



Contemporary separate-issue plan of the Battle of Cartagena de Indias

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Carte Topographique de la Baye Ville et Faubourg de Cartagene Avec les Forts et Batteries  
 Nouvellement Etabli pur servir a sa defense.

Paris, 1741. 445 x 600mm.

£1,800

Three maps relating to the British attack on Cartagena in April 1741, under Vice-Admiral Edward Vernon: the sea routes from England to the Americas; a plan of Cartagena Bay; and a plan of Cartagena itself. Four insets give details of the surrounding forts. Launched as part of the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-48), the attack on Catagena was an attempt to dislodge the Spanish from their American possessions. The large British force was expecting an easy victory: with the fleet in place and some of the Spanish outposts overcome, Vernon sent Captain William Laws back to London with reports of his victory. Medals were struck showing Vernon taking the surrender of Spanish admiral Blas de Lezo, but soon afterwards horrifying news came from America. Vernon had failed to capture the city and had withdrawn to Jamaica, defeated by disease, particularly yellow fever. George II was appalled and ordered Robert Walpole to prohibit news of the disaster from being published. Despite this and the withdrawal of the celebratory medals from circulation, the government fell. The annotation at the bottom left refers to the map as "The place where the English were beaten on 20 April, 1741."



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