



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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View of Southport, Wisconsin, October 1844.

Stock#: 65667
Map Maker: White
Date: 1844
Place: Southport (Kenosha), Wisconsin
(?)
Color: Uncolored
Condition: Good
Size: 17 x 13.3 inches (letter sheet)
Price: SOLD



Description:

A Rare Early Wisconsin Territorial View

Rare pictorial lettersheet, providing one of the earliest views of Southport (now Kenosha), Wisconsin Territory, shortly after the incorporation of the town in 1841.

The following description of the view appeared in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Summer 1954 (p 221)

The picture of Southport, a line engraving, measures 5 1/2 by 15 1/2 inches and must have been folded into the pamphlet. We have not been able to identify the artist, R. N. White, whose name does not appear elsewhere that we can discover in the annals of Kenosha or Wisconsin. Although the reference cited in the Telegraph of December 31, 1844, infers that the picture was well known, that its production had probably been something of an event in the life of the young community, no other reference to it or its artist can be found in the files of that paper. Neither can its date be fixed with certainty. A photographic reproduction of the drawing in Frank H. Lyman's The City of Kenosha and Kenosha County, Wisconsin, is entitled "View of Southport, Wisconsin, October 1844."

Certainly the picture would have to have been produced at least that early. However, since a second pier had been constructed in 1844 and only one pier shows in the artist's drawing, we are led to conclude that it dates from 1842 or 1843. The picture itself was later reproduced in



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at least one newspaper, for the Society has two copies carrying the penciled note that they were clipped from a New York newspaper of 1846-47.

The lettersheet includes a letter from Gilbert J. Vincent to Ebenezer Wadsworth of New Britain, New York.

Dear Brothers and sister I take this opportunity... father and mother are vary smart for people of thare age. Hour winter is vary fine hear we have not had two inches of snow hear this winter ... I will give the prises ... 25 corne 50 barley 45 potatoes 25 pork ... Vincent came to this cuntry this fall he lost his oldest child soon after he got hear sche took the canker rash on the way sche lived a few days after tha gat hear ... I have bin giting my timber for to bild me a barn in the spring the sies is to be 36 by 50 I I have got my materials all on the spot and pade 50 dolars towarge bildind it. I let the man have a yoke of catle. Dow and I think of starting in a few days to go up north to spend 4 or 5 months in the lumber country ... to the young men I daunt think thar is much danger in waiting a litle longer i must tell you thare is a first rate cause her for giting a wiff[e] i can count fifteen girls her in hour owen neighbour hood first rate girls if you cant perswaid them to com come with out tem i warrent you to git first rate won hear.

Southport was originally selected as the name of the town, based upon its being the southernmost harbor on Lake Michigan in Wisconsin. When it became a city in 1850, the town was renamed Kenosha after the Chippewa word "Kinoje," signifying pike or pickerel.

Roswell N. White worked in New York from 1832 to 1837 and in Chicago from 1846 to 1848. Given Southport's proximity to Chicago, it seems likely that the view for the letter sheet was created in Chicago, which would place White in the city at least as early as 1844. However, the only surviving example of the view in OCLC appears in a pamphlet published in the *Southport Telegraph*. As such, the printing may have occurred in Southport.

The 1850 U.S. Census names Gilbert J. Vincent (aged 35) and his wife Betsy (26) living on a 160 acre farm in Bristol Township, Wisconsin, with two children, Lewis (3) and Sylvina (2), born in Wisconsin. the *Kenosha Business Directory* of 1875 lists a Gilbert O. Vincent as a farmer owning 80 acres. Vincent was apparently buried in the North Bristol cemetery in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where his headstone still survives.

The City of Kenosha and Kenosha County, Wisconsin; a Record of Settlement . . . 1916 notes:



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*Dow J . Vincent, who is a progressive and successful stock raiser and farmer, residing on sections 29 and 30, Salem township, is a native of Kenosha county, his birth having occurred in Randall township on the 'ith of May, 1860. He is the son of George W. Vincent, whose father, **Gilbert Vincent**, was a native oi New York but came to Wiconsin about 1845 and settled in Bristol township, where he remained for two years. At the end of that time he purchased government land in Randall township, which was then known as Wheatland township. He passed his remaining years there, dying when eighty-seven years of age, and his wife, Mrs. Rebecca Vincent, also attained advanced years. They had thirteen children, twelve of whom grew to maturity, married and had children but all are now deceased. In the family were Justus; Willett; Owen; Phoebe, who was the wife of Samuel Earing; Jerusha, who married a Mr. Wadsworth; Eliza, who wedded Charles Rector; Matilda, who was the wife of Benjamin Wilbur; Gilbert; George; and Dow.*

Rarity

The view is apparently extremely rare. We were not able to locate another example of the lettersheet.

OCLC locates a 16 page publication entitled *Southport*, printed by the *Southport Telegraph*, which may include the view.

Detailed Condition:

Some wear at margins, small hole in center of letter with small loss to the text, old folds; the view is a nice dark impression.