



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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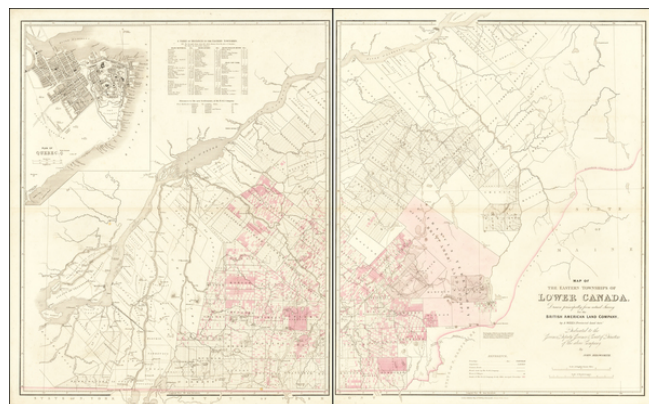
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Map of the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada, Drawn principally from actual Survey for the British American Land Company, By A. Wells, Provincial Land Survr. Dedicated to the Governor, Deputy Governor & Court of Directors of the above Company. By John Arrowsmith

Stock#: 63436
Map Maker: Arrowsmith

Date: 1839
Place: London
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 38 x 23.5 inches (if joined)

Price: SOLD



Description:

A Canadian Rarity -- Lands of the British American Land Company

Detailed map of the area to the south of Montreal and Quebec, including a plan of Quebec.

An exceptionally detailed map of the region, meticulously accounting for the lands owned and sold by the British American Land Company in Lower Canada, which includes several distance tables and a key.

This is the first of 3 variant editions:

- 1839 with the Essex Street address
- 1839 with Soho Square address
- 1842 reissue. This is the first state.

The British American Land Company

The British American Land Company ("BALC") was formed in 1832 and promoted by John Galt, Edward Ellice and others to acquire and manage the development of almost 1,100,000 acres of Crown land and other lands in the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada, in order to encourage the immigration of British subjects to the region. In comparison to the Canada Company, a similar enterprise in Upper Canada that thrived through collaboration with the local government, the BALC indulged in land speculation, made immigration a secondary priority, and struggled throughout its existence.



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In December 1833, it was announced that an agreement had been reached with Edward Smith-Stanley, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, to acquire a total of 847,661 acres. It would later acquire further lands through public auctions and private sales. Upon John Fraser's appointment as a commissioner in 1835, the Company's activities began in earnest, being concentrated in three places:

- Sherbrooke, as the Company's headquarters
- Victoria, in Lingwick Township, [g] as the center of settlement activities
- Port St. Francis, at the foot of Lake Saint Pierre, as the port of entry for the district

Wharves and warehouses were constructed at Port St. Francis, as were grist mills, sawmills and other facilities within the territory. Lands were sold subject to a 20% down payment, with the balance payable in three subsequent annual instalments, and the Company also offered to help clear the land and build a log house upon it for an extra charge. During 1836, during the first year of activity, three hundred families had settled in Victoria, occupying 23,000 acres, while 10,000 acres had been sold in other districts.

By deliberately working to increase the English-speaking portion of the population of Lower Canada, it was denounced by the *Parti patriote* and was referred to in the Ninety-two Resolutions adopted by the Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada in 1834. It was also denounced during the Lower Canada Rebellion in 1837, where a proclamation issued by *Patriote* leader Robert Nelson declared that all unsold Company lands "are of right the property of the State of Lower Canada."

The 1837 Rebellion discouraged immigration to Lower Canada, frightening off the better class of potential immigrants, and many of the current settlers were defaulting on their payments or even abandoning their lands. Many of the local agents were also neglecting their duties or pilfering the company stores, and the Company resisted attempts by local councils to impose property taxes on its holdings. This would eventually lead to the Company experiencing financial problems in 1841, forcing it to return 511,237 acres of the St. Francis tract to the Province of Canada.

Rarity

All editions are very rare. We have never seen the map offered for sale.

Detailed Condition:

Two sheets, unjoined.