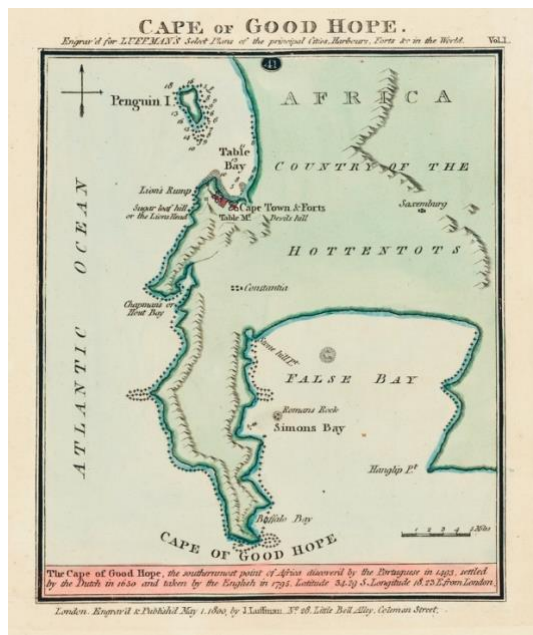


Map Information Sheet

Cape of Good Hope



Author: John Luffman (1756 – 1846)

Date of Publication: 1800

Publisher: John Luffman (London)

Original Size:

Description

This 1800 map of the **Cape of Good Hope** is a compact engraved regional plan, presenting the broader geography of the Cape Peninsula and environs, including Table Bay with Robben Island, False Bay, the Cape of Good Hope, and the adjacent interior labelled the “Country of the Hottentots.” Issued in his *Select Plans of the Principal Cities, Harbours, Forts etc. in the World*, it prioritises coastlines, capes, bays, and navigational reference points over street-level detail, conveying the Cape’s strategic maritime setting during the first British occupation (1795–1803). Designed for merchants, naval readers, and an informed public, the plate’s clean, functional engraving situates the harbour and headlands within their wider coastal and inland context, underscoring the Cape’s role as a vital victualling and waypoint between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans at the turn of the 19th century.

Cartographic Content

- **Geographical Coverage:**

The map depicts the **Cape of Good Hope**, including:

- **Table Bay:** Clearly delineated with anchorage points and surrounding topography.
- **Cape Town:** Shown as a small but fortified colonial settlement, with street grid indications, fortifications, and important buildings.
- **Fortifications:** The Castle of Good Hope and related defensive works are marked.
- **Surrounding Features:** Table Mountain, Devil’s Peak, and Lion’s Head are represented schematically as landmarks for navigation.
- **Environs:** The plan focuses tightly on the peninsula and harbour rather than the wider colony, aligning with the series’ emphasis on strategic nodes.

- **Cartographic Style:**

- This was not a large wall map but a compact engraved plan, part of a serial publication that ran from 1796 to 1803.
- The series was designed to give readers concise visual representations of the world’s key strategic and commercial sites.
- The engraving is clean and functional, with emphasis on harbours, fortifications, and settlement layout. Decorative elements are minimal.

Significance

1. Strategic Representation:

- Unlike broader colonial maps, this plan zeroed in on Cape Town and its defences, underlining Britain's view of the Cape as a fortified gateway between oceans.

2. Imperial Messaging:

- By including Cape Town in a collection alongside other global strongholds (e.g., Gibraltar, Bombay, Havana), Luffman visually asserted the Cape's place in Britain's global empire, even though its future (with the Peace of Amiens in 1802) was uncertain.

3. Public Engagement with Empire:

- The compact format meant that maps like this circulated widely, making imperial geography accessible to ordinary readers at the dawn of the 19th century.

Historical Context

• John Luffman (1751–1821):

An English engraver, publisher, and cartographer, Luffman specialized in producing affordable, small-format maps and plans. His *Select Plans* series was published in 120 monthly parts between 1796 and 1803, and later compiled into bound volumes.

• Why the Cape Appeared:

- The Cape of Good Hope was one of the most important harbours in the world at the time, a mandatory stop for ships sailing between Europe and Asia.
- Britain had seized the colony from the Dutch in 1795, during the French Revolutionary Wars, to prevent it falling under French control through the Batavian Republic (the Dutch Republic's successor).
- By 1800, when Luffman's plan was engraved, the Cape was firmly under British occupation (the first British occupation, 1795–1803).

• Intended Audience:

- The *Select Plans* were marketed to merchants, naval officers, and the educated public interested in Britain's growing imperial footprint.
- The Cape's inclusion highlighted its status as both a military outpost and a vital resupply station on the way to India.

• Cartographic Sources:

- Luffman's plan likely drew on British military surveys of Cape Town and Table Bay undertaken after the 1795 occupation.
- Compared with his general pocket atlas (*A New Pocket Atlas and Geography of the World*, 1799–1801), this plan is more technical, focusing on harbour detail and fortifications rather than broad geography.

This is a reproduction of a historical map.
Digitally enhanced and printed by **Africa Map Art**.



www.africamapart.co.za