



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

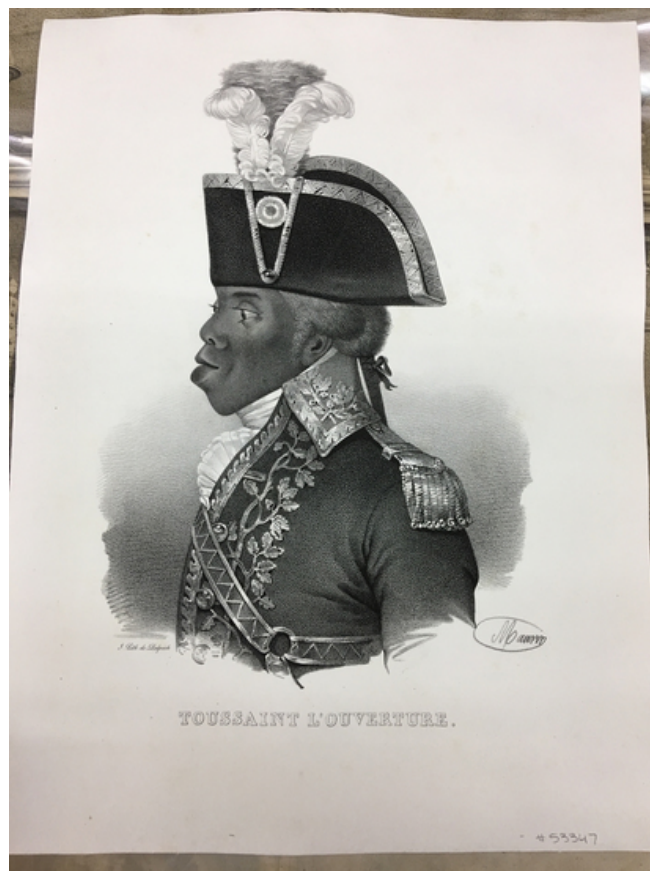
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Toussaint L'Ouverture

Stock#: 53347
Map Maker: Maurin
Date: 1832
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 14.5 x 11 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Most Famous Portrait of the Liberator of Haiti

In 1838, William C. Nell (1816-1874) black abolitionist and author advertised in William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator* that 12 copies of this lithograph of Toussaint Louverture would be for sale. While it is not known for certain that Nell had commissioned the Delpech portrait of Toussaint, he was an agent for its sale. Nell had commissioned engraved portraits for sale as a means of sponsoring and supporting his activities and was responsible for several engraved series, including the noted *Heralds of Freedom*, representing both white and black abolitionists.

As noted by the John Carter Brown Library on-line exhibition, *The Changing Faces of Toussaint L'Ouverture*:

Many, especially modern, commentators have considered it a racist caricature. Yet, despite its late date, the portrait is among those with the best claim to veracity, because it was



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Toussaint L'Ouverture

supposedly based on a picture (since lost) that Toussaint himself had presented to the colonial official Roume Saint-Laurent in 1801.

Although it is quite possible that Maurin's version might have exaggerated features of the original, it corresponds closely to the description General Caffarelli penned of Louverture in his jail cell some six months before his death and sent to Bonaparte: "Toussaint Louverture has ... big eyes, very prominent cheek bones, a flat but fairly long nose, a large mouth with no upper teeth, a very prominent lower jaw." Those who dismiss the Maurin picture as hostile propaganda tend to be unaware that Toussaint had lost his upper set of front teeth in the mid-1790s, when he was hit by a cannonball.

Detailed Condition:

Minor Foxing.