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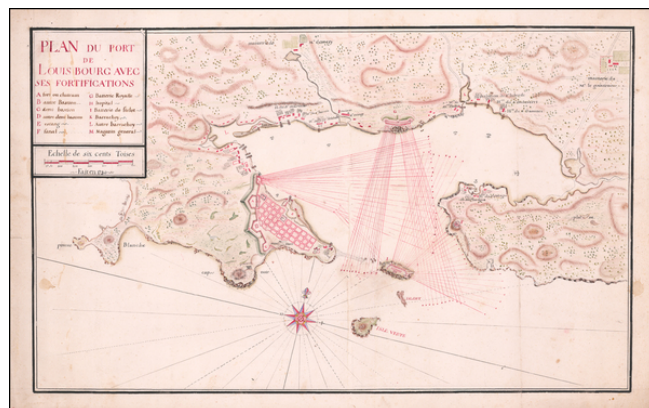
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Plan Du Port de Louisbourg Avec ses Fortifications . . . Fait en 1730 (manuscript map)

Stock#: 60556op
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1730 circa
Place: Louisbourg
Color: Pen & Ink with Wash Color
Condition: VG
Size: 24 x 14.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Early Manuscript Plan of Louisbourg Showing Cod Fish Production, The Names of Settlers, Gallows and Farms

Finely executed manuscript plan of the harbor of Louisbourg, drawn circa 1730. The present map is quite unusual due to its illustration of the local cod fish industry. It includes the names of early settlers, farms and other important details.

While the vast majority of maps of the Louisbourg area drawn between 1723 and 1745 were done for military planning, the present map has a number of commercial features to it, most notably what appear to be mercantile establishments related to the dry cod fishery, including named local residents and French-based merchants who operated their dry cod fishery from these sites. For example, the black line rectangles are fish drying flakes, illustrating the production process for drying cod before shipping it back to Europe. A "fish flake" is a platform built on poles and spread with boughs for drying cod on the foreshore of fishing villages and small coastal towns in Newfoundland and Nordic countries.

The map provides an exceptionally detailed image of Louisbourg. It dates to 1730, just thirteen years after the French moved to fortify the settlement in 1717 in the wake of the Treaty of Utrecht. The treaty ceded control of Acadia to Britain, leaving the French with only its colony at Île Royale to serve as a base of operations for its important fishing grounds on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. Louisbourg is well placed for protecting the entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the other French colonial settlements in Canada.

In 1713, the French built Port Dauphin and a limited naval support base at the former site of Fort Sainte-Anne. Unfortunately, the icy conditions of the harbor in winter led the French to choose another point on



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the southeastern part of Île Royale. The new harbor, being ice-free and well protected, soon became a winter port for French naval forces on the Atlantic seaboard and a center of commercial fishing activity, which they named Havre Louisbourg after King Louis XIV.

Progress to fortify Louisbourg moved slowly. The first settlers began receiving land warrants in 1717 and construction of the fortified town began in 1719, continuing until 1745, when Louisbourg was captured by the British. The major fortification work began in 1725, with the arrival of Etienne Verrier, who would spend the next 20 years transforming Louisbourg from a fishing port to a European style fortified harbor. The earliest plans illustrating the fortifications at Isle de Lentree, the Bastion on the north shore and the Magazines and major fortifications in the town date to 1725 and 1726.

The present map is similar to several maps in the French Archiv Nationales de Outre-Mers. Beginning with the 1723 Plan illustrated below which shows the barest outlines of the projected fortifications and prospective range of cannon fire, the improvement of Louisbourg began to take shape. The images below illustrate the progress of Verrier's work. Moreover, the plans illustrate that the present plan, pre-dating all but one of the other surviving Louisbourg plans, is among the earliest extant plans of Port of Louisbourg, and the first to illustrate settlers homes, docks and farms.

