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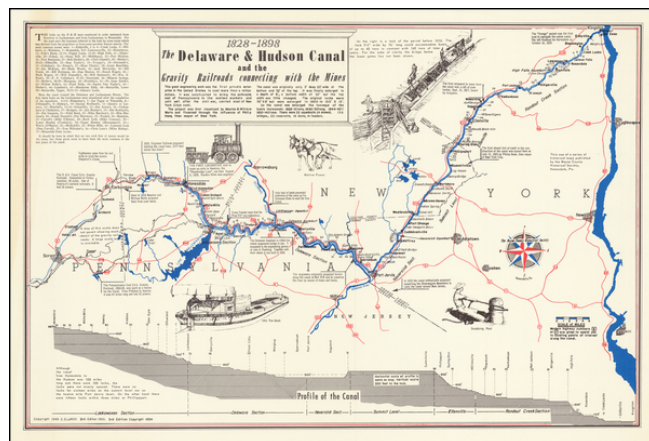
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The Delaware & Hudson Canal and the Gravity Railroads connecting with the Mines

Stock#: 62361
Map Maker: LeRoy
Date: 1949 (1954)
Place: n.p.
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 21 x 14 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The First Private Enterprise in America to Cost More Than One Million Dollars

Fascinating pictorial map of the Delaware & Hudson Canal, celebrating its 70 year history, from 1828 to 1898.

The map shows the route of the canal, naming and number over 100 locks along the route.

Delaware & Hudson Canal

In the early 19th century, Philadelphia businessman William Wurts often would leave his affairs aside for weeks at a time to explore the then-sparsely populated northeastern region of the state. He began noticing, mapping, and researching blackish rock outcroppings, becoming the first explorer of the anthracite fields that have since become known as the Coal Region. He believed they could be a valuable energy source, and brought samples back to Philadelphia for testing.

He convinced his brothers Charles and Maurice to investigate and beginning in 1812, they began buying and mining large tracts of inexpensive land. They were able to extract several tons of anthracite at a time, but lost most on the return journey, because of its difficulty. They recognized that the best market was in New York City, which had experienced an energy crunch after the War of 1812, when restrictions were placed on the import of British coal. The promoters envisioned a canal from Pennsylvania to New York, through the narrow valley between the Shawangunk Ridge and the Catskill Mountains, to the Hudson River near Kingston, a route followed by the Old Mine Road, America's first long-distance transportation route.



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Delaware and Hudson Canal Company was chartered in 1823, allowing William Wurts and his brother Maurice to construct the Delaware and Hudson Canal. The company hired Benjamin Wright, who had engineered the Erie Canal, and his assistant John B. Jervis to survey and plan a route. Wright's initial estimated cost of \$1.2 million was later revised to \$1.6 million (in 1825 dollars).

To attract investment, the brothers arranged for a demonstration of anthracite at a Wall Street coffeehouse in January 1825. The reaction was enthusiastic, and the stock oversubscribed within hours. Ground was broken on July 13, 1825 and the canal was opened to navigation by October 1828.

To get the anthracite from the Wurts' mine in the Moosic Mountains near Carbondale to the canal at Honesdale, the canal company built the Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania authorized its construction on April 8, 1826. On August 8, 1829, the D&H's first locomotive, the Stourbridge Lion, made history as the first locomotive to run on rails in the United States. By 1832 the canal carried 90,000 tons of coal and three million board-feet of lumber. The company invested the profits in improving the canal, making it deeper so larger barges could be used.

The completion of the Erie Railroad through the Delaware Valley in 1848 and its branch to Hawley in 1863 began the end of the canal's days, although it continued to be very successful through the 1870s and '80s, but the company was out of business by 1898.

Detailed Condition: