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A Map of the Back Settlements

Stock#: 41612
Map Maker: Stockdale
Date: 1794
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 8.5 x 7.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine reduced size version of Thomas Hutchins seminal map of region bounded by the Mississippi River, Lake Michigan and Lake Erie and Georgia in the South, from the London edition of *Morse's American Geography*.

One of the earliest maps to name Tennessee Government, spelling Tennessee correctly, unlike later maps by Carey. The two major regional delineations are Western Territory, encompassing Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio and Illinois Country. Ft. Massac on the Shawanee is shown, as are the camps of the Illinois and New Jersey Company's on the Mississippi River and the Wabash Company on the Fox. Post Vincent is noted, prior to Ft. Vincennes.

Ft. Joseph is shown southeast of Lake Michigan. A handful of Indian Tribes are named on tributaries of the Upper Ohio River and a small Indiana appears at the western edge of Maryland. Sandusky, Ft. Miami and Ft. Detroit are also located. The lands of the Ohio Company are also shown.

The map is based upon Thomas Hutchins seminal map of the west, *A New Map of the Western Parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland and North Carolina; Comprehending the River Ohio, and all the Rivers, which fall into it; Part of the Mississippi, the Whole of the Illinois River, Lake Erie; Part of Lakes Huron, Michigan, &c. . . 1778*

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. It showed the region between The Great Lakes and the Ohio River, west to the



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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 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.

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 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 seconded 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 is 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 travelled 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



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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 travelled 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 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.

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. ed in the latter half of 1796.

Detailed Condition:

Minor dampstain in upper margin