

AMERICA - (CREVECOEUR, MICHEL GUILLAUME ST. JEAN DE, CALLED: SAINT JOHN DE CREVECOEUR.)

Voyage dans la Haute Pensylvanie et dans l'État de New-York, Par un Membre adoptif de la Nation Onéida. Traduit et publié par l'auteur des Lettres d'un Cultivateur Américain. Tome Premier [- Tome Troisième.]

Reference: 27162

De l'Imprimerie de Crapelet. A Paris, Chez Maradan, An IX - 1801. Frontispiece, two plates, one folding plate, one folding map (vol. 1); four folding maps (vol. 2); four folding tables, two folding maps (vol. 3). Three volumes. xxi, [1, errata], 427, [1] pp.; xiii, [1, errata], 434 pp.; xii, 409, [1, errata] pp. 8vo. Contemporary mottled calf, spines richly gilt in compartments, green morocco labels with gilt lettering, a very attractive copy. Echeverria & Wilkie, 801/22; Fay, p. 40; Monaghan 503; Sabin 17501. The scarce first edition of this little-known work by Crèvecoeur, which was not translated into English until the 1960s. It is of course not a translation but an original work by Crèvecoeur. Crèvecoeur was of noble birth and first came to America in 1754. He served in Canada during the Seven Years' War, travelled widely throughout the Great Lakes and Ohio regions and American colonies, and finally settled on a farm near the frontier in Orange County, NY. He became an American citizen in 1764, and he served as French consul in New York from 1783 to 1790. His "letters of an American Farmer," published in English in 1782, made him an instant celebrity in Europe and the book was the first best-seller by an American author in Europe. "Crèvecoeur spent nearly a quarter of a century in America, saw Washington, in 1774, come to the first Congress fresh from his farm, witnessed his extraordinary career, and, in 1797, saw him retire to the private life of an agriculturist. His experience, therefore, enables him to give much information and personal gossip not readily found elsewhere. (.....) This work is distinguished by its details on the aboriginal tribes, and their gradual disappearance. No other writer has so well described the Indian great councils, or assemblies, where they deliberate on their public interests" (Monthly Review, quoted in Sabin). The work furthermore provides information on central New York, Niagara Falls, deals with (new settlements in) Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, the two Carolina's and some discussion on Canada, there are observations on the flora and fauna, political history, the city of New York, the whole constituting a rich source on the 18th-century history of America. The frontispiece is a portrait of George Washington, further portraits are of Kesketomah, an Ondondaga sachem, Koohassen, an Oneida warrior, a map entitled "Carte de la Partie Septentrionale des Etats-Unis", a map entitled "Plan de la Cataracte de Niagara et de l'Isthme qui separe les lacs Erie et Ontario", and a map entitled "Carte de la Partie Meridionale des Etats-Unis", a plate "Fortification des Anciens Indigenes" and a plate "Plan d'un Ancien Camp Retranché", two folding views of Niagara Falls, plus some tables both in- and outside text. - A very nice copy of a scarce and interesting work.

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