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William Penn's Treaty with the Indians, when he founded the Province of Pennsylvania in North America 1681

Stock#: 91121
Map Maker: Boydell
Date: 1775
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 23.5 x 18.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Benjamin West's Rendition of Penn's Treaty.

Scarce and fine copperplate engraving showing Benjamin West's interpretation of the 1681 peace treaty rendered between William Penn and the Delaware Indians.

Supposedly agreed to below the huge "Treaty Elm" at the left of this photo, this possibly apocryphal treaty is a founding myth of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The treaty is now known by several names, including the Treaty of Shackamaxon, the Great Treaty, and Penn's Treaty. Unfortunately, it would appear that there is no contemporary record of the treaty at the present day save a wampum belt that was supposedly given to William Penn.

The treaty became immortalized by Benjamin West's timeless rendition of the treaty in his rendition of the scene painted from 1771-72 and now held by the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The scene uses many features of English colonial imagery - a mighty Penn stands rotundly in front of a Native American tribe while European buildings are constructed, slowly encroaching on the native forest and indigenous dwellings.

Benjamin West is commonly regarded as the first American painter to gain fame outside of the American colonies. He moved to London in 1763 and built a reputation as a noted painter of historical scenes, and he even became the official history painter for King George III. He traded heavily on the mystique of coming from the colonies, even going so far as to claim that he learned his methods of paint mixing from



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Native Americans.

This view was engraved by John Hall from the original painting, although he did mirror the image as is often done on copperplate engravings. The image was published by John Boydell in 1775 in London.

Detailed Condition:

Dark, crisp impression. Reinstatement of lower margin just below text, with scattered repairs and reinstatement to the rest of the margins.