



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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A View of the Natural Bridge in Virginia

Stock#: 63013
Map Maker: Columbian Magazine
Date: 1787
Place: Philadelphia
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 7.5 x 5.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

"The Most Sublime of Nature's Works" -- Thomas Jefferson

Nice example of the *Columbian Magazine* engraving of the Natural Bridge, which also appears in some editions of Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*.

This would seem to be the earliest surviving American engraving of this iconic natural monument, which at the time was owned by Jefferson.

The Natural Bridge was a sacred site of the Native American Monacan tribe, who believed it to be the site of a major victory over pursuing Powhatans centuries before the arrival of Europeans in Virginia. In March 1742, frontiersman Howard was commissioned by Governor Gooch to lead an exploration the southwest of Virginia as far as the Mississippi River. The party followed Cedar Creek through the Natural Bridge, then floated in buffalo-skin boats down the New, Coal, Kanawha, and Ohio rivers to the Mississippi.

It is alleged that George Washington also came to the site in 1750 as a young surveyor.

Thomas Jefferson purchased 157 acres of land including the Natural Bridge from King George III of England for 20 shillings in 1774. He called it "the most Sublime of nature's works". Jefferson built a two-room log cabin, with one room reserved for guests, beginning its use as a retreat. While President, in 1802, he personally surveyed the area. Many famous guests stayed here, including John Marshall, James Monroe, Henry Clay, Sam Houston, and Martin Van Buren.



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Rarity

The view is quite rare on the market, this being the first example we have ever seen.

Detailed Condition:

Minor soiling and toning.