Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.

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Map of Morris's Purchase or West Geneseo In the State of New York. Exhibiting Part of the Lakes Erie and Ontario, the Straights of Niagara, Chautauque Lake and all the principal Waters, the Boundary lines of the several Tracts of Land purchase by the Holland Land Company, . . . 1800

Stock#: 48891
Map Maker: Ellicott

Date: 1800 (1804)
Place: New York
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 20.5 x 26.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Second state of the Most important map of the Holland Land Company, published for the promotion of sale of their Western New York lands.

The first comprhensive land survey of Western New York. The map displays three and a half million acres purchased in 1792 by the Holland Land Company, a Dutch consortium, from the American banker Robert Morris in a transaction known as "The Holland Purchase."

Joseph Ellicott's highly important map of land in West Geneseo illustrates the lands previously owned by Robert Morris, extending from Lake Ontario to the north, the Eastern Bounds to the east, Pennsylvania to the south and Lake Erie to the west. Ellicott produced the map on behalf of the Holland Land Company in order to sell their extensive land holdings in the region. As the agent for the Holland Land Company, Ellicott established an office in Batavia, whose advantageous positioning at a crossroads on the Geneseo Road made it an ideal location for administering the sale of the lands in the region.

The land is divided into sixteen rows and fifteen columns of squares, with each square numbered with the row it is in. Running along the bottom row of squares, from right to left, each column is labeled with a range number. The squares in the first row along the bottom and the column farthest to the right are also labeled with measurements in chains. Reservations are denoted and labeled, as are roads, some rivers and

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other physical features. To the right of the map image area is the explanation, which provides information about the depiction of the boundary lines between tracts and towns; the boundary lines between townships, tracts and towns; the boundary lines between reservations and tracts; wagon roads; "Indian Paths;" and "Indian Villages." The latitude is given as 42 degrees north.

The 1786 Treaty of Hartford, which settled western land claims going back to the original colonial charters, granted sovereignty over the region west of the Genesee River to New York State, but Massachusetts gained title to the land. In 1791, it was purchased by Robert Morris, of Philadelphia, who in turn sold to a group of Dutch investors known as the Holland Land Company in 1792-1793. In 1798, the Holland Land Company hired Joseph Ellicott to survey the vast territory. Ellicott also operated as the Company's land agent, with offices in Batavia.

Rumsey notes:

> *Vail says this was the "Most important map of the Holland Land Company, published for the promotion of sale of their Western New York lands." Nestler calls it "Probably the most important map of western NY when Buffalo was still known as New Amsterdam, and when land companies were luring settlers to this new frontier."*
>
> *The map is highly detailed, showing every tributary of every tributary of every stream. All the township and range lines are laid down, every town located, all reservations shown and all roads indicated. One has the impression that the ground was expertly surveyed with care and diligence.*
>
> *The Holland land holding comprised well over three million acres, not a modest subdivision! Ellicott was the company's agent at Batavia for many years.*

Nestler states that the map is

> *probably the most important map of western NY when Buffalo was still known as New Amsterdam, and when land companies were luring settlers to this new frontier.*

The full map title is:

> *Map of Morris's Purchase or West Geneseo In the State of New York. Exhibiting Part of the*

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Lakes Erie and Ontario, the Straights of Niagara, Chautauque Lake and all the principal Waters, the Boundary lines of the several Tracts of Land purchase by the Holland Land Company, William and John Willink and others ... by Joseph & B. Ellicott 1800. To The Holland Land company their General Agents Theophilus Cazenove & Paul Bush Esquires, This Map Is respectfully inscribed by the Authors. 1804.

Detailed Condition:
Repaired tear at left center, extending to Cascade River. Several repaired tears at the right side of the map, entering 2-3 inches into the printed image, with some minor restoration to the right of the Explanation key and along the bottom center, above the Y in Boundary and the P in Pennsylvania.