



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

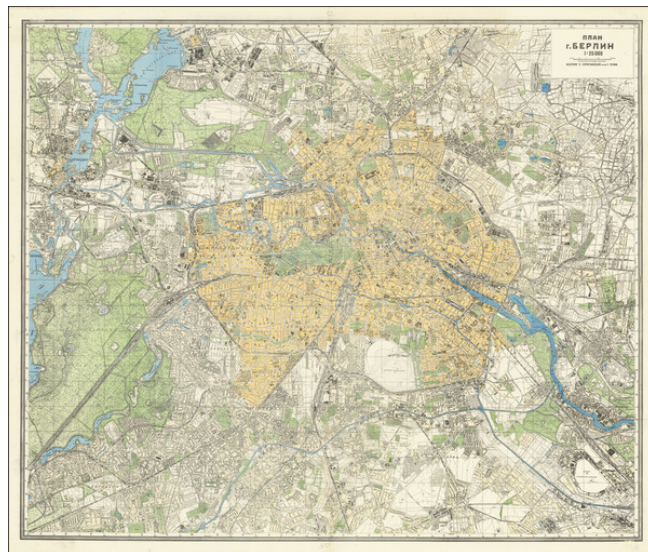
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[Battle of Berlin] План г. Берлин 1:25000

Stock#: 68524
Map Maker: Leningrad Military Mapping Unit
Date: 1945
Place: Leningrad (?)
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 39 x 32 inches
Price: \$ 2,400.00



Description:

"The Victory Map". The Official Soviet Map Used in the Battle of Berlin, April 1945.

This is a color-printed folding map of Berlin, issued by the Soviet Union in 1945, shortly before the Fall of Berlin. Many examples of this map were used by front-line Red Army troops during the last stages of the European theatre of World War II and carried into the city they depict.

The map shows most of Greater Berlin, spanning from the Tegeler See to Neukölln, roughly depicting an area of ten by twenty miles. Detail is extensive and apparently accurate, showing many roads, neighborhoods, and places of importance. This is expected, as Soviet commanding officers would have needed an accurate layout of the town in order to not be outmaneuvered by German troops or lose their way as they fought in the city.

We know of several editions of this map issued in 1945, though there is as yet little work regarding the differences between editions or the number of editions published. The most obvious identifying feature is the numbering in the lower right, this one is edition "Зак. 813 IV 45 Д". All editions claim to be based on the 1:15,000 map of Berlin by the Leningrad Military Mapping Unit, discussed below.

We have handled the 1:25,000 Berlin map in other examples with contemporary manuscript annotations. This copy is unannotated.

The Battle in Berlin



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In order for *Stunde Null* to occur, Berlin first had to fall. By the start of 1945, the Red Army had reached a line sixty kilometers east of Berlin, where they waited until the middle of April. The Red Army plan formulated was to surround Berlin before attacking, and so they divided troops between the north and the south of the city.

The Red Army would start attacking Berlin on the 23rd of April. By the 29th, Soviet troops would be in the center of the city, having reached deep into the yellow area shown on the map. The fight for the Reichstag and the city center, approximately the just to the east of the Tiergarten, would be devastating.

The first of May would see any remnants of the German army in pieces. Sporadic fighting would continue for another day, with fighters refusing to surrender. A strong attempt was made by German troops to flee to the western front, but few were able to break through the Soviet encirclement.

The war would continue for less than a week after the fall of Berlin. The German troops still controlled vast areas of lands throughout Europe, from the French Atlantic coast to the capitals of Slavic countries. Much of the fighting occurred as German troops stalled and migrated eastwards in order to surrender to the western Allies.

"The Victory Map"

This map was based on a four-sheet 1:15,000 map made during 1944 and 1945. This original map had been ordered on September 15, 1943 by Stavka, the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander in the USSR. This was the earliest point in the war at which there was any reason for the Red Army to consider that they would have an eventual need for a map of Berlin.

The project was undertaken by the *Ленинградская военно-картографическая часть* (Leningrad Military Mapping Unit) in the middle of the Siege of Leningrad. While a city under siege, Leningrad, the old St. Petersburg, had always been a center of culture and was perhaps the likeliest place to find good sources of maps. The city had a narrow corridor opened since January of 1943, so the harshest part of the siege was over, but difficulties would continue until January of 1944 when the siege was finally broken, which was also when the first edition of the map would be ready.

The cartographers making the 1:15,000 maps used sources comprising of outdated 1930s German maps of Berlin, tourist guides, and photographic postcards. They created over 6,000 Russian transcriptions for German streets, objects, and district names in Berlin. Mapping would be augmented with the use of material researched by Dornier spy planes, originally German but bought by the USSR prior to the war.

The Spring of 1945 would see the *Поезд-литография ВТС* (Lithography Train of the Military Topographic



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Service) making copies of the map along the eastern front. This program used movable, train-carriage based printing shops to distribute maps directly to key army officials. A popular name for these maps among officers was "The Victory Map." These 1:15,000 maps differed from the 1:25,000 map by including additional data regarding military organizations, technical specifications for bridges, and more. The exact history of the 1:25,000 maps is less well-known, though these maps were likely produced on the same printing trains. While the larger scale and less detailed format would suggest that this version was intended for field use, we have handled an example of this map used for high-level tactical planning as indicated by manuscript notations.

Detailed Condition:

Minor loss at intersecting folds.