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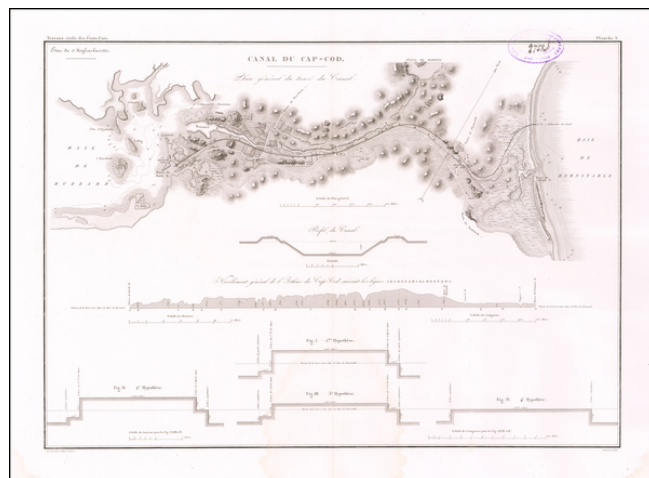
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Canal Du Cap-Cod Plan du trace et Profils du Canal

Stock#: 60206
Map Maker: Poussin
Date: 1834
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 21 x 15 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Early Plans for the Cape Cod Canal

Detailed map illustrating the course and profiles for the Cape Cod Canal, from Buzzard Bay to Barnstable Bay.

The eminent French engineer, Major William Tell Poussin, who worked for some time in the United States, on return to France, made an extensive report on public improvements of the United States, describes, with elaborate drawings, the Cape Cod Canal as being one of the greatest pieces of construction contemplated on the American continent. From 1830 to 1860 the project languished, but in the latter year the legislature of the State of Massachusetts once more took it up, reported, and again reported in 1864.

From that date until the end of the 19th Century, the question of the canal has been at intervals under discussion. The state granted a charter under which work was actually begun; funds, however, were not forthcoming in sufficient amount, the work was abandoned, and the charter allowed to lapse. In 1899, the legislature passed another charter, amended in 1900, in accordance with which plans for a canal have been prepared by William Barclay Parson, submitted to the joint board of rail road and harbor and land commissioners of the State of Massachusetts, which was finally approved.

On June 22, 1909, construction finally began for a working canal under the direction of August Belmont Jr.'s Boston, Cape Cod & New York Canal Company using designs by engineer Parsons. The canal opened on a limited basis on July 29, 1914, and it was completed in 1916.



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Guillaume Tell Poussin

Guillaume Tell Poussin was born in 1796 in the department of the Seine and Oise, in France. His father was a painter of some celebrity, who has left many fine works in the galleries of Versailles and Rouen. Introduced, while a child, to the favor of Napoleon, it was ordered by a special decree that, as a descendant of the great Nicholas Poussin, whose works are among the chief glories of French art, William Tell Poussin should be educated at the imperial school of Rouen. In Rouen, Guillaume entered this national academy of engineering.

In 1815, Guillaume travelled to America, arriving at New York in November, 1815. After a short residence in New-York he proceeded to Philadelphia and the next spring he moved to Washington, where he had heard that he could be profitably employed in the rebuilding of the capitol, which the British army had destroyed in the late war. He worked as an architect for about a year, when, several leading senators and representatives having become acquainted and signed a petition to President Madison for his admission to the corps of Topographical Engineers, which was then to be organized, and he was transferred to the United States Army. A short time after, General Bernard, whom Mr. Crawford, the American Minister at Paris, had engaged to be the chief of the Topographical Engineers, arrived in Washington, and assuming his office.

Poussin became aid-de Camp to General Bernard and left Washington with him for a military reconnaissance of the coast on the Gulf of Mexico, and of the delta of the Mississippi. They spent a year and a half in New Orleans and in 1817 returned to Washington and submitted to the President a memoir of their operations. It was upon this first report, presented by the Executive, on the Military Defenses of the United States,—a report drawn up in a very large degree by the hand of M. Poussin, and illustrated throughout with his discovery and suggestion,—that Congress, by an almost unanimous vote, authorized the erection of the great line of our military defenses, adopting the recommendations of the commissioner without even the slightest alteration.

The Board of Military Engineers entered subsequently on the yearly execution of their important duty of examining the coast previous to determining the actual sites and descriptions of the works of defense which they afterwards delineated. The young topographical engineer continued in his arduous scientific labors, and thus contributed largely in the perfecting of that great national scheme. It was in these military operations, and afterwards in the surveys for roads and canals, which, under the supervision of a Board of Internal Improvements, were confided to a portion of the same officers, assisted by civil engineers, that Poussin rendered himself so efficient as a practical and scientific surveyor, and became so perfectly familiar with all the internal resources of our extensive country, which he had thus most remarkable opportunities to study and appreciate, by crossing it in all directions, and, in fact, by visiting



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every state, and by following up and down every valley and river of the eastern half of the continent. Few men have had such occasion of studying visually the extent and resources of the republic; and the intelligent readers of the volume before us will acknowledge, that few persons have shown themselves more conversant with its astonishing advancement. His first publication was a description of the works to which he had contributed, under the title of " A History of the Internal Improvements of the United States his second, an account of all the railroads in this country, which had considerable influence in developing in Europe a disposition toward our policy in this respect, and entitles Major Poussin to the gratitude of all lovers of rapid and safe communication. It was reproduced in Belgium and Germany, and has long been a textbook upon its subject in those countries, as well as in France. His third work was the one now translated, *La Puissance Americaine*, in which he has displayed, most emphatically, his admiration of our institutions, and offered them as examples to communities aspiring after rational liberty. It may be said of it, that it is the American system rendered popular, by practical and convincing illustrations.

Major Poussin returned to France early in 1832. in the hope to cooperate in rendering popular in his own country some of the political institutions of the United States, to which he always attributed our great prosperity; but he was not fortunate enough to be admitted to active official life. He employed himself in his profession of surveyor, and superintended several important public works, and frequently in pamphlets and in contributions to the journals, labored for the dissemination of American ideas. At last, when the Revolution of February, 1848, broke out, he was chosen, with the greatest unanimity by the Provisional Government, to be the Representative of Republican France near the Government of the United States. It was deemed the highest compliment of which France was capable, that she sent as her minister the citizen most conversant with our affairs, and most eminent for admiration of our institutions. His arrival in this country, and the misunderstanding with the cabinet at Washington, which resulted in his recall by President Bonaparte, cannot have been forgotten by the observant reader. We believe that few who have carefully studied the conduct of Major Poussin in that affair, will be disposed, in the slightest degree, to censure him, while the entire history will readily be consigned to oblivion by the American who is in any degree sensitive upon the subject of our national honor.

Rarity

The map is very rare on the market. This is the first example we have ever seen and we can find no examples of the book appearing on the market with the map in a dealer catalog or auction record.

Detailed Condition:

Includes an illegible stamp from a European Library.