



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Upper Canada &c.

Stock#: 66939
Map Maker: Arrowsmith
Date: 1842
Place: London
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 19 x 24 inches
Price: \$ 395.00



Description:

Early state of John Arrowsmith's map of Upper Canada and the Eastern Great Lakes, including Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake, Ontario, with parts of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior.

The present map is drawn directly from the work of James Chewett and William Chewett, whose work in the mapping of the region over the course of the 3 decades, beginning from a nearly blank canvas, resulted in a comprehensive general mapping of the region during a period where Upper Canada went from largely unsettled to a population of over 300,000.

Arrowsmith's map faithfully incorporates the important surveying and mapping work of James G. Chewett for the Surveyor General of Upper Canada, at time when the Canada Company, the progenitor of this rapid expansion, was in a state of turmoil, which would result in the ouster of its founder, John Galt.

The map predates the depiction of the increase in settlement in the region just to the east of Lake Huron and south of Georgian Bay. The Lands shown here as Indian Territory and Crown Lands in London County



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will in the next decade be divided into townships, and the Rivers and topographical features of the region are not yet shown.

Mapping Southern Ontario

In 1792, Chewett's father William moved to the newly-formed Province of Upper Canada (Ontario), where he worked as surveyor for Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe, under the direction of David William Smyth, laying out new towns and cadastral lots for incoming Loyalist settlers. He was, more than any other individual responsible for shaping the accurate geographic conception of what is now southern Ontario. During this early period, settlement in Upper Canada only hugged the main waterways along the American border, including the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario, and the Detroit, Niagara, St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers. The contemporary mapping of this strip of civilization was impressive, but had one major problem. Beyond the settled zone, such as the shores of Lake Huron and Lake Nipissing, the area was poorly mapped and often a complete void.

The War of 1812 was a transformative event in the history of Upper Canada. Against the odds, the province's small defense forces of British regulars, citizen militia and their Native Canadian allies fended off repeated attacks by often much larger American armies. The war wrought extensive damage to farms, towns and property. Notably, the capital York (Toronto) had been sacked and burned in 1813. The British government technically assumed responsibility for compensating subjects for their war losses. However, as the provincial archives, including the records and maps of the Surveyor General's office, went up in flames during the burning of York, much of the information relevant to assessing compensation claims needed to be painstaking reacquired. Many cadastral surveys had to be redone, and visible damage to properties needed to be recorded. William Chewett was given the primary responsibility for this task.

As time wore on, the cash-strapped Crown balked at paying the ever-rising war compensation claims, and so desired to find a new source of revenue for settling these obligations. Moreover, just as had happened in the neighboring American states, people realized that vast fortunes could be made in land speculation. John Galt (1779-1839), a Scottish novelist, proposed in 1824 a private land development company be formed to settle the region. The company could buy large tracts of undeveloped land from the Crown, the proceeds of which could be used to settle the war compensation claims. In turn, the company could sell the land to migrants. Galt petitioned various political figures in London and York, and on July 27, 1825, the Canada Company was given a royal charter by Act of Parliament.

The Company agreed to purchase 400,000 acres of land from the Crown. The 'Canada Company Lands' consisted of much of the northern part of Southwestern Ontario, including much of the future counties of Lambton, Huron, Bruce, Wellington and Dufferin. While the Canada Company was technically a private venture, the Crown's stake in the scheme ensured that official resources and manpower were drafted to



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support the venture. James Chewett, William's son, was given the task of preparing a grand 'master map' of Southern Upper Canada that would give an accurate and up-to-date depiction of the province and the Canada Company Lands in particular. The completion of the map was seen as an urgent imperative, as many of the Company's investors had only a vague idea of the nature of the Company's territory. While much of the depiction of the province could be pieced together from Chewett's own recent surveys and those of others in the surveyor general's archives, a big problem was that the Canada Company Lands remained the most poorly mapped area of the region.

By 1825, Chewett complete the manuscript for what would become the first accurate general map of what would become Southern Ontario. The depiction of the settled areas of the province is exceedingly precise and detailed, including the placement of towns, townships, counties, rivers, roads, with jurisdictions bodies of water. Capatain Bayfield is specifically given credit for his contribution, as an inscription located off of the shores of Lake Huron reads "from Capt. Bayfield's survey 1819 - 1824".

Joan Winearls, the leading scholar for mapping of Upper Canada, notes:

"Undoubtedly one of the most important maps to be published in the first half of the century -- because of its accuracy and for its impact on other map makers -- was the Canada Company map of 1825-6. . . .The finished map, adds information from the hydrographic charting of the Lake Huron coast by Henry Bayfield to produce the most accurate map of the province until the late 1850s" (Winearls, p. xxii).

The years following the Company's establishment marked a period of explosive growth in Upper Canada, as the province's population grew from 165,000 in 1826 to 375,000 in 1846. The Company experienced considerable success in attracting settlers and developing its territories. New roads were quickly laid across the lands and new towns were created.

However, the Canada Company quickly ran into financial and legal problems. This was, in good part, due to Galt's chaotic mismanagement and the web of corruption into which the venture became intertwined. Amazingly, Galt who had almost complete autonomy over the Company's day-to-day operations, did not even keep ledger books. Agreements were often made (and then rescinded) by means of oral conversations, and no proper records were kept. Company agents habitually embezzled funds and leading members of the "Family Compact" accepted bribes and other ill-gotten gains. Many of the regular prospective settlers and investors who had paid money to the Company were defrauded. Upper Canada's courts were inundated with lawsuits against the Company, and public outrage over the Company's behavior is thought to have been a contributing cause to Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837.



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The situation was so serious that the Crown was not being paid its fees and quitrents. In 1829, the province's Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, ensured that Galt was dismissed, and had the Company placed under official audit. While the Company continued to play a key role in the settlement of what would become Ontario, the vast riches imagined by the Company's founders remained elusive. The Company existed in various forms until it was folded in 1958.

Detailed Condition: