



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

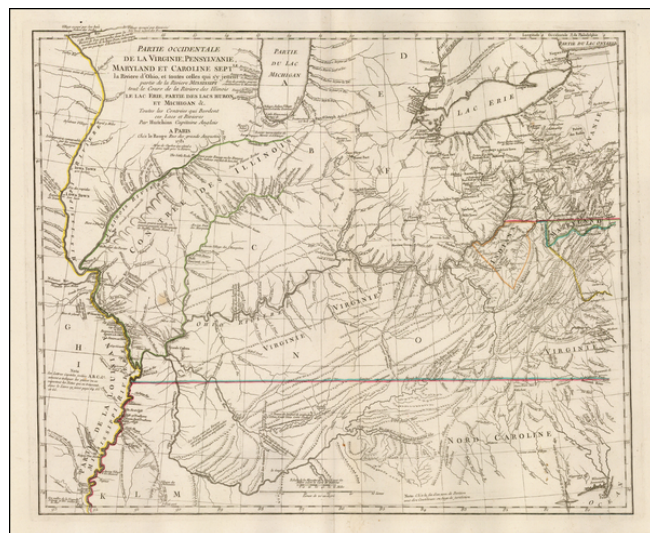
7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Partie Occidentale de la Virginie, Pensylvanie, Maryland et Caroline Septle. la Riviered d'Ohio, et toutes celles qui s'y jettent partie de la Riviere Mississipi tout le Cours de la Riviere des Illinois Le Lac Erie, Partie Des Lacs Huron et Michigan . . Par Hutchins . . . 1781

Stock#: 39955
Map Maker: Le Rouge / Hutchins
Date: 1781
Place: Paris
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 24 x 20 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Proof State of the French Edition of Hutchins Map of the Ohio Valley & Mississippi Valley, First Great Modern Map of the American Midwest

The present map is proof state of the French edition of the single most important fundamental eighteenth century cartographic record of the American Midwest. First issued in 1778 in London and subsequently issued in 1781, in Paris, Hutchins' *A New Map of the Western Parts of Virginia . . .* was not only the best but also the largest map of the Midwest in print, and as such was the logical vehicle to educate European, British and American investors about the region's geography. It shows the region between The Great Lakes and the Ohio River, west to the Mississippi, which was erected into the Northwest Territory in 1787, and immediately became the site of the most extensive land speculation in American history. A number of land companies were established in the Territory by prominent Americans, who immediately sought European, particularly French, investors to finance their projects. Their efforts coincided with the French Revolution, which resulted in a great flight of capital from France. The rapidly growing United States, with its abundant natural resources, seemed to offer the safe haven that French bankers, merchants and



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aristocrats were seeking.

While not properly appreciated today, the influx of European capital had a formative impact on the development of the Midwest. By the end of the eighteenth century, vast tracts of the U.S. backcountry including the Northwest Territory, were owned by foreign investors, or reliant on foreign investment. As François Furstenberg notes in his remarkable analysis of the role of European capital in Frontier America:

[the] funneling of European capital into the northern and northwestern [American] backcountry may well be one of the most important -and most overlooked- features of the post-Revolutionary era . . . It was European capital, not American, that began to integrate the northern U. S. backcountry into the Atlantic world's trade networks.

Many of the American speculators were prominent politicians, such as Henry Knox, the Secretary of War, and Senator Robert Morris, of Pennsylvania, which presumably ensured that government policy would protect the interests of European capital. The net result was an influx of capital that forever changed the landscape of the Trans-Appalachian West. The Hutchins map must be regarded as the primary visual catalyst.

Interestingly, this commercial imperative is well illustrated in the changes reflected in the two known states of the French edition of the Hutchins map. As noted below, the English edition of the map shows considerable topographical features along a number of rivers, suggesting that the lands on either side of the rivers was not flat. This feature is present in the proof state of the French edition (offered here), but was subsequently revised before issuance of the final version of the map, quite possibly in order to provide a more favorable depiction of the lands adjacent to these rivers, as a means of suggesting that lands were flatter and more hospitable to agricultural uses than was initially suggested by Hutchins in the English edition of the map.

Thomas Hutchins & the First Modern Mapping of the Midwest

Thomas Hutchins was one of the most important cartographers operating in America during the second half of the eighteenth-century. An intrepid frontier explorer of great intellectual curiosity, even more than two centuries later, the breadth and high quality of his work remains absolutely astonishing. Born in Monmouth County, New Jersey, Hutchins joined the Pennsylvania militia at a very young age, and evidently received advanced training in surveying and draftsmanship. During the French & Indian War he



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served at Fort Pitt, the gateway to the Ohio Country, and mapped the shorelines of much of the lower Great Lakes. Returning to Philadelphia, Hutchins was assigned to General Henry Bouquet's expedition to reconnoiter the upper Ohio Valley, resulting in his fine *Map of the Country on the Ohio and Muskingum Rivers* (1766). In 1766, he joined George Croghan and Harry Gordon on an epic descent of the Ohio to the Mississippi River, drafting a detailed hydrographic survey and making numerous scientific observations. He was subsequently charged with surveying the route of the proposed Iberville Canal, as well as various other locations in British West Florida.

In the mid-1770s, Hutchins drafted his groundbreaking and monumental manuscript map of the entire Trans-Appalachian West, *A New Map of the Western part of Virginia*. . . It was the product of almost two decades of his own explorations combined with the finest available geographic intelligence gained from other authorities.

