



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

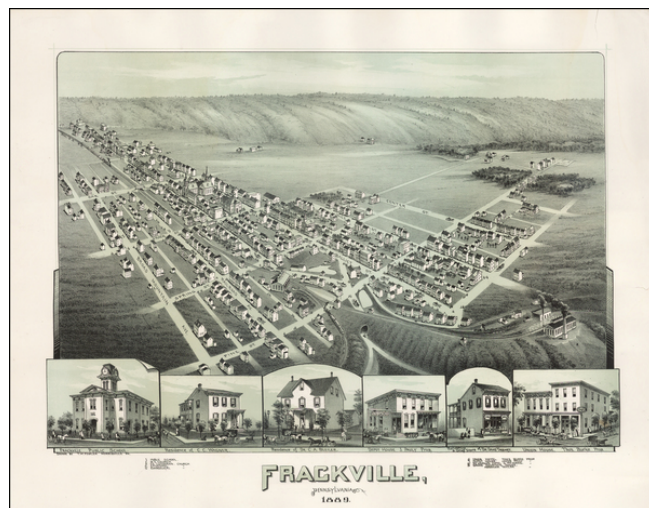
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Frackville, Pennsylvania. 1889

Stock#: 50389jc
Map Maker: Fowler
Date: 1889
Place: Morrisville, PA
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 19 x 24 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Frackville Before The Advent of Fracking

Finely executed Birdseye View of Frackville, Pennsylvania, by T. M. Fowler of Morrisville, PA.

The image is in the classical American birdseye view style, with industry and railroad depot in the foreground and the residential section of town stretching toward the horizon. The elevated rail line, with a tunnel beneath connecting the city, is a nice element of urban planning for such a small town.

Smaller vignettes of the Union House, Drug Store, Depot House, Public School and several residences complete the image.

There was clearly no association between the town of Frackville and the modern practice of oil and gas fracking, but it was definitely the name that caught our attention.

T.M. Fowler

Thaddeus Mortimer Fowler (1842-1922) was born on December 21, 1842 in Lowell, Massachusetts. Fowler ran away from home at the age of fifteen and eventually and was admitted into military service in 1861. Fowler was wounded at the second Battle of Bull Run, which led to his discharge from the service in 1863. Despite having been discharged, Fowler decided to stay close to the war by making his way from army camp to army camp selling tintypes to the soldiers.



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Towards the end of the war Fowler moved to the Midwest to work for his uncle, John Mortimer Fowler, who was a photographer in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1868, he was hired by Albert Ruger, the first artist to achieve success drawing panoramic works of cities. Fowler began as a subscription agent and eventually became an assistant to Ruger.

In 1870 T.M. Fowler began to produce his own panoramic maps. Over the course of the next fifty-two years Fowler would traverse through numerous states and cities achieving startling accuracy and a simple, yet refined, artistic style with each town he drew.

Over the course of his travels, T.M. Fowler would partner with other panoramic artists of the time and produce collaborative works. Other artists included J.J. Stoner, O.H. Bailey, and James B. Moyer. From 1887 through 1906 Fowler concentrated on the state of Pennsylvania, where over the twenty year stretch he managed to produce over 200 maps of cities spanning the entire state.

During the fifty-plus years that Fowler spent drawing maps, he managed to draw 426 works of locations in the United States and Canada. Of those 426, 248 were of cities located in Pennsylvania, the most of any other panoramic artist of the time period. The Pennsylvania State Archives is in possession of 167 of the 248 Pennsylvania drawings done by Fowler.

With surprising simplicity and startling accuracy, T.M. Fowler was able to capture at the time what a camera could not. Each work serves as a snapshot of America during the turn of the twentieth century providing a unique perspective and insight into the past.

Rarity

OCLC locates 3 examples.

Detailed Condition:

Minor marginal tear at right margin and top right corner, expertly repaired on verso and not affecting printed image.