



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Map No. 2 From The Mouth of Trap River To The Santa Fe Crossing; from Explorations and surveys made under the direction of the Hon. Jefferson Davis Secretary of War by Capt. E.G. Beckwith 3d. R.H. Kern Topographer in the Field . . . 1855

Stock#: 55962
Map Maker:
Date: 1856
Place: Washington, D.C.
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG-
Size: 23 x 31 inches
Price: \$245.00



Description:

Detailed map of large portions of Kansas and Nebraska, prepared in connection with the Surveys to determine the most practicable routes for Transcontinental Railroads in the the 1850s.

The map provides a detailed treatment of the region between the Nebraska or Platte River, the Missouri River, the Kansas River and the Arkansas River.

Among other interesting features, the map locates Ft. Atkinson, the first US Military Fort on the Santa Fe Trail. Located 2 miles west of the modern Dodge City, Kansas, the original Fort Atkinson was established August 8, 1850, by the U.S. Army in an attempt to prevent Indians in the area from attacking travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. Even before this, a site nearby was occupied in July 1850 by Lieut. Col. Edwin Vose Sumner, who served as a Union major general in the Civil War. This first site was called Camp Mackay or



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Fort Mackay. Later the camp was moved to the site where it was permanently established. Sod buildings with canvas roofs were constructed. This post was abandoned in September 1853 and the buildings were torn down so Indians could not hide inside them and surprise travelers on the Trail.

During the USPRR Surveys, it was observed that "the bluffs are low, and the country on all sides unbroken prairie, without timber even on the river bottom." Gwinn H. Heap, who visited the post in 1853, wrote the nearest trees were fifteen miles away. Water was ample, however, since Fort Atkinson was bounded on the south by the Arkansas River.

The most important event occurring at Fort Atkinson was the signing of a treaty. On July 27, 1853, a major treaty was ratified between the U.S. government and the Apache, Comanche and Kiowa tribes in the area. By 1853 the plains tribes were starting to feel the encroachment of whites onto their lands. The treaty had a number of provisions to protect those traveling through the area. In summary, the treaty was to allow for roads to be used and for military posts and such like settlements to be constructed on Indian lands. The tribes involved were to refrain from making incursions into Mexico or to take property or captives from Mexican provinces. Any wrongs committed by the Indians were to be remedied by restitution and any captives were to be freed. As compensation the Indians were to be given annuities for a period of time. Any breaches of the treaty by the Indians could result in reductions to the annuities paid.

Shortly after the post was abandoned efforts were made to reestablish it. In February 1854 the New Mexico territorial legislature requested Congress to reestablish Fort Atkinson. It appeared no action would be taken to do this. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, the future Confederate president, wrote in a letter May 20, 1854, that he considered the resurrection of the fort to be too costly and impractical.

However, Fort Atkinson was reestablished on June 13, 1854. Eight officers and 110 enlisted men from Fort Riley reestablished the post adjacent to its original site. Major Albemarle Cady was the commander through Fort Atkinson's second life. The troops lived in tents and no buildings were constructed. They protected a mail station and aided travelers. Approximately 140 men were at the post, but they were unable to do much to help travelers

A great gathering of the Comanches and Kiowas in the region came to Fort Atkinson in July to receive their annuities, although they still had captives and animals that were not legally theirs. The Indian agent, J. W. Whitfield, distributed at least some of the annuities.

The post did not last long after this gathering. Cady filed the last field return for the post in October 1854. His return said of the closing of the fort, "This post abandoned Oct. 2/54."



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Detailed Condition:

Minor loss at top right corner.