



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Le Massif du Mont-Blanc.

Stock#: 81074
Map Maker: Viollet-le-Duc
Date: 1876
Place: Paris
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 37.25 x 44 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A View of Mont-Blanc as if Photographed from 10,000 meters by one of the 19th Century's "Most Influential Architects" (The Met).

Superb color-lithographed map of Mont Blanc and the surrounding region and representing perhaps the best map of the Mont Blanc ever produced. The result of Eugene Viollet-Le-Duc's seven years spent studying the mountain between 1868 and 1875, the map is a wondrous feat showing the great architect's eye for detail.

The map was the most detailed and accurate map of the Mont Blanc Massif published up until that point, and a critical map for climbers and mountaineers. However, it was also a piece of art, with [modern observers](#) commenting on the crystalline and geological shape the map portrays as well as the impressive use of shading. These aspects come from Viollet-Le-Duc's impressive training as an architect, a capacity in which he is remembered for restoring some of Europe's great churches and Medieval sites such as Carcassone and the Mont-Saint-Michel.



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The map is a result of Viollet-Le-Duc's obsession with the Massif. Having always had a fascination with the mountains, he pursued a methodological and "militaristic" study of the mountain in which he sought to portray all aspects of the structure of the mountain. This map was published alongside his book of the same name that described his years of travel and his discoveries. The map is of immense importance for refining previously available military triangulations of the massif, and providing the first such expansive mapping of the mountain that could be used by mountaineers otherwise unfamiliar with the area. This map would be refined by later workers into the twentieth century, further tweaking it and making minor corrections.

On the map, glaciers are named, the elevations of various peaks are provided, toponyms abound, and climbers routes are shown. In the lower right, a cross-section shows the underlying geology of the Mont Blanc, with gneisses, schists, and other metamorphic rocks indicated. In the upper left, a view of the Mont Blanc Massif is shown as would be seen from the direction of Chamonix.

Eugène Viollet-le-Duc

Eugène Viollet-le-Duc was one of the most important French architects of his time, to the point where he was chosen over Gustave Eiffel to plan the Statue of Liberty, however, he was prevented from completing this project by his old age. During his lifetime, he was most famous for his restorations of medieval buildings during a period in which popular sentiment supported the reclamation of European heritage. Some of his most notable projects include the Mont Saint-Michel, Carcassonne, Roquetaillade Castle, and Pierrefonds. He was sometimes criticized for imposing modern tastes on some of his restoration projects, albeit backed up by copious research.

Viollet-Le-Duc was able to travel France as a young man due to his family's connections as building managers for the royal family, where he was able to pick up not only his love of architecture but also his love of the mountains. He at first made selling his paintings to members of the court, and he returned to this passion for painting when undertaking his study of the Alps. His work on the Alps survives in thirty-two original drawings of the alpine scenery and his master-class mapping of the Massif, considered the most important work of its kind in the 19th century.

Detailed Condition:

Flattened and laid on tissue. Old fold splits expertly mended.