ONE OF THE FIRST SEPARATELY ISSUED POCKET MAPS OF KANSAS, PUBLISHED AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN ITS HISTORY

Bleeding Kansas

308. [MAP]. HALSALL, John (publisher) and J[oseph] H[utchins] Colton (copyright holder). Sectional Map of the Territory of Kansas Compiled from the Field Notes in the Surveyor General’s Office. Published by John Halsall. Saint Louis, Mo. 1857 [below title] Entered according to Act of Congress in the Year 1856 by J.H. Colton & Co. in the Clerks Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York [lower right above neat line] The above Map is correct, So far as the field notes have been reported to this Office. Surveyor General’s Office 1856 Robt. L. Ream Chief Clerk, Surveyor Gen’ls. Office. St. Louis [i.e., New York: J.H. Colton], 1857. Lithograph map on banknote paper, original hand coloring in wash and outline, ornate border; neat line to neat line: 66 x 50.5 cm; border to border: 70.5 x 55 cm; overall sheet size: 74.2 x 58.5 cm, folded into publisher’s brown cloth embossed pocket covers (14.5 x 9.5 cm), lettered on upper in gilt and in blind on lower cover (Ream’s Sectional Map of Kansas), printed broadside affixed to verso of upper board with Colton ads: Maps, Atlases, Guides, Books, Etc. Published by J.H. Colton & Co.... Map: A few minor stains (primarily marginal and most noticeable at juncture of the map with the pocket covers, which seems to be the case in most copies), a few clean splits at folds (no losses), overall a near fine copy of the map with superb color retention and paper strong. Covers: Cloth faded and gilt lettering and embossing on upper cover mostly absent.

First edition, early issue. Several variants of this map were published in rapid succession in 1857 and 1858. This copy has “Entered according to Act of Congress in the Year 1856 by J.H. Colton”; cover title is “Ream’s Sectional Map of Kansas”; Cherokee and Osage now have added designations for the counties of Godfrey, Wilson, Dorn, and McGee; Washington, Clay, and Dickinson Counties are not present; Riley County has not yet been downsized; the Kansas Reservation is not located. Heaston, “The Kansas Pocket Map: The Cartographer’s Orphan” (elements of entries 6 & 7): “One of the first pocket maps of Kansas to be issued as a Kansas map, with detail much improved.... The government surveys are much more elaborate, and excellent details of old and new counties are present.” Karrow 13-0558. Phillips, America, p. 346. Rumsey 4094: “Development is limited to five tiers of counties running west from the Missouri border. The land office surveys are evident and gradually filling in all the old and new counties.”

Heaston, “The Kansas Pocket Map” (introduction, p. 169):

The popularity of the pocket map increased with the great movement in the Trans-Mississippi West. It would be extremely difficult even to estimate the number of individual maps actually issued because so many of them have been lost.... They usually cost no more than from twenty-five to fifty cents, depending upon their elaborateness, were considered expendable, and were discarded when they had served their purpose.... The beginning of Kansas cartography followed
the long, hard debate over the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which established Kansas Territory in 1854. The area of the state and even the name Kansas had appeared on maps for centuries: the spelling has been noted in over one hundred variants, ranging from Cansez and Kanzes to Kansa.... The years following 1854 were a most exciting period in Kansas cartographic development, and in just a short period of thirty-nine years, some extremely fine maps were issued.

This map shows the steady expansion into eastern Kansas at the time. Although showing only roughly the third of the Territory east of the principal meridian, considerable development is already taking place in the southeast quadrant along the Missouri River, with lesser development spreading out west of there along the Kansas River. Shown are platted townships, existing towns, roads, streams, military posts (including Fort Leavenworth, Fort Riley, etc.), and several fairly large Native American reservations and land holdings (e.g., Cherokee, Ottawa, Shawnee, etc.). For the traveller going West, shown are “Santa Fee Road,” “Fort Laramie Road,” etc. Kansas City, Kansas, does not yet exist.

This map was published at a critical juncture in Kansas history. Kansas Territory and Nebraska Territory were created following the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, with the provision that when admitted to the Union as states they “shall be received with or without slavery,” with the decision to be voted upon. This automatically repealed the 1820 Missouri Compromise, which forbade slavery north of 36°30’.

The sensitive, divisive issue of slavery in the West was raised, which resulted in a sudden influx of settlers, both pro-slavery and anti-slavery, setting up the conflict that became known as “Bleeding Kansas.” Pro-slavery and anti-slavery advocates attempted to populate the territory with their proponents. When this emigration map appeared, the unhappy, violent time known as “Bleeding Kansas” had commenced, presaging the Civil War. By the summer of 1856, parts of Kansas were desolated and deserted.

The conflict in Kansas also had great and dire consequences for Native Americans in Kansas, setting in motion a diaspora fragmenting tribal groups (and for some it was not the first such migration). The map documents locations and relocations of Indian land, printing new county designations over lands designated as tribal. Native American titles were ignored in the law creating Kansas Territory. Annie Heloise Abel, one of the first scholars to narrate Native American involvement in the Civil War and shaping of the trans-Missouri West, asserted: “Never in all history, so it would appear, has the insatiable land-hunger of the white man been better illustrated than in the case of the beginnings of the sunflower state” (Annie Heloise Abel, The American Indian as a Slaveholder and Secessionist, Cleveland, 1915-1925, Vol. 3, pp. 23-24). See also Luke Cramer Ryan, “The Indians would be too near us”: Paths of Disunion in the Making of Kansas, 1848-1870, Dissertation, University of Arizona, 2009.

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