



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

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**Atlas of the State of South Carolina, Made Under The Authority of The Legislature;  
Prepared With A Geographical, Statistical and Historical Map of the State . . . .**

**Stock#:** 65546  
**Map Maker:** Mills  
**Date:** 1825  
**Place:** Philadelphia  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** Good  
**Size:**  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***The First Atlas of an American State With An Important South Carolina Provenance***

First edition. Small folio. 29 maps, comprising a map of the state and 28 maps of districts, many folding.

The map bears the ownership inscription of John Rutledge Abney (1850-1927), Solicitor General of South Carolina from 1876 to 1880.

The district maps all identify major land owners and topographic features. A number of the district maps have undated manuscript notations locating rail lines through the state, almost certainly in the hand of a member of the Abney family.

In his landmark work on 19th century American cartography, *American Maps and Mapmakers*, Walter Ristow describes the *Mills Atlas of South Carolina* as 'A significant first in American cartography.' He devotes an entire chapter to this production, the only native atlas to bear this distinction. This atlas preceded by four years the state-sponsored atlases of Maine and New York, by Moses Greenleaf and David Burr respectively. There would not be another state atlas for 35 years and those would be commercial, not state-instigated, publications.



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The history of the mapping of South Carolina in the early years of the 19th century shows intractable intertwining of production of the Mills atlas and John Wilson's map of the state published in 1822. Many of the same district surveys were used for both, but Mills redrafted these maps for inclusion in his atlas. Ristow recounts the full history of the atlas, as does the introduction to the 1980 reprint of the atlas published by the Southern Historical Press.

**Rarity**

It is not known exactly how many copies of the first edition of the Mills atlas were published, but it is estimated to have been at least 500, that being the lowest number at which expenses might have been substantially recovered. For a variety of reasons, however, most prominently the devastation of South Carolina by Sherman during the Civil War, the number of surviving copies is far lower. The last recorded auction appearance of a complete copy of the first edition was in 1965.

**Provenance:** This copy was owned for many years by the Abney family, a prominent South Carolina family, and has an ownership signature of John Rutledge Abney (1850-1927), Solicitor General of South Carolina from 1876 to 1880. The Abney family name appears in two places on the Edgefield District map. This family was heavily involved in the development of railroads in South Carolina, with John Rutledge Abney having been a lawyer, agent and significant investor in at least one of the major lines. It is likely that this copy was acquired at the time of publication in 1825 by his namesake grandfather. John Rutledge Abney left his library to a local library from which this copy was acquired.

**Detailed Condition:**

Recently cleaned, with fold splits closed and minor tears repaired.