



Colour printed map with contemporary colour wash, on two joined sheets and laid down on linen.

## **THE FIRST ACCURATE, COMPREHENSIVE MAP OF MAHÉ, THE PRINCIPAL ISLAND OF THE SEYCHELLES**

**Map of the Island of Mahé Seychelles. Made in accordance with Ordinance No 7 of 1898. Based on survey by Commander Balfour HMS Stork 1890 and showing the principal landed properties as compiled from various plans and other sources and laid down by Traverse of Roads and Paths, by S.B. Hobbs, Island Surveyor**

### **Author**

HOBBS, S.B.

### **Publication date**

27th Sept 1900.

### **Publisher**

L. Pombart for the Central Printing Establishment,

### **Publication place**

Port Louis, Mauritius,

### **Physical description**

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### **Dimensions**

980 by 680mm. (38.5 by 26.75 inches).

### **Notes**

The Seychelles had been part of the British Crown Colony of Mauritius since 1814, where this map

was printed, only three years before the Seychelles would become a crown colony in their own right, in 1903. Based on the trigonometric surveys conducted by the crew of the HMS 'Stork', under the Command of Andrew Francis Balfour, in 1890. Hobbs's detailed map is of particular interest because it includes, in addition to topography, settlement, and infrastructure, the cadastral divisions of named plantations. Many of the place-names are in French, a hangover of the French slave plantations of the second half of the eighteenth century, and those recorded in capital letters are properties that were originally granted by the French crown.

S.B. Hobbs, worked in Mahé's surveying office for a considerable time. From 1881, he was Assistant Island Surveyor, and eventually responsible for making and recording cadastral surveys across Mahé.

From the library of Albert-Auguste Fauvel (1851 - 1909), best known for his writings on China, who, nevertheless, conducted an in-depth study of the great "Coco de Mer" (Lodoicea), or giant sea coconut, native to the Seychelles, and created the first carto-bibliography of the Seychelles. He has annotated the map, in an apparent attempt to chart the movements of Lazare Picault, a French mariner who led an expedition to Mahé in 1742.

Rare, one of only 4 examples known: at the British Library (possibly a later edition dated 1901); one in a private collection; and another sold at auction, Christie's 2004.

### **Bibliography**

Fauvel, 'Seychelles. Unpublished Documents on the History of the Seychelles Islands... together with a Cartography...', 1909, p. 19; Guebourg, 'Les Seychelles', 2004, p. 55; Lawrence, 'Note on a Visit to the Republic of Seychelles', 1979, p. 4; McEwan, 'Land Survey and Land Registration in Seychelles', 1961, p. 35; 'The Seychelles Law Reports', vol. I, 1936, p. 107.

### **Provenance**

Provenance:

With contemporary manuscript annotations in pencil of Albert Auguste Favell (1851-1909), the French intellectual-adventurer who was the first person to seriously study the cartographic history of the Seychelles.

### **Price:**

**Inventory reference:** 17691