



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

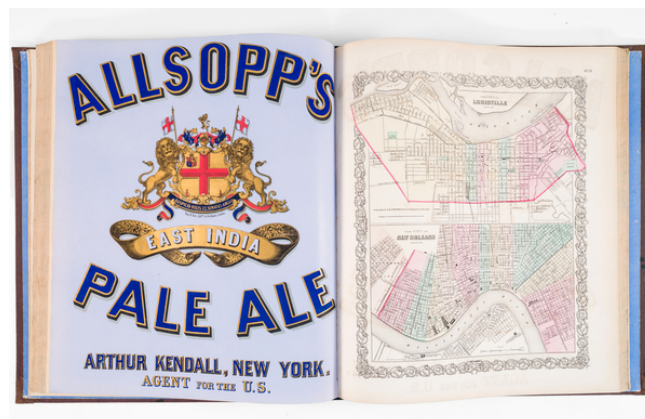
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Colton's Advertising Atlas of America

Stock#: 95068
Map Maker: Colton
Date: 1857
Place: New York
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 15.75 x 18 inches
Price: \$ 9,500.00



Description:

One of the Great Rarities of 19th Century American Atlas Collecting.

An unusually fine example of J.H. Colton's iconic 1857 *Advertising Atlas of America*, today one of the rarest atlases produced by that firm.

Because the atlas was produced and distributed specifically for hotels and similar businesses, where the atlases were paged through constantly and used by many, the book rarely survives today complete and in good condition, making the present example quite exceptional. The atlas is particularly fantastic for its snapshots into 18th-century business, with advertisements for heavy machinery, homewares, pharmaceuticals, book binderies, and more. Chief among these is the full-color gilt-illustrated advertisement for Allsop's East India Pale Ale, lithographed by Day and Son in London.

Joseph Hutchins Colton first published his two-volume *General Atlas* in 1855. The following year, the atlas would be consolidated to a single volume, which would be published until the 1880s. In 1856, the firm also issued a single volume "Atlas of America", which consisted of only the American maps from the larger work. Shortly thereafter, the firm began issuing a variant of the American Atlas, entitled *Colton's Atlas with Business Cards of the Prominent Houses in Philadelphia. Commercial Edition*, which included advertising, which would be "distributed gratuitously, for the interest of the advertisers therein, to leading Hotels and Steamers, throughout the country..." The atlas was sufficiently successful that in 1857 Colton created *Colton's Advertising Atlas of America*, which is perhaps best known for the elaborate print for the New York agent of Allsop's Pale Ale, a print lithographed by Day & Son of London.

The *Advertising Atlas* was unique for its time in that combined local and national advertisements with what was at the time the most successful commercial atlas of the period. The advertisements were often



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for businesses and services, such as railroads, hotels, manufacturing and insurance companies. The *Advertising Atlas* was typically distributed to hotels and similar establishments for use by guests, travelers and local businesses. They were placed strategically opposite the maps to ensure that they would be seen by the people using the atlas. The advertising content is said to have varied based upon the region in which it was distributed. This may be true, as the number of advertisements varies from copy to copy. This copy nearly matches the advertisements found in the Rumsey copy, although that copy does not appear to have the Allsop's advertisement.

Interestingly, one of the advertisements (opposite the map of Baltimore), is for Cushings & Bailey, Booksellers & Stationers. This is the firm that would acquire the rights to Mitchell's Universal Atlas in 1860 from Charles DeSilver of Philadelphia, publishing several vary rare editions which are now among the most sought-after mid-19th-century American atlases.

Rarity

The last complete example of *Colton's Advertising Atlas* that we trace to be offered by itself was sold at PBA in 2006 and made \$9,200. Another complete example appears to have been offered in 2016 alongside Colton's atlas of the world, although the condition and specifics of the copy are unclear.

Detailed Condition:

Publisher's quarter leather with brown cloth boards embossed "Colton's Advertising Atlas of America." Complete with 58 engraved map (some double page, as called for, except for the erroneous description of the New York map per usual) in original hand color, 59 black and white pages of advertisements (including advertisements on endpapers) and 1 advertisement printed in color. (Expertly rebaked on buckram with original backstrip laid down, some chips to original spine and repaired tears. Small closed tear to frontispiece. Scant and scattered foxing, but overall VG+ internally.)