



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Map of Northern Georgia. Made under the Direction of Capt. W.E. Merrill, Chief Topl. Engr. . . . (presented by the commander of the Topographical Engineers to his brother on August 11, 1865)

Stock#: 29309
Map Maker: Merrill
Date: 1864
Place: Chattanooga, Tenn
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 37.5 x 34.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare and highly important Civil War Battle Map, published by Merrill in Chattanooga On May 2, 1864 for use by commanding officers in the field.

The map is one of only 200 copies originally printed in the days before the commencement of the Atlanta Campaign and was produced in the field by a team of Army topographers and draughtsman. Merrill's map is one of the rarest and most important maps of the War, referred to by Stephenson as s "the principal reference map for all field commanders in the initial stage of the Union campaign to capture Atlanta." The importance of the map cannot be overstated.

As noted by the Library of Congress in its exhibition of Civil War field maps:

The Topographical Department of the Army of the Cumberland, under the direction of Col. William E. Merrill, was chiefly responsible for providing the maps for the Atlanta Campaign. Thomas B. Van Horne in his History of the Army of the Cumberland (1875) notes that "The army was so far from Washington that it had to have a complete map establishment of its own. Accordingly, the office of the chief topographical engineer contained a printing press, two lithographic presses, one photographic establishment, arrangements for map-mounting, and a full corps of draughtsmen and assistants."



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The lithographic presses were invaluable for quickly providing multiple copies of a map. However, the weight of the presses and stones made transporting them difficult, necessitating that they remain in a central depot near the front lines. . . the topographic engineers in the field had available to them a mobile "facsimile [sic] photoprinting device invented by Captain Margedant, chief assistant. . . The process, however, was expensive, and did not permit the printing of a large number of copies; therefore these maps were only issued to the chief commanders." . . .

In preparation for the coming campaign, the Topographical Department began the compilation of an accurate campaign map of northern Georgia. The best available map was enlarged to the scale of an inch to the mile. According to Van Horne, this was then "elaborated by cross-questioning refugees, spies, prisoners, peddlers, and any and all persons familiar with the country in front of us. It was remarkable how vastly our maps were improved by this process. The best illustration of the value of this method is the fact that Snake Creek Gap, through which our whole army turned the strong positions at Dalton and Buzzard Roost Gap, was not to be found on any printed map that we could get, and the knowledge of the existence of this gap was of immense importance to us."

Two days before the Atlanta Campaign began, the Topographical Department was informed of the date of advance. . . the single copy of the map of northern Georgia over which the Topographical Department had been laboring "was immediately cut up into sixteen sections and divided among the draughtsmen, who were ordered to work night and day until all the sections had been traced on thin paper in autographic ink. As soon as four adjacent sections were finished they were transferred to one large stone, and two hundred copies were printed. When all the map had thus been lithographed the map-mounters commenced their work. . . before the commanding generals left Chattanooga, each had received a bound copy of the map, and before we struck the enemy, every brigade, division, and corps commander in the three armies had a copy." Entitled "Map of Northern Georgia made under the direction of Capt. W. E. Merrill, Chief Topl. Engr.," the finished map measures 94 by 88 cm. It is lightly hand colored and indicates below the title and scale that it was "Lith. and printed at Topl. Engr. Office, Dept. Cumbd., Chattanooga, Tenn. May 2d, 1864." For ease of carrying in the field, the map was cut into 24 sections and mounted on cloth to fold to 16 by 23 cm. Pasted to the cloth mounting were cardboard covers to protect the map when folded (LC Civil War Maps no. S29-S30).

As noted by Michael Buehler:

The battle for Atlanta followed the Union victory at Chattanooga in November 1863. The first order of business was the preparation of an accurate field map, the result of which was this map of Northern



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Georgia, which was distributed to every commanding officer before the Army engaged in combat. Work on the map was carried out all through the winter of 1863-64 by engineers under the chief topographical engineer of the Union army of the Cumberland, William Merrill, "the most innovative and conscientious exponent of mapping during the Civil War."

Particular emphasis was put on the work of Sergeant N. Finegan and the Information Bureau, which expertly interviewed anyone who might be expected to have useful information on the region where the campaign was to be fought. So valuable was the intelligence he gleaned that the map was delayed while Finegan finished questioning his spies, scouts, refugees, travelers, prisoners, preachers, and peddlers -his 'motley crew,' in Merrill's words.

The map was completed and printed just five days before the campaign began on May 7 at the Battle of Rock Face Ridge. It depicts approximately the northwest one-third of the State of Georgia. Although imperfect due to the haphazard manner of its construction, it was undoubtedly the best map of northern Georgia then in existence, and a better map than any other Union command ever carried into a campaign.

As a testimony to the map's importance, it is reproduced . . . in virtually every study of Civil War mapping. General Sherman's two personal copies used during the campaign are in the Sherman Collection, Library of Congress. A special edition, printed in three parts on cloth, was issued for the use of cavalry officers "in the saddle."

The map includes an inscription "Map presented to George Osterheld by his brother Henry Osterheld Aug 11, 1865." Henry Osterheld was a Lieutenant, likely serving directly under Merrill at the time the map was compiled. The History of Westchester County, New York provides the following:

In 1864 . . . Mr. Osterheld was appointed to serve on General Rosecrans' staff as assistant inspector of railroad defenses in the Department of the Cumberland, Major James R. Willett being the chief inspector at that time. This department was then transferred to General Thomas' command, and Mr. Osterheld was sent to Nashville, Tennessee, as assistant chief inspector and took charge of the topographical engineers' department. ...

Subsequently he was transferred to the chief engineer's department, becoming assistant to the chief engineer, Major-General Z. B. Tower, head of the military division of the army of the Tennessee. He continued to serve in branch of the army until he was mustered out and honorably discharged in May, 1866.



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Osterheld was apparently also active in the construction and inspection of Railroad Defense Blockhouses during this period. Part of the archive with which this map was acquired includes documents reflecting the reports of Osterheld to Colonel William E Merrill and Major James Willett regarding his inspections and an elaborate set of drawings for a blockhouse.

The map is from the collection of George Osterheld. Osterheld came to America via New York in November 1850 with his friend Rudolf Eickmeyer, after participating in the unsuccessful campaign against Prussian control in South Germany and siege of the Bavarian fortresses of Landau and Kaisertlautern.

On September 1, 1854, Eickemeyer and Osterheld, opened a machine shop, the business at first being confined mainly to repairing tools used in the hat shops and other factories.

The partners familiar with the art of hat manufacturing, and soon produced a small machine for making leather hat-bands. A year or two later he constructed the first sewing machine used to sew the leathers into the hats; the whip-stitch, then introduced, is retained to the present day in some of the best machines used for sewing purposes.

During the war, the partners added the making of revolvers to thier work. In 1865, they invented and patented his first hat stretcher, and also a machine to pounce hats in a cone-shape, in the following year, together with Mr. Osterheld, he invented the first successful hat-blocking machine. From that time forward a specialty was made of hatting machinery at his shops; and he invented numerous improvements to his machines.

In 1869 the firm invented and perfected a driving mechanism for mowing machines. The machine, the Haymaker, received a bronze medal at the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, and three similar medals were awarded to the firm of Osterheld & Eickemeyer for their other exhibits. Their New Champion Mower was later manufactured on an extensive scale at Springfield, Ohio, and in a modified form, as a one-horse mower, by a firm in Yonkers, which was dissolved some years ago.

Detailed Condition:

Folded map, laid on linen. Scattered soiling and foxing. Original covers, inscribed.