



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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A Plan and Regulation of the City of New York, made from Actual Survey by Casimir Th. Goerck and Joseph Fr. Mangin, City Surveyors, by order of the Common Council and protracted by Joseph Fr. Mangin Anno. Domini 1800. . . .

Stock#: 44419ops
Map Maker: Goerck & Mangin
Date: 1803
Place: New York
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 35 x 40 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Finest Surviving Example of the First Official Map of New York City After The American Revolution

A remarkably well preserved example of the Mangin-Goerck Plan of New York City, the first official map of New York City published after the American Revolution.

Commissioned by the City of New York to serve as the first Official Map of the City after the American Revolution, the project was essentially hijacked by Mangin, a highly skilled French surveyor who was in New York fleeing the French Revolution, who determined that he would in essence exercise the liberty to create his own image of a master planned expansion of Manhattan, without the permission or shared vision of the Common Council.

The Commissioners, shocked by Mangin's breach of protocol, initially suppressed the map and attempted to retrieve all the printed examples, before allowing the map to be issued in very limited quantities, sold with a disclaimer regarding Mangin's "creative license." There are those who opine that it was in fact a change in the power structure of New York's politics that was the real reason for the map's suppression, as the next official survey, the so-called "Commissioner's Plan", would wind up adopting much of Mangin's

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urban planning.

History of The Map

The Mangin-Goerck was the first official plan of the city produced after the Revolution and is one of the rarest and most fascinating of all printed plans of New York. The extraordinary growth of New York meant that most existing maps of the city quickly became obsolete.

In December of 1797, the Common Council of the City of New York contracted the two surveyors, Joseph Francois Mangin and Casimir Goerck to compile a new map of the city for official use. The price to the city was \$3,000 with the stipulation map being offered to subscribers for \$4 each which was to be split between Mangin and Goerck and the City. The two quickly started work, "During the spring and summer of 1798 they ranged all over the city and beyond, surveying by day, computing and drafting by night." Koppell. During the summer of 1798, Casimer Goerck succumbed to yellow fever which was ravaging the city at the time. Mangin continued on alone and, in April 1799, presented his manuscript to the Common Council.

In July 1799, Peter Maverick was engaged to engrave the map. Because of the size and complex nature of the map, it took four years to complete.

While drawing the map Mangin, had taken the liberty of making his own plans for the city's future, by laying out a grid pattern to the north of the existing streets and smoothing out the shoreline. In this respect, he understood that the city needed a plan for expansion. The Council members apparently knew to some extent of his intentions, and offered no objections.

When the engraving was finally completed in 1803, it again was given to the Common Council. Between 1799 and 1803, political change occurred within the Council. Out went Hamilton's Federalists and in came Jefferson & Burr's Republicans. When Mangin re-submitted the engraved version of his oddly shaped map to the new Commissioners, they declared that it contained "an arrangement certainly to be desired but unfortunately it deviates so much from [previous maps] that the adoption of it would create great difficulties from its total derangement of a great number of lots."

While visionary in its depiction of the City's future, the Common Council rejected the map, directing that the copies of the subscribers be destroyed. The city minutes note

Map of the City lately printed...contains many inaccuracies and designated streets which have



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not been agreed to by the Corporation [meaning the city] and which it should be improper to adopt, and which might tend to lead the proprietors of the Land adjacent to such streets so laid into error.

The decision was made to suppress the Mangin-Goerck plan, a decision led by the new street commissioner Joseph Browne, brother in law of Aaron Burr. In his book on the history of New York, Gerald Koppell strongly suggests that the suppression of the map was an example of political cronyism championed by Burr and his supporters. Browne turned the entire council against that map resolving "to return the money paid by each subscriber [and] endeavor to recall as many of said maps as have been sold." This act of suppression accounts for the Mangin-Goerck Plan's extreme rarity. A few subscribers did receive their copies after a qualifying label was affixed to the surface of the map warning that the northern two-thirds of the map was invalid.

This new / alternative title (the lower title on our copy illustrated) read as follows:

Plan of the City of New-York,

Drawn From Actual Survey, By Casimir Th. Goerck and Joseph Fr. Mangin, City Surveyors.

This Plan shews the Wards of the City as lately altered by the Legislature, and designates with accuracy, most of the Streets, Wharves, Slips &c. lying to the Southward of a line beginning on the North River, at Water Street, thence extending through said Street to Hudson Street, thence to Leonard Stret, thence to Broadway, from thence in a line to Bayard Street, through this Street to Bowery Road, thence to Bullock Street, and through this Street to the East River. Except Brannon and Spring Street, none of the Streets to the Northward of the line above-mentioned have been ceded to the Corporation, or have been approved and opened under their authority; thay are therefore to be considered subject to such future arrangements as the Corporation may deem best calculated to promote the health, intorduce regularity, and conduce to the convenience of the City.

Having been deemed a work of fantasy, the Mangin-Goerck map is now very rare on the market. As of 1928, Stokes had located just six copies of the Mangin-Goerck. By the time Cohen and Augustyn published Manhattan in Maps in 2006, they noted that "only about ten examples have survived."



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Detailed Condition:

4-sheet map, printed on unusually thick paper. Two titles, both pasted down over original blank title box. Minor restoration in several spots, but generally an exceptional survival, perhaps the finest surviving example known.