



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

A Map of the Oneida Reservation including the Lands leased to Peter Smith

Stock#: 78861
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1820 circa
Place: n.p.
Color: Pen & Ink with Wash Color
Condition: VG
Size: 15.5 x 11.25 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fascinating hand drawn map of a portion of the Oneida Reservation leased to Peter Smith in 1793.

The land shown on the map shows the Oneida Reservation, including a section in the south which includes approximately 50,000 acres originally acquired by Smith under a 21 year lease from the Oneida in 1793.

In about 1795, *A Map of the Oneida Reservation; including the lands leased to Peter Smith* was printed Albany by Gideon Fairman. The map is quite similar to the present map, but includes additional subdivided areas and information, and in some cases different details, suggesting that the maps are derived from different original manuscript maps. Notably, the present map includes fewer roads in certain areas, but also includes details not present in the Fairman map, such as the Indian Carry trail between Wood Creek and the Mohawk River, north of Fort Schuyler (today's Utica).

The Fairman map can be seen

here: <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:z603vh81d>

The present map looks like it was hand drawn, perhaps to support litigation or otherwise by a contemporary land owner or administrator. Significant areas of the map differ from the printed version and would seem likely to have been drawn from a common hand drawn predecessor.

Peter Gerrit Smith (1768-1837)

Peter Gerrit Smith was an important New York State landowner and business partner of John Jacob Astor.



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Born in Greenbush, in 1784 he worked with Abraham Herring & Co. in New York City as a clerk. In 1787, he opened a store at Fall Hill, New York. where he partnered with Astor in the fur trade for a year, before the two turned to land speculation as partners. In all, he bought and sold about 500,000 acres.

In 1789, Smith moved to Old Fort Schuyler (Utica) and opened a store. In 1794, he acquired 37,200 acres in the Charlotte River and Byrne's Patent in the Mohawk Valley from Astor and would later buy the rest of the Patent in the 1820s from Astor.

In 1793, Smith acquired 50,000 acres from the Oneida Indians. Over time, he befriended the Oneida Chief Shenandoah. The land would become known as the "New Petersburg Tract" and included Augusta in Oneida County, and the towns of Stockbridge, Smithfield, Fenner and northern Cazenovia in Madison County. Because US law did not allow Indians to sell their land, Smith leased it for 21 years. In 1795, the state of New York acquired a large part of the Oneida Reservation, including Smith's tract. Because Smith had sub-leased portions of his lands to settlers; he was required to pay the state about \$3.50 per acre to obtain clear title. In the end, Smith wound up with about 22,300 acres.

By 1806, the town of Smithfield and village of Peterboro were established. In 1807 the first officers of Madison County were elected. Smit became the supervisor of the town of Smithfield and later a judge of the Madison County Court. Smith founded a newspaper, the *Madison Freeholder*, in 1808.

After turning over his business affairs to his son, Smith re-settled in Schenectady in 1825, where he lived until his death in 1837.

Detailed Condition:

Hand drawn map.