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**Map of the District of Maine Massachusetts Compiled From Actual Surveys made by  
Order of the General Court and under the inspection of Agents of their appointment. By  
Osgood Carleton**

**Stock#:** 24004  
**Map Maker:** Carleton  
  
**Date:** 1802  
**Place:** Boston  
**Color:** Outline Color  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 60 x 39 inches  
  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

Landmark map of Maine, in its original slipcase.

Carleton's map of Maine is one of the most important early maps of the State. Drawn at a scale of 2.5 miles to the inch, the map illustrates in fine detail the intricate coastline and complex system of rivers, streams, lakes and ponds. The depiction of towns, counties, townships etc. is even more impressive, beginning with the surveyed boundaries of counties and townships (including dozens of townships laid out but not yet granted or sold), as well as the courses of roadways and locations of bridges.



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The map includes eight distinct symbols to indicate the locations of cultural, government and industrial establishments. The emphasis seems to be on the latter, as different symbols are assigned to grist mills, saw mills, iron works, iron ore deposits, and fulling mills. The cartouche depicts a small vessel moored at the mouth of a river and taking on a cargo of wood, which might well have been brought down from the mill shown in the far distance. Though at the time much of Maine was unsettled and even unexplored wilderness, the landscape here appears thoroughly tamed, with a meeting house and possibly an academy standing in a large area of open fields.

This is the second state of the second edition of Carleton's map, the first edition having been produced by an Osgood Carleton-John Norman partnership and published in 1798. Though similar in overall appearance the second edition was re-engraved on new plates and differs in a number of ways, including a different cartouche and a different Maine-New Brunswick boundary at the Schoodic River and offers a rather different rendering of that waterway. Agreement on this boundary was not reached until October 1798, after the completion of the first edition of the map. For the first edition, Carleton and Norman do not include a boundary. The other major difference is the introduction of Kennebec County, which had been carved out of Lincoln County in 1799.

The second edition was first issued in 1801 and a second state (the map offered here) issued the following year. The two seem to differ only in that the second state bears the imprint of publishers B. & J. Loring. The slipcase bears the ownership labels of the Lancaster, Mass. Town Library and Horace William Shaler Cleveland (1814-1900). Cleveland, a native of Lancaster, was a major 19th-century landscape architect, who began his career in Massachusetts and later worked in Chicago and Minneapolis. Some of his important projects include Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord, Mass.; Roger Williams Park in Providence, Rhode Island; the boulevard system in Omaha Nebraska; and St. Anthony Park in St. Paul, Minnesota. His design for Central Park lost out to that proposed by Frederick Law Olmstead.

At the time of the map's publication, Maine had not achieved statehood and remained a "district" of Massachusetts. Much of its territory was virtually unexplored, with Carleton showing a vast but largely uncharted tract. This lack of knowledge is further evident at the Maine-Quebec boundary, which is shown imprecisely as a line of highlands running south of and parallel to the St. Lawrence.

With Massachusetts burdened by debt and short of money, Maine lands were seen as a cash cow, to be sold off as quickly as possible to raise funds. The first major attempt was a largely unsuccessful plan in 1786 to sell by lottery 50 townships in Washington and Hancock Counties. Philadelphia financier William Bingham then stepped in and purchased almost 1,000,000 acres of the unsold land, and soon thereafter purchased



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another 1,000,000 acres in the western part of the District. One of the more interesting grants is townships 1 and 2, range 2 in Kennebec County, given to the "Sufferers of Portland," presumably a reference to losses incurred by Portland residents when the town was burned by the British in October 1775.

For all this activity, however, North of roughly 44°30' dozens of townships are shown on the map as unclaimed. Further, it appears that most of the townships that had changed hands had not yet benefitted from development. For example not a single road is shown in the million or so acres held by Bingham in Hancock and Washington Counties. Only the coastal towns from Penobscot Bay south and the southern tiers of York, Cumberland, Kennebec and Lincoln Counties show significant signs of activity such as investment in roads, bridges, meeting houses, and industrial establishments.

