

OLD MAPS AND PRINTS

Mill Creek Farm

Rushland, Pennsylvania 18956

215-598-3662

Certificate of Authenticity

This **original** 1891 map was published by E. P. Noll & Co. in ***The Atlas of Bucks County, Penna.*** 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 this countries progression from an uncharted wilderness, (the newcomers' perspective), into a "modern" country. Production was extremely labor intensive making them comparatively expensive, so they were purchased primarily by those with professional needs, e.g. real estate and financial issues, surveying, etc. (An original 1876 Scott Atlas invoice lists one for \$10.00! A lot of money!). To reduce the cost of the 1876 atlas, lithographic views, similar to display ads of peoples' homes and/or businesses, were sold. This was not done in Noll's 1891 atlas, making them even more expensive.

It is impossible to know exactly how many atlases Scott and Noll printed, but given the technology of the time and their cost, it's reasonable to assume that comparatively few atlases were made. Since most of those were heavily used, few have survived, making the 1876 atlas rare and Noll's 1891 atlas particularly scarce.

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

William A. Perry, Jr.