



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## Altorff Haupt Flecken des Lands URY

**Stock#:** 37408  
**Map Maker:** Merian  
**Date:** 1642  
**Place:** Frankfurt  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG-  
**Size:** 13 x 9 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

Striking early view of the town of Altdorf in the Canton of Uri, incorporating the coat of arms of the town.

The town is perhaps most famous as the location of the legend of William Tell, with a statue and a square commemorating his story in the town center.

Matthaus Merian (1593-1650) was a Swiss engraver and one of the most prolific engraver's of town views in the 17th Century. Merian learned the art of copperplate engraving in Zurich and subsequently worked and studied in Strasbourg, Nancy, and Paris, before returning to Basel in 1615. The following year he moved to Frankfurt, Germany where he worked for the publisher Johann Theodor de Bry (son of Theodor de Bry), whose daughter Maria Magdalena he married in 1617. In 1620 they moved back to Basel, only to return three years later to Frankfurt, where Merian took over the publishing house of his father-in-law after de Bry's death in 1623. In 1626, he became a citizen of Frankfurt and could henceforth work as an independent publisher.

Merian spent most of his working life in Frankfurt. His first town view was a plan of Basel from 1615. With Martin Zeiler (1589 - 1661), a German geographer, and later (circa 1640) with his own son, Matthäus Merian (1621 - 1687), Merian produced a series of *Topographia*, which grew to 21 volumes, collectively known as the *Topographia Germaniae*. In 1647, his daughter Anna Maria Sibylla Merian was born, who would become a pioneering naturalist and illustrator. Matthäus Merian died after several years of illness in 1650 in Bad Schwalbach near Wiesbaden.

After his death his sons Matthäus and Caspar took over the publishing house and continued publishing the *Topographia Germaniae* and the *Theatrum Europaeum* under the name Merian Erben (i.e. Merian Heirs).



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**Detailed Condition:**

Early restoration to top left corner, with some loss of image reinstated.