The map was produced through a public-private partnership between Carleton, a Boston-based surveyor and mapmaker and the General Court (legislature), which was approved in the mid-1790s. Each town was required to conduct a survey at its own cost and submit a town plan to the Secretary of State. The surveys would then be compiled and where necessary reconciled to produce maps of Massachusetts proper and the District of Maine. Enacting Carleton's proposal, a 1794 Resolve of the General Court stated:

*That the inhabitants of the several towns and districts in the Commonwealth... take or cause to be taken... accurate plans of their respective towns or districts, upon a scale of two hundred rods to an inch, and upon a survey hereafter actually to be made, or that has actually been made, within seven years next preceding this time.... [Resolves of the Massachusetts General Court, 1794, Chap. 101 (26 June, 1794)]*

Further instructions made clear that this was not to be simply a geographical survey, but a summing up of the cultural and economic resources of the state.

*And be it further Resolved, that on each of said plans... the situation of houses for public worship, Court-Houses... shall be inserted....*

*And it is further Resolved, That there be inserted... the breadth of rivers, the number and reputed magnitude of ponds, the falls of water, mountains, manufactories, mills, mines and minerals, and of what sort, iron-works and furnaces... (Ibid.)*

By 1796 a majority of towns had submitted their surveys, which may still be found in the Massachusetts State Archives. It was only in 1797, however, that a partnership of Carleton and Boston printer-publisher



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John Norman submitted a winning proposal to compile the maps from the surveys. In return for providing 400 copies of each to the State, they would receive a 14-year copyright to the map.

Unfortunately, the project encountered numerous setbacks. Many towns were either tardy or noncompliant in submitting surveys, and those submitted were of uneven quality. For example, Provincetown apparently submitted a "plan" consisting of nothing more than an outline of the town with no interior detail. Reflecting the quality of these surveys, a note on the both editions of the Massachusetts and Maine maps states that, "as the surveys of some towns were not so full as others, the Roads and Streams of those Towns have been unavoidably discontinued." Interestingly, a similar note appeared on James Whitelaw's *Correct Map of the State of Vermont* (1796), the first official map of Vermont, which had been produced by a similar process.

Another problem was the poor quality of Norman's engraving. Errors of fact aside, Norman had trouble integrating the immense amount of information and depicting it in a user-friendly manner. As a result, the first edition maps—that of Massachusetts in particular—are in places so cluttered with information as to be almost unreadable. In 1798 the General Court rejected Carleton and Norman's first submission and gave them seven months to produce a revision:

*It is expected in the Mean time they correct all the Error in said maps, and take out the many accidental strokes in the Plate; and also that they make Margins of the Rivers, Ponds, and Sea Coasts neater, and that the whole Plate be better Polished... (Massachusetts Resolves, 1798, chap. 71. June 29, 1798).*

This revision was never produced, however, as it appears that Norman had run off 400 copies of the map before submitting proofs to the General Court for approval. By the time the above revisions were called for, Norman's "sunk costs" may have been so high that he was incapable of further effort on the project. Interestingly, some time in late 1798 or soon thereafter Norman issued a pirated version of the Maine map on a reduced scale, with the title *New Map of the District of Maine Taken from the Original Map Compiled by Osgood Carleton Esq. From Actual Surveys that were made by an Act of the General Court*. (Wheat and Brun #172, incorrectly dating the map to ca. 1795.) That map is now extremely rare.

#### **States of The Map**

Carleton was then asked to re-draw the maps, this time working under the supervision of agents appointed by the General Court.



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- State 1: Engraved by Joseph Callender and Samuel Hill, approved by the General Court, and printed in 1801 in a run of 500 sets (This is what we could call the 2nd edition, 1st issue.)
- State 2: Another run of 400 sets was issued in 1802, the only apparent change being the insertion of the "B. & J. Loring, 1802" imprint" (2nd edition, 2nd issue).

**Detailed Condition:**

Segmented and mounted on linen. Housed in original blue morocco slipcase. Map with light scattered foxing, else excellent. Slipcase bumped and scuffed (but sound) and bearing ownership labels of Lancaster, Mass. Town Library (deaccessioned) and H.W.S.