



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## [Butte, Montana] County Plat Book

**Stock#:** 48467a  
**Map Maker:** Anonymous  
**Date:** 1892 circa  
**Place:** Butte, MT  
**Color:** Color  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 24 x 34 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### ***Important Early Hand Assembled Plat Book For Silver Bow County, Montana Territory***

Interesting "County" Plat book, illustrating the town at the start of its great boom period at the end of the 19th Century.

The Plat Book includes a fascinating assemblage of maps, consisting of

- Map of Butte City Montana and its Additions Compiled and Published by Ray & Leonard . . . 1890
- 1888 Map of The Townsite of the Town of Butte Deer Lodge Co. Published by Baker & Harper
- Plat of Noves and Upton Addition (hand drawn on drafting linen)
- The Saturn Add To Butte City Montana (hand drawn on drafting linen)
- 34 Blue Print Sheets, primarily 1 map per page, showing various additions, subdivisions and small towns, all of which would become part of Butte



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### [Butte, Montana] County Plat Book

The two printed maps are extremely rare. Neither of the two printed maps has appeared in a recorded auction or dealer catalog going back many decades.

#### Butte History

Founded in 1879, Butte, "the Richest Hill on Earth", is located in Silver Bow County in southwest Montana. Although Butte was one of the largest producing copper districts in the world, its mining heritage can be traced to the discovery of gold in 1864. Prospectors had already found rich placers at Bannack and Alder Gulch 70 miles to the south and at Dry Gulch near the present day City of Helena. By 1868 the placers at Alder Gulch had produced about \$30 million in gold. The gold at Butte, however, was short lived and yielded only about \$1.5 million, but it was recognized early on that the source of placers were nearby. As the placers were exploited miners located lode deposits, of which the first to be staked was the Asteroid claim in 1864 on Butte Hill.

In 1865, a silver vein was discovered adjoining the Asteroid and was named the Travona. Shortly thereafter, numerous claims were located and Butte was transformed into the leading mining district of Montana Territory. Although metallurgical recovery of the ores proved difficult, miners drugged onward digging shafts to 150 feet and continuing assessment work on the claims which included the Parrott, Original, Gray Eagle and Mountain. Several years went by with little progress on recovering the refractory silver ores. In 1874 the Travona was re-located by William Farlin and in 1876 William Clark, a local banker, invested money into the Dexter 10-stamp mill, which turned a profit on the silver ore. This marked the beginning of Butte's successful episode into silver mining and by 1878 \$900 thousand was made on silver bullion. Silver mining peaked in 1887 with throughput from five mills.

Rich copper deposits were known at Butte since the early 1870's, although development was delayed for not only metallurgical reasons but for the lack of adequate transportation required to bring the ore to smelters. Fortunately for Butte, the well-known mining giant George Hearst visited Butte and in 1882 and recommended the sinking of a new shaft on Marcus Daly's Anaconda mine, which at the time was producing 30 ounces silver per ton. At the 300 foot level a crosscut encountered a large vein 5 feet thick of chalcocite. By 1883, the shaft reached 600 feet and exposed more chalcocite in a vein over 90 feet thick. Without the necessary rail lines and recovery facilities, Butte's copper ore was sent to Swansea, Wales for processing. Nonetheless, Butte now entered its third phase of mining - the copper industry. By this time the Utah & Northern rail lines connected Butte with the Union Pacific out of Ogden, Utah. By 1888, the Montana Central reached Butte and in 1893 the Northern Pacific. All the infrastructural components were in place for Butte just in time for the dawn of the electric age and the requirements for copper wire.

Butte was often called "the Richest Hill on Earth". It was the largest city for many hundreds of miles in all directions. The city attracted workers from Cornwall (United Kingdom), Ireland, Wales, Lebanon, Canada,



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Finland, Austria, Serbia, Italy, China, Syria, Croatia, Montenegro, Mexico, and all areas of the U.S.

Among the migrants, many Chinese workers moved in, and amongst them set up businesses that led to the creation of a Chinatown in Butte. The Chinese migrations stopped in 1882 with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act. There was anti-Chinese sentiment in the 1870s and onwards due to racism on the part of the white settlers, exacerbated by economic depression, and in 1895, the chamber of commerce and labor unions started a boycott of Chinese owned businesses. The business owners fought back by suing the unions and winning.

The influx of miners gave Butte a reputation as a wide-open town where any vice was obtainable. The city's famous saloon and red-light district, called the "Line" or "The Copper Block", was centered on Mercury Street, where the elegant bordellos included the famous Dumas Brothel. Behind the brothel was the equally famous Venus Alley, where women plied their trade in small cubicles called "cribs". The red-light district brought miners and other men from all over the region and was open until 1982 as one of the last such urban districts in the U.S. The Dumas Brothel is now operated as a museum to Butte's rougher days. Close by Wyoming Street is home to the Butte High School (home of the "Bulldogs").

At the end of the 19th century, copper was in great demand because of new technologies such as electric power that required the use of copper. Three men fought for control of Butte's mining wealth. These three "Copper Kings" were William A. Clark, Marcus Daly, and F. Augustus Heinze.

In 1899, Daly joined with William Rockefeller, Henry H. Rogers, and Thomas W. Lawson to organize the Amalgamated Copper Mining Company. Not long after, the company changed its name to Anaconda Copper Mining Company (ACM). Over the years, Anaconda was owned by assorted larger corporations. In the 1920s, it had a virtual monopoly over the mines in and around Butte. Between approximately 1900 and 1917, Butte also had a strong streak of Socialist politics, even electing a Mayor on the Socialist ticket in 1914.

#### **Detailed Condition:**

Hand assembled County Plat book. 34 numbered map sheets, plus 4 additional unnumbered maps and an index. Top cover detached. Two maps laid in loosely (likely never attached). Some occasionally chipping, but generally very good.