- **1723 Plan:**

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulyse/osd?q=louisbourg&coverage=&date=1723&from=&to=&type=Carte+ou+plan&mode=list&id=FR_ANOM_03DFC242B

- **Unsigned 1730/31:**

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulyse/osd?id=FR_ANOM_03DFC165B&q=louisbourg&date=1730&type=Carte%20ou%20plan&mode=list&id=FR_ANOM_03DFC165B

- **Verrier 1735:**

http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ulyse/osd?id=FR_ANOM_03DFC185B&q=louisbourg&date=1735&type=Carte%20ou%20plan&mode=list&id=FR_ANOM_03DFC185B

Analyzing the Plan

In addition to the date shown on the plan, there are a number of features on the present map which illustrate its age and the likely purpose for which it was made.

Etienne Verrier was the chief engineer responsible for the creation of the fortifications at Fortress Louisbourg; he served there from ca. 1725 to 1745. Virtually all of the surviving maps and plans from this period bear either his signature or are stylistically consistent with his work. The present map, while clearly constructed by a skilled draftsman, does not appear to be in Verrier's hand.



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The first observation is that title of the present map is pasted over an earlier title, as can be seen where the paste down title is slightly folded back at the top left, above the word "Port." Below the present title is a simple title "Plan."

The second observation is that while the map includes military fortifications and details, the majority of the information on the map is of a civilian and commercial nature. Unlike the three maps listed above, the following civilian features are shown on the present example:

- The location of *habitations* outside the fortified town and docks are emphasized
- The shore is lined with symbols illustrating cod fish flakes.
- Instead of soundings, only the locations of anchorages are shown around the bay
- Several roads are shown in the upper part of the map
- The "*maitterie de Mr. le gouverneur*" is shown (Governor's Farm)
- The "*maitterie de Mr. demesy*" is shown (Demesy's Farm), which is likely Jacques-Ange Le Normant de Mezy or his son Sebastien-Francois-Ange Le Normant De Mezy.
- The "*Simetiere*" (Cemetery) is also shown in the fortified town
- A meticulously illustrated "*Potence*" (Gallows), is shown south of the fortified town, at the entrance of the harbor.

The third observation relates to the lighthouse. The 1723 plan does not show a lighthouse. Following the wreck of the French ship *Chameau* in 1725, the need to build a lighthouse became more pressing. The location for the lighthouse was proposed as early as 1727, but construction did not begin until 1730. The unsigned 1730/31 map above shows "*fanal a faite en 1731*" (beacon built in 1731). The present map includes shows the "*Fanal*" further to the north, suggesting completion of this map prior the commencement of construction in June 1730.

One of the map's most important features is the location of a number of French settlers along the shoreline of the harbor. The names include:

- Lartigue (warrant confirming land grant to Lartigue signed June 22, 1718)
- Rodrigue (warrant confirming land grant to Rodrigue signed June 22, 1718. Jean-Baptiste Rodrigue and his son Michel, both sea captains, developed a wholesale trading business out of their shipping to and from the West Indies and Quebec)
- Dassance
- Etcheverri (likely Bernard D'Etcheverry, a Basque-born merchant)
- Laborde
- Madame Pledien
- Demsy (DeMesy; either Jacques-Ange Le Normant de Mezy or his son Sebastien-Francois-Ange Le



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Normant De Mezy)

- Dolabarato
- Lacroix (warrant confirming land grant to Lacroix signed June 23, 1718)
- Martinsas (Pierre Martissans began as a *habitant-pecheur* with a fishing property near Louisbourg, but by 1725 he was also a commission agent, a wholesale supplier to many other fishermen, and a shipowner with wide commercial interests)
- Lasson (warrant confirming land grant to Lasson signed June 23, 1718)

The map identifies by name 2 early residents and shows the farm of the third.

As noted above Demsy / Demesy is almost certainly Jacques-Ange Le Normant de Mezy, the first *commisaire ordinaire* of the Île Royale. Mezy and the Governor (Joseph de Monbeton de Brouillan (Saint-Ovide), were the two most influential government officials in Louisbourg.

Another significant resident identified here is Joseph Lartigue, whose biographical details give an excellent understanding of life in early Louisbourg. As noted by the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*:

LARTIGUE, JOSEPH, fisherman, merchant, councillor, judge; b. c. 1683 in the province of Armagnac, France; d. 28 May 1743 at Louisbourg, Île Royale (Cape Breton Island). He married Jeanne Dhiarse (d'Hiarse, Dihars), the daughter of a fisherman from Plaisance (Placentia, Nfld.), and they had four sons and five daughters. One of his daughters married Léon Fautoux and another, Michel Rodrigue (whose family is also named on the map).

