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[Hand Drawn Map of Valletta] Les Villes, Forts, et Chateaux de Malte 1724

Stock#: 62069op
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1724 circa
Place: n.p.
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: VG+
Size: 14 x 8.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Manuscript Map from 1724

Finely executed hand-drawn map of Valletta and environs, with nomenclature in French, illustrating the town, fortifications and neighboring fortifications.

The map is oriented with southwest at the top. Among the fortified areas to the left of Malta are:

- Port du Sangle ou des Francois
- Port Des Galeres / Chateau St. Anoe
- Le Bourg / Port du Bourg ou des Anglois
- Port de la Renelle

Includes an elaborate compass rose.

Valletta

The peninsula which is now Valletta was previously called Xaghret Mewwija, named during the Arab period. Mewwija refers to a sheltered place. The extreme end of the peninsula was known as Xebb ir-Ras (Sheb point), of which name origins from the lighthouse on site. A family which surely owned land became known as Sceberras, now a Maltese surname as Sciberras. At one point the entire peninsula became known as Sceberras.

The building of a city on the Sciberras Peninsula was proposed by the Order of Saint John as early as 1524, a time when the only building on the peninsula was a small watchtower dedicated to Erasmus of



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Formia (Saint Elmo), which had been built in 1488. In 1552, the Aragonite watchtower was demolished and the larger Fort Saint Elmo was built in its place.

In the Great Siege of 1565, Fort Saint Elmo fell to the Ottomans, but the Order eventually won the siege with the help of Sicilian reinforcements. The victorious Grand Master, Jean de Valette, immediately set out to build a new fortified city on the Sciberras Peninsula to fortify the Order's position in Malta and bind the Knights to the island. The city took his name and was called La Valletta. The Grand Master received substantial aid from various European crowns, due to the increased fame of the Order after their victory in the Great Siege. Pope Pius V sent his military architect, Francesco Laparelli, to design the new city, while Philip II of Spain sent substantial monetary aid and construction began in 1566.

Francesco Laparelli was the city's principal designer. The city of Valletta was mostly complete by the early 1570s, and it became the capital in March 1571 when Grand Master Pierre de Monte moved from his seat at Fort St Angelo in Birgu to the Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta. During the reign of Antoine de Paule, more fortifications were built to protect Valletta (the Floriana Lines). During António Manoel de Vilhena's reign, a town began to form between the walls of Valletta and the Floriana Lines.

In 1749, Muslim slaves plotted to kill Grandmaster Pinto and take over Valletta, but the revolt was suppressed before it even started due to their plans leaking out to the Order.

In 1775, during the reign of Ximenes, an unsuccessful revolt known as the Rising of the Priests occurred in which Fort Saint Elmo and Saint James Cavalier were captured by rebels, but the revolt was eventually suppressed.

Detailed Condition:

Extra oversized margins added to left and right side of the map.