



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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### [With 1872 Bronze Medal From Chicago Fire] R. H. McDonald's Map of Chicago, with a Correct Outline of the Great Fire, from a Careful Survey by Sharp & Thain, of Chicago. . . 1871 [with] [Pocket Guide and views]

**Stock#:** 83771  
**Map Maker:** McDonald  
  
**Date:** 1871  
**Place:** New York  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 16 x 20 inches (map size)  
  
**Price:** SOLD



#### Description:

Important early pocket map of Chicago, showing the area affected by the Great Fire in red.

This lot includes 1 of 500 examples of the so-called 1872 Chicago Fire Medal. This medal were struck in July 1872, using bronze recovered from the Chicago Court House bell. After the fire, the bell from the Chicago Court House which had burnt down was melted and turned into various relics which were sold off as souvenirs. Designed by William Barber, the medals were struck in 1872 by the United States Mint using the actual metal from the Chicago Court House bell. The medal is approximately 51mm in diameter.

Title on printed covers is:

*R. H. McDonald's Illustrated History and Map of Chicago and the Great Fire. [bound with]: R. H. McDonald's Illustrated History and Map of Chicago, With a History of the Great Fire; Containing Views of Chicago in 1820 and 1871. Photographs of the Public Buildings Burned. Growth and Progress of Chicago from 1774 to 1871. Its Enterprise, With a Record of All the Great Fires of the World. The Map is from an Official Survey of the City as it Was, With a Careful, and Correct Outline of the Burned District. New York: R. B. Thompson & Co., 1872.... 24 pp., 10 text engravings ( Chicago in 1820..., Bird's-eye View of Chicago in 1871-before the*



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*Fire, plus 8 scenes of architecture and public works).*

According to the Chicago Public Library on-line catalogue the burnt district is incorrectly indicated.

The text consists of 24 pages, with 10 text engravings, including:

- Chicago in 1820...
- Bird's-eye View of Chicago in 1871—before the Fire
- plus 8 scenes of architecture and public works

The medal was cast from the metal of the Chicago Court House bell after the Chicago Fire of 1871 by Everhart & Co. and sold as souvenirs. "Fort Dearborn, 1812" referencing the cities founding, the burning city the Great Fire of 1871, and the image of a phoenix symbolizing rebirth. The motto "Semper Resurgens" means "rising again" and refers to the rebuilding. When the fire started the night of October 8th, the Court House bell sounded the alarm until the building caught fire, causing the bell to crash into the ground and shatter. The Court House and its bell had been the pride of the young city, so when the flames died out, businesses like Everhard & Co. capitalized on the popularity of the bell pieces as souvenirs.

**Rarity**

Reps does not list the birds-eye view of Chicago on p. 3 of the text. Only 1 auction record in the past 30 years.

The medal seems to appear occasionally on the auction market. As we are not coin dealers, we have not attempted to grade the medal, but the case in which appears seems to match a larger case in the Chicago History Museum, in terms of the materials and printing

fonts: [https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collection/chm\\_museum/id/1875](https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collection/chm_museum/id/1875)

**Detailed Condition:**