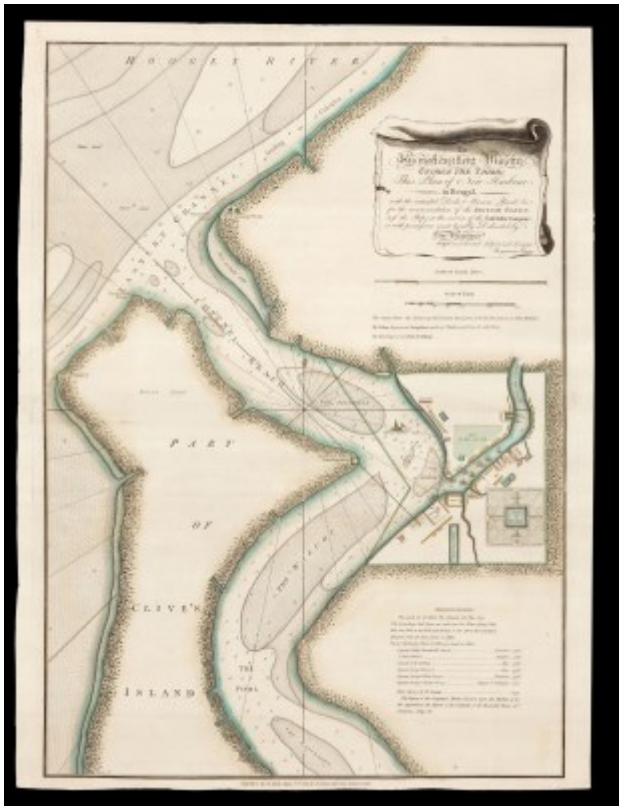


First issue. Double-page engraved chart, with contemporary highlights in red, green and yellow ink, and full colour wash.

FOILED PLANS

To his most excellent majesty George the Third; This Plan of New Harbour in Bengal, with the intended Docks, Marine Yard, etc., for the Accommodation of the British Fleet, & of the Ships in the service of the East India Company; is with permission mostly humbly Dedicated by His Majesty's dutiful and devoted Subject and Servant, Benjamin Lacam.

Author
LACAM, B[enjamin].

Publication date
August 30th, 1784.

Publisher
Published as the Act directs,... by B. Lacam, Cecil Street, Strand,

Publication place
London,

Physical description
First issue. Double-page engraved chart, with contemporary highlights in red, green and yellow ink, and full colour wash.

Dimensions
72 by 54mm. (2.75 by 2.25 inches).

Notes

The woes of Benjamin Lacam, who was commissioned by the East India Company to survey the delta of the Hoogly River, a busy shipping lane, and recommend a location for a new harbour to cope with the increased trade in Calcutta, with a naval dockyard, are reported at length in a government report for 1783. He chose a site some 60 miles down-river of Calcutta, but his initial proposal was “spiked” by opponents, and was rejected. Lacam sued for compensation, and was again rejected. Lacam appealed, repeatedly, and eventually, in 1809, received a meagre compensation.

Lacam’s proposed plan of the new harbour at Bengal is presented in great detail, in his plan, with magazines, dockyards, carpenters, granaries, and a “bake house” shown along the banks of “Corelier Creek”, the waters of which are populated by seven illustrated ships. There is also a “tank of fresh water” surrounded by a “garden”, as well as a “park for deer and cattle” and a hospital.

A key above the plan of the harbour explains the colours used to represent the boundaries of New Harbour (green), brick buildings (red) and thatched wooden bungalows (yellow).

Beneath, “observations” reference six separate hydrographical surveys of the area which were undertaken between 1775 and 1777. Despite the great hydrographical efforts Lacam went to, in order to prove the validity and promise of his project, the EIC ultimately withdrew funding and his dream of New Harbour was never realized.

Bibliography

Provenance

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