



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

**Map of the Visible Heavens on an Equatorial or Concave Globular Projection. By Saml. D. M'Cullough, A. M. Dedicated with much respect and affection to those Young Ladies, who, at various times, have composed Classes in Astronomy, under the care of their friend and instructor, the Author. Lexington, Ky. 1840**

**Stock#:** 69501  
**Map Maker:** M'Cullough  
  
**Date:** 1840  
**Place:** Lexington  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** Good  
**Size:** 85 x 42 inches  
  
**Price:** \$ 34,500.00



**Description:**

***The Earliest Celestial Wall Map Published in the United States -- Published in Lexington, Kentucky, By The Headmaster of the Lafayette Female Academy.***

Finely executed eight-sheet celestial double-hemisphere wall map, published in Lexington, Kentucky in 1840.

As noted in the title, the map is dedicated by Samuel M'Cullough, who had served for 14 years as the headmaster of the Lafayette Female Academy in Lexington, "with much respect and affection to the Young Ladies . . ." whom M'Cullough had instructed in astronomy classes at the Academy.

This exceptional rarity would seem to be the first celestial wall map published in America and an object of considerable interest. Samuel D. M'Cullough, then the head of the Lafayette Female Academy, first began seeking subscribers for the map in 1838. A September 27, 1838 article in the *Kentucky Gazette* notes:

***MAP OF THE VISIBLE HEAVENS***

McCullough's splendid Map of the Heavens is now open to the inspection of the public, at his school room, over the McChord church session room--a prospectus for obtaining subscribers, to aid in its publication, will be laid before the public in a few days--we trust that the necessary patronage will be cheerfully bestowed to a work which does honor its author, and will confer signal benefits on its patrons.



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In the subscription proposal issued in 1839, he advertised the "Terms" of the map as follows:

*This splendid Map will be upon an Equatorial, or Concave Globular projection, 7 feet in length, by about 4 in width, and covering an area of nearly 28 square feet. It will be engraved by one of the best workmen in the United States, neatly painted, mounted on rollers and varnished.*

*In consequence of some beautiful additions which have been made, the heavy expense incurred by its publication, and that of the accompanying volume, it is found necessary to put the work to subscribers at **Twelve Dollars**, to be paid upon delivery.*

*It will be ready for distribution as soon as a number sufficient can be obtained to justify its publication.*

**Lexington, Kentucky, 1839.**

**SAM'L. D. M'CULLOUGH.**

The map was advertised in the Columbia, Tennessee published periodical, *The Guardian: A Family Magazine*, October 15, 1844, at page 154 as follows:

**Map of the Visible Heavens, on an Equatorial or Concave Globular Projection. By Samuel D. McCullough, A. M.** *Dedicated with much respect and affection, to those Young Ladies, who, at various times, have composed Classes in Astronomy, under the care of their friend and instructor, the Author. Lexington, Ky. 1844.*

*This beautiful and carefully prepared Chart is of the dimensions of about four by eight feet, and from the beauty and brilliancy of its coloring and the good expression of its figures, cannot fail to make an attractive addition to the furniture of any school. Many teachers, we are aware, consider the Celestial Globe a sufficient substitute for a map of the heavens; but the circumstance of the Globe representing the constellations as seen from some point beyond the starry heavens, renders it almost useless in conveying any practical knowledge of their real configuration.*

*We have examined Mr. McCullough's Map with some attention, and cheerfully recommend it to the attention not only of teachers but of parents, as an admirable means of drawing the attention of the young to a practical acquaintance with Astronomy.*

*Mr. McCullough has also brought out a Treatise on Astronomy, written in a popular vein, and*



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*divested as much as possible of the mathematics and the abstractions of the science. It is a valuable book, and destined, we predict, to a long and wide-spread popularity.*

*We earnestly hope that the public—not always just or discriminating in its judgments— may duly appreciate the value of Mr. McCullough's scientific labors.*

The map was engraved in Philadelphia by J. Knight.

**Rarity**

The map is extremely rare. We note only one surviving example in the collection of Harvard University, likely given as a gift by W.H. Dennet, donated to Harvard College on July 15, 1859. Dennet's gift included a subscription broadsheet dated Lexington, Kentucky, 1839, seeking subscribers, with testimonials on the verso, as well as M'Cullough's companion celestial atlas, published in Lexington, Kentucky in 1840, entitled:

*Picture of the Heavens: for the use of schools and private families: being a full and distinct explanation of the different celestial phenomena, divested of mathematical formulae : with tables for determining the moon's age, calculating eclipses, etc., etc.: adapted to the comprehension of young persons*

[https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:12152992\\$2i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:12152992$2i)

**Detailed Condition:**

Printed on eight sheets, joined as one. Contemporary preparation as a wall map; mounted on contemporary linen, varnished and toned, with some minor abrasions, tears, and separation from rods. Unrestored.