



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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[Unfinished Pictorial Map of France] (Oil painting)

Stock#: 58393
Map Maker: Pinchon
Date: 1951
Place: Paris
Color: (See Description)
Condition: VG
Size: 48 x 48 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Unfinished Pictorial of France By Noted French Illustrator Joseph Pinchon -- Commissioned By Huguette Clark

A remarkable pictorial view of France, painted by the French artist and illustrator Joseph Pinchon in 1951 for his patron New York Heiress Huguette Clark.

Painted in the whimsical style which Pinchon made famous as the illustrator of the French children's classic *Bécassine*, offers a magnificent pictorial overview of post-World War II Paris, through the eyes of one of France's most beloved children's books illustrators. Centered on the Louvre and Jardin des Tuileries, the pictorial detail and scale of the map are quite remarkable.

Among the characters illustrated is Becassine.

The painting was commissioned by Huguette Clark, who was Pinchon's primary patron during the last several years of his life. (She supported several prominent French artists in the 1950s).

The following passage is from *Empty Mansions* (Pinchon's name appears 6 times in the book and two letters survive):



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Félix Lorient was not the only French artist to benefit from Huguette's patronage. She sought out others. At least four illustrators—Jean Mercier, Manon Iessel, J. P. Pinchon, and the pen-named Chéri Hérouard—were all supported by Huguette until they died. She commissioned illustrations of children's songs, drawings of all the female saints of France, and maps of the history of each region of the country. "You know how loyal I have remained," she wrote to Pinchon, "to the French traditions and folkloric past of France."

And a second passage:

Another of the artists, J. P. Pinchon, summed up his relationship with the American heiress. He wrote to Huguette in 1953, accepting in his eighties a new commission, even as he recognized he was near death. "The fairy tale continues, and you make my life beautiful. At the beginning of our acquaintance, I compared you to a good fairy who made the dream of any artist at the end of his career come true. Your magic wand never stopped, and I work with joy."

Joseph Pinchon

Pinchon was a famous French children's book illustrator and artist, who is perhaps best recalled for the adventures of Bécassine (1913+). Bécassine is considered to be the first female comic heroine. Born in Amiens in 1871, he first studied painting with Fernand Cormon. His brother Emile Pinchon (1872-1933) was a sculptor. Joseph worked mainly as an animalier, painting hunting scenes. He was vice-president of the painting section of the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts*, which he had joined in 1899; they awarded him their Grand prix in 1928, and in 1948 their Puvis de Chavannes prize.

As an illustrator he contributed to many books, including an 1899 edition of *L'Arbre* by Georges Rodenbach, and a 1947 edition of *La Grande Meute* by Paul Vialar. From 1926 to 1929, he also provided satirical illustrations to *L'Écho de Paris*. From 1908 until 1914 he worked as the costume designer for the Opéra Garnier, the main location of the Paris Opera.

In 1916 he joined the army as an infantryman. After the first world war, he also directed two movies, *Mektoub*, set in Morocco in 1919, and *Mon Village* in 1920.

Pinchon's main body of work are his comics and illustrations made for many French youth magazines. This started in 1903 in Saint-Nicolas, where he illustrated *L'Automobile enchantée*, written by Henry Gauthier-Villars. His biggest success came in 1905, when he illustrated the first story about *Bécassine*, a young



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Breton girl, in the form of text comics (comic strips with the text beneath the drawings instead of in balloons). From 1913 on, the adventures of *Bécassine* were collected in 24 albums. *Bécassine* is considered to be the first female comic heroine.

Huguette Clark

Huguette Marcelle Clark (1906 - 2011) was an heiress and philanthropist, who became well known again late in life as a recluse, living in a hospital for more than 20 years while her mansions remained empty. She was the youngest daughter of United States Senator and industrialist William A. Clark. Upon her death at 104 in 2011, Clark left behind a fortune of more than \$300 million, most of which was donated to charity after a court fight with her distant relatives. A feature film of her life is planned, based on the best-selling book *Empty Mansions: The Mysterious Life of Huguette Clark and the Spending of a Great American Fortune*.

NBCNews.com reported in March 2012 that shortly after Clark moved to a hospital, a valuable pastel, *Danseuse Faisant des Pointes (Dancer Making Pointes)*, by Edgar Degas, was taken from her Fifth Avenue apartment. The painting was sold to Peter Findlay Gallery and later acquired in 1993 by H&R Block co-founder and art collector Henry W. Bloch. The Peter Findlay Gallery indicated that it acquired the piece from a "European gentleman, seemingly from a good family, who visited New York from time to time" and who claimed to have inherited the work. It was not until 2005 that the FBI made Bloch aware that it was investigating the painting, and in 2007, it told Bloch that the painting had been reported stolen from Clark.

Under an October 2008 deed of gift, Clark agreed to donate the pastel, valued at \$10 million, to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, of which Bloch was a major benefactor. After making the gift, Clark made a request that the pastel be lent three times in 25 years to the Corcoran Museum of Art, that it be listed as from an anonymous donor, and that Clark personally receive a full-sized color photograph of the work. The museum kept the matter confidential, acknowledging ownership in a 2012 written exchange with NBCNews.com, which was doing an investigative report on Clark.

The painting was purchased at auction in 2018 from one of the "remainder" sales advertised as the property of Huguette Marcelle Clark.

Detailed Condition:

Oil painting on Canvas