



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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A Plan of the City of New-York & its Environs to Greenwich, on the North or Hudson's River, and to Crown Point, on the East or Sound River, Shewing the Several Streets, Publick Buildings, Docks, Forts & Battery . . . Surveyed in the Winter, 1775 . . .

Stock#: 78315
Map Maker: Montresor
Date: 1775
Place: New York
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 20.5 x 25.5 inches
Price: \$ 68,500.00



Description:

The First Large Scale Plan of New York City -- Including Early Breweries and Pleasure Gardens

Fine example of John Montresor's map of lower Manhattan, the first large scale plan of New York City.

Montresor's map of New York is of the highest importance for the history of the mapping of New York. While historically it has been recognized for its primacy in the cartographic history of New York City, it is also of great note for its preservation of the location of a number of important early city landmarks, including the location of the brewery of "America's First Brewery Family" and locating several early landmarks of New York City's leisure culture in colonial times.

Following the conclusion of the French & Indian War, the British introduced a number of measures in America intended to produce revenue and self-fund the defense of the colonies. Chief among these was the



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Stamp Act of March 1765, and the Quartering Act, which forced colonials to house British troops.

The merchants of Boston and New York reacted unfavorably. General Thomas Gage, Commander-in-Chief of British forces in America, fearing that Manhattan would soon become a battleground, and discovering that he had no adequate maps of the city, commissioned his best engineer, John Montresor to compile a map of New York. Between December 1765 to February 1766, Montresor undertook a rigorous survey of the area under very difficult circumstances. There was great concern that the map be compiled in secret, as public knowledge of the project "might endanger ones house and effects if not ones life."

Montresor presented the finished manuscript to Gage on February 18, 1766, then sailed for England for a six month's leave of absence beginning in October, taking with him drafts of his map. The manuscript maps were given to John Rocque, who prepared a copper plate and returned the first printed examples to Montresor in May 1767. This first state of the printed map is dated 1766, the year that the original manuscript was completed. The second state was thereafter published by A. Dury in 1775.

Montresor's plan is the first for New York to show the northern environs of the city, including the old village of Greenwich, and the open fields, gardens and estates of several important merchants and planters. These include the establishments of such well-known families as Bayard, Rutgers, and de Lancey. The Bowry, the 'Road to Albany and Boston,' is clearly marked. At its foot are the 'rope walk,' and the 'Jews Burying Gr.,' the first Jewish cemetery in New York.

A text at lower left entitled "New York" gives a brief history of the city, and an adjoining key locates 31 important sites within the city. In the upper left corner is a chart of New York harbor, which was based on a survey made by Montresor in September 1766. Montresor's map is the first to show King's College, the precursor of Columbia University.

Montresor, born in Gibraltar, was the chief English engineer in America. He commenced his survey of New York City in December 1765, at a time when the Stamp Act was spurring the creation of the Sons of Liberty and pushing the Colonists toward Revolution. The work quality was hurried and not terribly accurate, owing in part to the local hostilities.

Brewers and Pleasure Gardens

The map is noteworthy for its inclusion of several landmarks of the Beer and Pleasure Culture of New York.



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On the Hudson River about halfway up the coast, Harrison's Brewery appears, with Vauxhall and Ranelagh in the area below the Brewery. Vauxhall and Ranelagh were the names of the major "pleasure gardens" in London at the time of the printing of the map. Dating to the mid-17th Century, these pleasure gardens were fashionable meeting places, known for lavish entertainment.

Beer in New York

By 1612, Dutch immigrants Adrian Block and Hans Christiansen had established a commercial brewery in a log house at the southern tip of New Amsterdam (Manhattan). In about 1630, the Dutch West India Company build a brewery in Lower Manhattan on Brewers (later Stone) Street (shown on Montresor's map as the middle of the 3 streets between Beaver Street and Dock Street west of Broad Street).

On the East River, above the farm established by Rutger Jacobsz and later anglicized to Rutgers by his son Harman, is a Brew House, the brewery established by Harman Rutgerson about 1695. Over the next several decades, the Rutgers family would start a number of other breweries in the city. As noted by David Fowler

[Craft brewing] was also, along with landholding, the basis of the Rutgers family's wealth. . . . By the 1750s, the brewing establishment of Harmanus Rutgers on Maiden Lane in the East Ward included a dwelling house, brew house, malt house, storehouse, and ancillary buildings. The brewing complex of another family member covered 10 city lots; its brewing kettle had a capacity of 40 barrels (approximately 1440 gallons). . . . By the mid-18th century, both branches of the Rutgers family were solidly ensconced as brewers. Breweries were also prominent landmarks in real estate advertisements: the brewery (or breweries) at Maiden Lane were known locally as "Brewer's Hill." Because of their long tradition over four generations as brewers, the Rutgers family has been deemed "the first of the 'brewing families' in America."

The city's breweries found a ready market: their proximity to the waterfront meant that there was no lack of customers. Social life on all levels in the city frequently revolved around consuming "seas of liquor": according to one traveler, "to drink stoutly ... is the readiest way for a stranger to recommend himself." . . .



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Pleasure Gardens in New York

In the mid-1760s, out-of-town taverns, such as John Clapp's in the Bowery, had become popular in Colonial New York, taking advantage of the "Sunset Strip-like" jurisdiction, two miles from the post office. The first pleasure garden was located at a site called "Bowling Green." In 1767, Samuel Fraunces opened a pleasure garden, first called the Vaux-Hall Gardens. Its major competitor was called Ranelagh Gardens, (named after Ranelagh Gardens, Chelsea, London), which opened in 1765.

The pair occupied a wooded rise of ground just north of the northernmost city houses, on the south side of Duane Street; the site overlooked Lispenard's Meadows (shown on the map) and the riverfront road to Greenwich Village (also shown). The original Vauxhall Gardens was located in a smaller site on Greenwich Street near the Hudson River between what later became Warren and Chambers streets in the fashionable Sixth Ward. Fraunces operated Vaux-Hall through Summer 1773.

Detailed Condition:

Minor restoration at outer parts of centerfold, just entering printed image.