



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

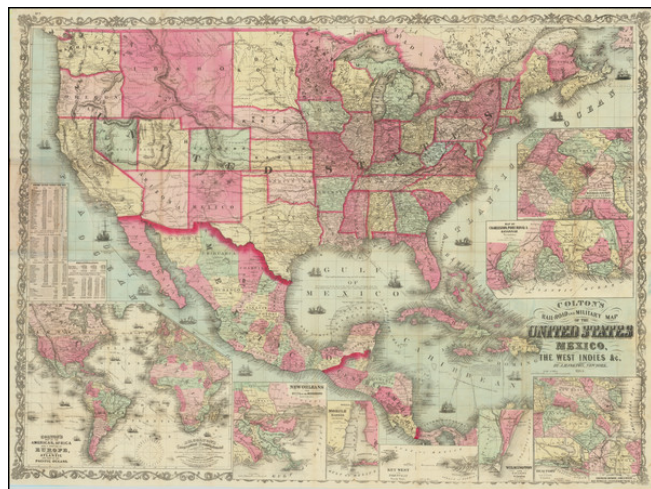
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(Oversized Idaho Configuration) Colton's Rail-road and Military Map of the United States, Mexico, the West Indies, &c...1864

Stock#: 92784
Map Maker: Colton
Date: 1864
Place: New York
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 40 x 30.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A Remarkable and Short-Lived Idaho Configuration. With Contemporary Annotations Marking Bannack and Virginia Cities.

Colton's remarkable and very rare 1864 map of the United States and Mexico, published in the midst of the Civil War and including one of the earliest, and most unusual, appearances of Idaho Territory.

The map adheres to the Colton legacy of producing cutting-edge geopolitical representations of the American West. In addition to the extremely rare Idaho configuration, the map displays a number of other, less rare anomalies, such as a truncated Nevada, elongated Utah, shortened Nebraska, and the combined Dakota Territory.

The detail is fantastic throughout. Of particular interest are the many routes shown, which include:

- The Pony Express
- Route from Independence, Missouri to Oregon via South Pass (the Oregon Trail)
- Proposed Pacific Railroads through Colorado, the Southwest, and the northern states.
- Cooke's Wagon Road

In addition, there remains a constellation of well-marked forts throughout the region. Areas of economic interest are marked in the west, including an oil spring in Wyoming, and coal mines in Washington.

The Civil War context is critical in understanding this map. Seven of the eight insets shown on the map



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relate to critical conflict areas, including the DMV area, Charleston, Beaufort, Norfolk, Wilmington (North Carolina), Key West and Tortugas, Mobile Harbor, and New Orleans. Data regarding the relative populations of enslaved peoples and freemen in the southern states are noted to the left of the map. In fact, editions of the map between 1860 and 1862 were colored according to slave and free states.

The final inset shows a partial world map centered on the Atlantic and notes famous 18th- and 19th-century voyages up to the tracks taken by the USS *Vincennes* in 1838 and 1842. The map also tracks the day-by-day laying of the Atlantic Telegraph in 1858.

Formation of the Idaho Territory

The oversized Idaho Territory was an extremely ephemeral feature on American maps, as it was created in March 3rd, 1863, before being subdivided with the creation of the Montana Territory in May of 1864. Even in 1863, there was disagreement about how to map the Idaho Territory, with some of the [other maps from that year](#) showing a "step" configuration to the state.

The Territory sprang out of the mad rush to the region caused by the discovery of gold in northern present-day Idaho in 1860 and the larger discovery in the Boise Basin in 1862. The discovery of further gold east of the Continental Divide led to the foundation of the Montana Territory soon after (May 26, 1864). The Wyoming Territory was formed in 1868.

A number of toponyms appear throughout the Territory. Only Fort Laramie, Fort McKenzie, Fort Union, and Camp Walbach are marked as official forts, but Ft. Owen, Ft. Kootaine, and Fort "Boisee" (founded in 1863) are also denoted. The Three Tetons and Three Buttes are shown. Passes through the Rocky Mountains are Marias, Lewis & Clark, Hell Gate, Cadotts, and South. Big Hole Prairie is marked in just south of present-day Butte.

Virginia City and Bannack

Both Virginia City and Bannack were short-lived centers of early Montana interest. Bannack, today a ghost town, came first when it was founded in 1862 during a major gold discovery. When founded, it was extremely remote and the terminus of the Montana Trail. Despite this, the population rapidly boomed to about 10,000 and served as the first capital of the Montana Territory.

Virginia City was founded by prospectors who had ventured from Bannack and discovered gold. It was founded immediately thereafter and became a boomtown. Both Virginia City (originally named Verina after the First Lady of the Confederacy) and Bannack were particularly notable as lawless mining centers that



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were the center of the Montana Territory in the 1860s and '70s.

Rarity

We locate only four examples of the 1864 edition of Colton's map through OCLC and other means. However, the existence of variants of the 1864 edition means that not all (if any) of the other examples show the Idaho configuration in question.

The example held by Yale is in publisher's hand-color with Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming all separated. The example held by the Osher Map Library includes the newly-formed Montana Territory and extends the Dakota territory into Wyoming. It also includes the addition of Bannack City, Nevada, Virginia, and various other cities in southwestern Montana. We have not been able to ascertain the configurations shown on the examples held by the Kansas State Historical Society or the Boston Public Library.

We are unaware of any examples of this edition of the map having previously traded.

Detailed Condition:

Original hand color. Folding map with original covers. Faint dampstain near left margin. Covers somewhat sunstruck.