

# OLD MAPS AND PRINTS

Mill Creek Farm

Rushland, Pennsylvania 18956

215-598-3662

## *Certificate of Authenticity*

This **original** 1876 map was published by James D. Scott in, ***The Centennial Combination Atlas of Bucks County***. The map shows the Township/Borough as it was in the latter 1800's with the boundary lines, acreage and the owner's name of most every property. Upon close examination, one will locate all major structures: the main house and any barns, one room schoolhouses, grist and lumber mills and other establishments important to the 19th century residents.

Atlases depicting the cumulative knowledge of the known world were not new. World atlases had been published since the 1500's. They began appearing here in the early 1800's showing the outline of the North American continent and the existing States and Territories. By the late 1830's, early 1840's, the atlases had progressed to devoting just regions, and occasionally a State to one page. The larger scale allowed more information shown, i.e. the counties, cities, towns and the ever increasing number of trails and roads.

By the late 1860's, virtually the entire North American continent had been mapped. The atlases then produced, usually included every State, Territory and Canadian Province with the boundaries that are much the same as they are today. Even Alaska was represented, although it was then referred to as, "Russian America".

The next logical step, in what was essentially, the production of an demographic inventory of who we were, where we lived and what we did, was the publication of maps indicating property owners names. These were printed next to dots representing the physical location of their homes. Initially, hanging wall maps of various sizes were used to depict this information. The earliest commercial maps for Bucks County, sold by subscription, were published in the 1850's.

County atlases followed this natural progression, documenting the progress of this country developing from an uncharted wilderness, (from the newcomers' perspective), into a "modern" country. The production of such atlases were extremely labor intensive and therefore, comparatively expensive. (An original invoice for an 1876 Scott Atlas lists the price as \$10.00, at that time, a lot of money!). To help reduce the cost of the atlas, lithographic views of peoples' homes and/or businesses were sold, similar to display ads. Still, most atlases were sold to those who used it professionally, i.e. surveying, financial and real estate issues, etc.

Although it is impossible to know exactly how many atlases Scott actually printed, given the printing technology of the time and its' cost, it's reasonable to assume that comparatively few atlases were in circulation. Since most of those were heavily used and didn't survive, the result is that these atlases are very rare.

Enjoy this piece of history. Please contact me with any questions.

William A. Perry, Jr.