



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

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(858) 551-8500
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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#: 59183
Map Maker: Ellicott

Date: 1800 (1804)
Place: New York
Color: Uncolored
Condition: Good
Size: 26 x 20.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

The Most important Map of the Holland Land Company -- Extensively Used in America For Promotion of Sales To Actual Settlers

The first comprehensive land survey of Western New York, published by the Holland Land Company specifically to market for the first time its holdings in the region to actual settlers.

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."

The present example, extensively annotated in red pen circa 1821, delineating the various boundaries of Erie County. As of 1800, all of western New York was included in Ontario County. Genesee County was created in 1802 out of part of Ontario County. In 1808, Niagara County was created out of Genesee County. In 1821, Erie County was created out of Niagara County, encompassing all the land between Tonawanda Creek and Cattaraugus Creek.

Map Overview

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



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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 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 New York 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!



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Ellicott was the company's agent at Batavia for many years.

Historical Overview of the Survey of the Holland Land Company Lands

The following is excerpted from Vail's article:

Probably the earliest published map of Western New York prepared for the use of the Holland Company was an untitled map engraved with English titles but issued in Holland for use of the Dutch investors circa 1793-94 by Van Baarsel. The map shows the area from the border of western territory west of Presque Isle [Erie, Pa.] east to Seneca Lake; from lower shore of Lake Ontario south to northern Pennsylvania [and] precedes the Ellicott map of the purchase dated 1800, but published in 1801. . . .

The original manuscript of the later Map of the Holland Land Company's Preliminary Survey, 1797, is [as of 1969] in the Grosvenor branch of the Buffalo Public Library and is published in the Livingston County Historical Society's A History of the Treaty of Big Tree, 1897, p. 91.

As the surveys of the purchase progressed and more complete geographical information became available, Joseph and Benjamin Ellicott, the Company's surveyors, provided a new manuscript map which was engraved, presumably in Amsterdam, in 1800, for the use of the stockholders in Holland. It is described as follows:

Map/of two million acres of land/West Genesee/in the State of New York/recorded in the names of Wilhem Willink;/Nics van Staphorst;/ Pieter van Eeghen;/Hendrick Vollenhoven;/Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck./To the/Society in Holland; this map/is respectfully inscribed/bij/ Joseph & B. Ellicott/1800. [Amsterdam? 1800]. (66 x 52 cm.).

Title of a folio map described by William H. Samson from an original owned in 1904 by Howard L. Osgood of Rochester who bought it about 1894 in Holland for \$8.00. Mr. Samson says:

"This looks to me like a map made from partial surveys, because some parts of the territory are left absolutely blank. . . . The names of the proprietors are given on this map and though dated 1800, was probably made before all the surveys were completed, and possibly before the



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[Holland Land Company] was really organized in Holland." It is probable that this map is now with the other Osgood papers in the Rochester Historical Society, Rochester Public Library . .

*Since the map was secured in Holland and since the Dutch word bij is used in the English title instead of by, it is probable that this map was engraved in Amsterdam, the home of the company, from an original map supplied by the Ellicotts. Its rarity is probably explained by its being superseded by **the American map** which was made after the surveys were completed. The dimensions of this map are taken from the description of another (or perhaps the same) copy which was offered in the Frederick Muller catalogue of books on America, part 3, 1874, no. 3037 . . . and the same copy in his 1877 catalogue, no. 1214 . . . This map was quickly superseded by the first edition of the American map, the main survey, begun in the fall of 1797, having been completed in the fall of 1800. It is described as follows:*

*Map/of/Morris's Purchase/or/West Geneseo[sic]/In the State of New York:/Exhibiting/Part of the Lakes Erie and Ontario, the/Straights [sic] of Niagara, Chautauque Lake/and all the principal Waters, the Boundary/lines of the several Tracts of Land purchased/by the Holland Land Company/William and John Willink/and others./Boundary lines of Townships:/Boundary lines of New York and/Indian Reservations:/Laid down from actual Survey:/Also/A Sketch of part of Upper Canada by/ Joseph & B. Ellicott/1800./[rule]/To the/Holland Land Company/their General Agents/Theophilus Cazenove & Paul Busti Esquires/This Map/ Is respectfully inscribed/by the Authors./Explanation./ [6 lines] [New York? 1801]. Folio map (76 x 54.5 cm. over all, 67.5 x 52.3 within the plate mark). NH*i*.*

The date of publication of this map is generally given as 1800, the date engraved on it, but in the Report on the survey of the Holland Purchase, Buffalo Historical Society Publications, 32, 1937, p. 103, and following, Ellicott says that "A reduced map was sent to the engraver," and, on Feb. 14, 1800, "To cash paid towards engraving a plate for the general map. \$260.00," and, writing to the general agent, Paul Busti, on Feb. 17, 1801, he says: "the engraver has not yet executed the map of the Holland Company's land."

This was the most important map of the Holland Purchase and was extensively used in America for the promotion of sales to actual settlers who did not need an



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accompanying descriptive booklet such as was prepared for investors and settlers from abroad, since the Americans were on the ground and could see the property for themselves.

The same engraved plate was greatly improved in the second edition by the addition of numerous roads, the village of Batavia, local headquarters of the purchase, and of the date 1804 following the dedication. This final version of the Holland Purchase map is to be found in several historical collections including the Library of Congress and New-York Historical Society.

Provenance

The map includes hand written notes at the bottom right corner identifying its provenance.

The map's first recorded owner was Dr. Horatio N. Loomis (1807-1881), who gifted the map to the Buffalo Historical Society in 1865. Loomis was Buffalo physician and noted collector, who was active in the Buffalo Historical Society, who is best known for having been sued for Libel for publishing a Teaching Article entitled "Demonstrative Midwifery" in a Buffalo newspaper in 1850.

The map's third recorded owner was W.H. Samson of Rochester, New York, who acquired the map through a trade with the Buffalo Historical Society in December 1903. Samson's collection was sold in a single owner sale entitled *Important Collection of Americana from the Library of W.H. Samson ... Including Many Rare Indian Items, State and County Histories, Early Western New York Books, Pamphlets and Maps, and an Extra Ordinary Collection of Anti-masonic Literature . . .* by Anderson Auction Company on December 12 and 13, 1911. However, the map was not included in the sale and we surmise that Samson donated the map to the Rochester Historical Society.

We acquired the map through Cottone Auctions in 2018, in a de-accession sale from the Rochester Historical Society.

Detailed Condition:

Ex-Rochester Historical Society (with its stamps), de-accessioned through Cottone Auctions in December 2018. Backed with archival linen. Extensive manuscript annotations. Loss of image in several places at fold intersections, which have been filled with paper by an early restorer and in some cases the missing



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text added. Old repaired tear running through title and an old stain at the right margin, entering the printed title. Several areas of fold weakness and fold splits and tears on other places and other signs of soiling.