



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Great Barrington (Massachusetts)

Stock#: 31734
Map Maker: Sanborn Map Company
Date: 1900 circa
Place: n.p.
Color: Hand Colored
Condition:
Size: 30.5 x 20.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Early Sanborn fire insurance map of most of the town of Great Barrington, in the Berkshires on the Housatonic River, extending as far south as Bridge Street and the Town Hall.

Among the buildings located are several Liverys and the Miller House.

The map shows property owners, street names, public and private buildings, and a key identifying the composition of the buildings (Brick, Stone, Wood, etc.) as well as out buildings, roads, railroads, electric railways and water plates. The map is one of apparently 2 sheets that covered Great Barrington, although most of the commercial and residential districts are on this sheet.

Sanborn Maps were originally created for assessing fire insurance liability in urban areas in the United States. The maps include detailed information regarding town and building information in approximately 12,000 U.S. towns and cities from 1867 to 2007. Author Kim Keister describes the legacy of Sanborn maps: "Stated simply, the Sanborn maps survive as a guide to American urbanization that is unrivaled by other cartography and, for that matter, by few documentary resources of any kind."

Mapping for insurance, and specifically fire insurance, purposes had existed for a century prior to the emergence of the Sanborn Company, first beginning in London in the late 18th century. In the decades following the end of the Civil War, fire insurance mapping grew rapidly, mirroring the flourish of growth in the country, the rebuilding of the South and massive westward expansion. Factors such as the Homestead Act, railroad construction, the Second Industrial Revolution and massive immigration to the United States all fostered huge population growths, urbanization, and heightened demand for mapping.

The Sanborn Company began making fire insurance maps in 1867 when founded by Daniel Alfred



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Sanborn, a surveyor from Somerville, Massachusetts. The Sanborn Map Company created maps for fire insurance assessment in the U.S. and within several decades became the largest and most successful American map company. Sanborn was headquartered on Fifth Avenue in Pelham, New York, but had regional offices in San Francisco, Chicago, and Atlanta. The Sanborn Company sent out legions of surveyors to record the building footprints and relevant details about these buildings in all major urbanized areas regarding their fire liability. It was because of these details and the accuracy of the Sanborn maps, coupled with the Sanborn Company's standardized symbolization and aesthetic appeal that made the Sanborn Company so successful and their maps so widely utilized.

The Sanborn maps themselves are large-scale lithographed street plans at a scale of 50 feet to one inch (1:600) on 21 inch by 25 inch sheets of paper. The maps were created in volumes, bound and then updated until the subsequent volume was produced. Larger cities would have multiple volumes. In between volumes, updates (new drawings of new or altered buildings or lots) were created and sent out to be pasted on top of the old maps (referred to as 'slips') to reduce expense and preserve accuracy.

Detailed Condition: