



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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A Map and History of Peiping; formerly known as Peking; capital of provinces, princedoms and kingdoms since 1121 B.C.; in 1264 A.D. the capital of the Mongol Empire of Kublai Khan; made the capital of the Ming Empire through the Ming and Ching Dynasties. . .

Stock#: 43979
Map Maker: Dorn

Date: 1936
Place: Beijing
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 34 x 29 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Finely executed pictorial map of Beijing, published by Frank Dorn and the Peiyang Press. Ltd. of Tientsin and Peiping, in 1936.

This is the finest example we have handled.

Dorn's map is perhaps the best known and most iconic pictorial map of Beijing published in the 20th Century, offering a host of interesting ethnographic and iconographic information about Beijing and its environs, while retaining the whimsical qualities of the great pictorial maps of the first half the 20th Century.

Dorn's map is considered one of the great maps of the golden era of pictorial mapmaking. The map is ringed with a series of cartoon vignettes illustrating the history of the city from ancient times to 1936.



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Dorn was a friend and admirer of the pictorial mapmaker Jo Mora (1876-1947), and was clearly influenced by Mora's style of combining accurate pictorial details, bright colors and a bit of whimsy, along with vignettes providing an illustrated history of the place.

The full title of the map is:

A Map and History of Peiping; formerly known as Peking; capital of provinces, princedoms, and kingdoms since 1121 B.C.; in 1264 A.D. the capital of the Mongol Empire of Kublai Khan; made the capital of the Ming Empire and built as it is today by Yung Lo in 1421; continued as the capital of the Chinese Empire through the Ming and Ching Dynasties; and now a city which will live long in the memory of man as one of the greatest the world has ever known. Completed on this fifth day of February in the year of our Lord Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-six.

Frank Dorn was an artist, writer and military officer. Growing up in San Francisco, he attended the San Francisco Art Institute and became an accomplished cartoonist. After graduation from West Point, he was assigned a post in the Philippines, and as a side project wrote a book about a clan of tribal people he got to know there. An acquaintance of California artist Jo Mora, Dorn began making his own maps; an early one depicted Camp Strassenbourg in the Philippines.

While living in China, Dorn made his popular pictorial map of "Peiping". He later served in the field as an advisor to a Chinese army. A fluent speaker of Chinese, Dorn's most important military role was in the China-Burma-India theater during World War II. There he served with Deputy Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army forces, General "Uncle Joe" Stilwell, during the Burma campaign from 1942 to 1944, and served as a commanding officer in 1944-45. A 1942 Life Magazine article about the Burma mission stated that, "Dorn, an artist, drew Stilwell's campaign maps."

Dorn eventually attained the rank of Brigadier-General and retired in 1953. He settled in Carmel, California, living what his friend John Thompson, who describes Dorn as living "a semi-bohemian life, writing and painting. In the Sixties he did some amazing psychedelic paintings, wondered if he was the incarnation of a Buddhist painter, and held progressive civil rights and antiwar views." In the 1970s, Dorn authored two highly-regarded scholarly books on the Chinese and Burmese theaters of World War II.

Detailed Condition:



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Backed with archival tissue. Several reinforced marginal tears entering into image with minor loss. Slight abrasion at a few old folds.