



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
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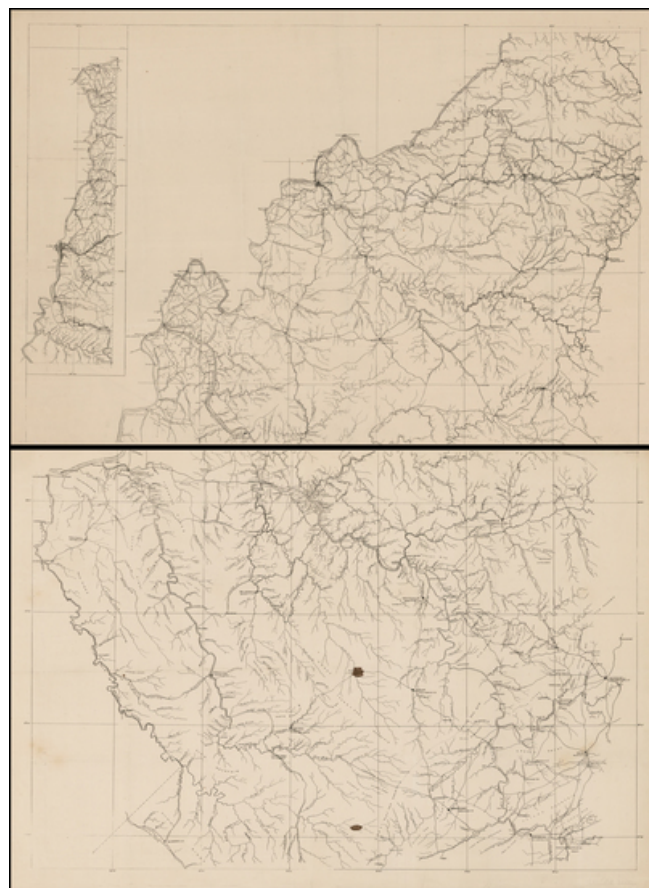
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[The State of Kanahwa? -- Untitled Map of Western Virginia]

Stock#: 32390mb
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1861 circa
Place: Washington D.C. ?
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 44.5 x 32 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Unfinished map of the State of Kanawha, ca. 1861?

A very rare two-sheet map of western Virginia, likely produced during the secession crisis and possibly during its short-lived run in 1861 as the proto-state of Kanawha. Owned in partnership with Boston Rare Maps.

The map depicts northwestern Virginia from the Ohio and Sandy Rivers as far east as Clarksburg and Lewisburg. County seats are located, as are a few other towns and settlements, along with rivers, roads, railroads and trails. Some major topographical features are named, though there is no hachuring used to show relief. The base map used is not known, though for example the treatment in the western counties is strongly reminiscent of Bucholtz' 1859 updated edition of the 1828 Boye map of Virginia.



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The map lacks a title or other identifying information, though the presence of Clay County (est. 1858) and absence of Lincoln (est. 1867) indicate it was created in the Civil War era. Numerous signs of erasure, line breaks, areas of illegibility and other features all suggest that this is a working proof state of an apparently otherwise unknown map. Further supporting this view is the map's provenance, as it was acquired as part of a deaccession from a 19th-century collection which included a number of other unfinished government maps.

We believe-though cannot prove-that this map was produced during the crisis of 1861, some time after Virginia's secession from the Union in May but before western Virginia Unionists ratified the creation of the State of Kanawha in October (The name was soon changed to West Virginia, which was formally admitted to the Union in 1863.) The map approximates only roughly the 39 counties that originally comprised Kanawha: it does not include for example Preston, Randolph and Tucker, which were among the 39, but does include Greenbrier and Monroe, which were not. However, it seems that the boundaries of the would-be state were much in flux for a time, given the vicissitudes of local politics and in particular the varying degrees of secessionist sentiment across the region. This map, we believe, reflects the fluid state of affairs in the Summer and Fall of 1861.

Further supporting our view that this is an early map of the proto-state is the fact that there is no sign that the two sheets were intended as part of a larger map: The easternmost sections of both sheets are left entirely blank, whereas continued coverage would be expected if this were part of a larger map of Virginia. Likewise, the areas northwest of the Ohio River and southwest of the Sandy are also left blank, while a regional map would have included coverage of Kentucky and Ohio.

The lack of title, imprint or date makes it difficult to assess the rarity of this map. However, we have not located any other examples of this map or directly-related derivatives.

Rarity

The map would appear to be a unique survival.

Detailed Condition:

Very good, both sheets gently toned and with minor soiling, and a couple of ink[?] spots to lower sheet.