* * *

Lartigue claimed to have been "without doubt one of the best established [settlers at Plaisance]." His situation at Île Royale, where he went with the Plaisance colony in 1714, confirms his prominence. His principal property in Louisbourg was in a choice location at the foot of the interior glacis of the King's bastion and was considered to be "the finest in the town." With six shallops and 20 men in his employ in 1719, he figured among the town's most important fishermen, but from the early 1720s he appears to have abandoned the fishery in favour of trade. In 1726 he employed 12 men and two vessels in trade. He also rented two warehouses to the crown, as well as space for the admiralty court.

After acquiring some legal experience as a clerk from 1715, he was appointed a councillor in the Conseil Supérieur in 1723 and keeper of the colony's seals in 1731. In 1734 he became the first (and only) judge of the Louisbourg bailiff court on the recommendation of the governor, Saint-Ovide, and the financial commissary, Sébastien-François-Ange Le Normant de Mézy, who described him,



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perhaps a little flatteringly, as a “very steady fellow, honest and straightforward.” Throughout his Louisbourg career Lartigue showed a remarkable propensity for building in areas about to be expropriated in the interests of the king’s service. Although the Crown replaced his expropriated property with comparable land in other areas, he nevertheless complained of losses and it may be that his offices were given him in partial compensation. . . .

Maker

While the maker is unknown, some signs suggest that it could be Francois-Madeleine Vallee. The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* entry for Valle is as follows:

VALLÉE, FRANÇOIS-MADELEINE, surveyor; fl. 1710–42; m. Laurence Casselle in France.

François-Madeleine Vallée was trained in the engineering sciences, including surveying and hydrography. In 1723, by lettre de cachet, he was exiled with his family from France to Île Royale (Cape Breton Island), following a period of imprisonment for undetermined misdemeanours. Until 1725 he was forbidden to take gainful employment; instead, the state provided the family with rations. Probably to demonstrate his usefulness, he undertook a critical review of the construction work done at Louisbourg prior to his arrival there. In 1725 François Ganet, with the consent of the authorities, appointed Vallée as his agent in Louisbourg. In that capacity Vallée looked after the general contractor’s interests until the latter arrived in Louisbourg later that year, including the initial negotiations to settle the claims of the heirs of Michel-Philippe Isabeau, the previous general contractor.*

An attempt in the same year to have Vallée appointed king’s surveyor and teacher of mathematics and hydrography to officers’ sons failed; he had to wait until July 1731 for his surveyor’s licence. Thereafter he was responsible for preparing town plans and survey reports on property concessions in Louisbourg and throughout the colony. He settled boundary differences between owners and on occasion studied all original land titles in order to provide official advice on the current status of various properties. He kept the court up to date on new concessions by providing plans and statements and he was frequently called upon to furnish precise facts respecting properties about to change hands. Vallée’s reports and plans are among the best surviving documentary evidence of town planning at Louisbourg.

In 1731 Vallée was expected to live by the fees he could charge for his services. Evidently this arrangement proved most difficult: he was in a “miserable situation” and it was “absolutely impossible” for him and his family to subsist without a salary. No salary was provided, but from 1733 he was given an annual gratuity of 200 livres. Vallée also raised 5,500 livres by selling his stone



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house on the corner of Rue Saint-Louis and Rue de France in Louisbourg.

Archival references to Vallée at Louisbourg peter out in 1742. There is some evidence that he may have been allowed leave in France in 1738-39 and that he may have returned there in 1743. He had died by the time a register of officers who had served in the French colonies from 1747 to 1763 was drawn up. He is known to have had one son, Louis-Félix, an artillery officer in Île Royale from 1742 to 1745.

Conclusion

This early plan of Louisbourg captures crucial historical information about its inhabitants, layout, and defense. It was possibly drawn by a resident important to the town's property dealings and is a significant contribution to the history of Louisbourg and French Canada.

Detailed Condition:

Pen & Ink with wash colors.