastery lies somewhat outside the city centre and is surrounded by fortifications and moats (103). Ghent, which is situated to the northwest of Brussels, derives its name from the Celtic *ganda*, meaning "confluence". As a leading centre of cloth production, in the High Middle Ages, Ghent rose to become a major power with a flourishing economy and together with Bruges was the most important centre of commerce in Flanders. From the 13th to the middle of the 14th century Ghent was the second-largest city in northern Europe after Paris, with some 60,000 inhabitants, but in the second half of the 14th century these numbers began to decline. Flemish-speaking Ghent is today the third-largest city in Belgium, with a population of around 230,000. (Taschen)

Detailed Condition:

Old Color. Some color offsetting. Archivaly backed with a thin layer of tissue.