During the height of the American Revolution, Hutchins traveled to London in an effort to have his grand manuscript engraved and published, and became involved in the political intrigue that was gripping both sides of the Atlantic. While still technically serving as a British officer, a captain of the legendary 60th Regiment of Foot, Hutchins' loyalties increasingly lay with the Patriot cause. He crossed the channel to Paris, where he met Benjamin Franklin, who was then serving as the American ambassador to Versailles. Franklin, who was a leading speculator in Ohio Valley lands, was a great admirer of Hutchins' work. He also inducted Hutchins into the spy ring he was operating, the objective of which was to have well-placed American-sympathizers infiltrate official circles in London.

Hutchins promptly returned to London, and while he was arranging for the publication of his map, he fell under the suspicious gaze of William Knox, the Undersecretary of State for the Colonies. Knox (rightly) accused Hutchins of being an American spy and had the cartographer imprisoned and subjected to severe inquisition. Nevertheless, the great map was published towards the end of 1778, along with a separately issued descriptive pamphlet, *A Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina*.

Upon his release by the British, Hutchins traveled to Paris, where he met with Benjamin Franklin. Interestingly, and perhaps due to Franklin's intervention, in 1781, the prominent Paris mapmaker, Georges-Louis Le Rouge (who also published Franklin's map of the Gulf Stream), published a French edition of the great Hutchins map, along with an edition of the pamphlet entitled *Description Topographique de la Virginie, de la Pensylvanie, du Maryland, et de la Caroline Septentrionale*. The



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French edition of the pamphlet attained considerable importance, as it was seen as the authoritative guidebook to the American backcountry by French investors, which includes a map of the lands of the Indiana Company, which Hutchins dedicated to Benjamin Franklin and which is not found in the 1778 English edition of the pamphlet.

Issued separately, but intended to accompany the Pamphlet, Franklin and Hutchins arranged for the publication of this French edition of the map by Le Rouge. The map is a faithful reduced size version of Hutchins' map, with a key identifying sections of the map which are discussed at greater length in the pamphlet.

Hutchins was eventually returned to America. Following the Revolution, he was appointed as the first Geographer of the United States, whereupon he assumed a leading role in developing the frontier lands he had been instrumental in exploring. He was the father of the Ordinance Survey system, which established the systematic division of the western lands into neat cadastral squares (townships), and was actively involved in a series of private land speculation schemes. Hutchins died in 1789, while preparing to lead an ambitious speculative endeavor in Spanish Louisiana.

Conclusion

In summary, Hutchins' epic work, is an exceedingly important historical artifact documenting the early endeavors to settle the American Midwest. With unrivalled scope and detail, it depicts the Native American cessions, key transportation routes and settlements and the location of virtually all of the major land speculation schemes of the late 18th Century. It is without question, the single most important cartographic depiction of the region and an artifact that was used extensively in the selling of this region to European investors.

Moreover, the French proof state of the map and modifications thereto in the final version, provide further insight into the importance of portraying these western lands as commercially attractive to European speculators and settlers.

Proof State

The present example of the map is a proof state of the map. Specifically, it includes significant amounts of topographical detail along the major western rivers which was subsequently removed or significantly reduced in the final state, most notably in the following places:



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- Along the Mississippi River and the Wabash River, just north of their confluence
- On the south side of the Illinois River
- On both sides of the Upper Ohio River, all the way to Fort Pitt
- On both sides of the Shawanee River
- On both sides of the Cherokee River

These later revisions, along with removal of the guidelines present in the map title and elsewhere, can be seen on the copy in the Boston Public Library / Richard Brown Collection copy: maps.bpl.org/id/rb15251

The areas along these rivers were areas of great interest to French settlers and speculators. We surmise that the decision to modify this, features a significant departure from the original Hutchins map and the proof state of the French edition of the Hutchins map (offered here), was likely to make these lands look flatter and therefore more hospitable to agricultural uses. The English edition can be viewed here: {{ inventory_detail_link('37434') }}

Rarity

The map is of the utmost rarity, with no record that the map has ever appeared at auction or in a printed dealer catalog. We locate the following examples:

- Bibliotheque Nationale de France (not examined)
- Sachische Landesbibliothek (not examined)
- Library of Congress / Rochambeau Collection (proof state)
www.loc.gov/resource/g3707o.ar079000/
- Richard Brown Collection / Boston Public Library, on line. (final state). maps.bpl.org/id/rb15251

The collections at the State Library of Virginia, Maryland Historical Society and Pennsylvania State Archives, all reference their examples as being copies of Library of Congress / Rochambeau collection copy.

The Library of Congress Rochambeau Map Collection, contains cartographic items used by Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau (1725-1807), when he was commander in chief of the French expeditionary army (1780-82), during the American Revolution. The maps were from Rochambeau's personal collection, cover much of eastern North America, and date from 1717 to 1795. Many of the items in this extraordinary group of maps show the importance of cartographic materials in the campaigns of the



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American Revolution as well as Rochambeau's continuing interest in the new United States. The collection consists of 40 manuscript and 26 printed maps, and a manuscript atlas, the originals of which are in the Library of Congress' Geography and Map Division.

www.loc.gov/collection/rochambeau-maps/about-this-collection/

With the exception of the Rochambeau copy, there are no other known examples of the proof state of the map and, to our knowledge, prior to the publication of this online essay, the existence of the two states of this map was unknown.

Detailed Condition: