

Price-Strother map of NC: Reviews and Ads

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*I've fought and lost
the battle to reformat
this properly.*

Contemporary reviews and advertisements for the Price-Strother map of North Carolina

The earliest review located thus far was published in *The Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review* in April 1808.[see endnote 1] Was it an original review, or was it a reprint of an earlier review? The date and verb tense in the first sentence of this review, "The year **1807 has** added another map..." suggests that the published map was available for inspection in 1807, and leaves open the possibility that this 1808 published review was a reprint of one published the previous year. Following is the full text:

PRICE AND STROTHER'S MAP OF NORTH-CAROLINA.

The year 1807 has added another important map to our geography. By the labours of Jonathan Price and John Strother, a map of the state of North Carolina has been compiled, the first, it is said, from actual survey. It includes the whole of its extensive and peculiar coast on the Atlantick ocean, from the Virginian line, a little north of the Currituck inlet, to the South Carolina boundary, at Little River inlet. But the new discoveries,

made under the auspices of the national government, which have been published by virtue of a resolve of Congress, dated 2d of March, 1807, seem not to be comprehended in it. This is probably owing to their having been made after the map was put into the engraver's hands.

From its extreme point of east-longitude at Cape Hatteras, in about 75° 50' W. from Greenwich, this commonwealth extends to the 84th, or thereabout, on the westernmost part of its junction with Tennessee, beyond the Iron, Bald, Walnut, and Smoky mountains, in which the territorial line is not fully ascertained. The civil divisions into counties are distinctly marked, and coloured. And the roads, rivers, towns, places of publick worship, villas, hills, and swamps, are so minutely marked, that the map may be deservedly ranked among the most instructive publications of this class. The engraving and printing was performed by the Harrisons of Philadelphia.

The above review was reprinted almost verbatim (in the first sentence, "our geography" was changed to "American geography") in the August, 1808, issue of *The Athenaeum, a Magazine of Literary and Miscellaneous Information*, published by John Aikin in London.[2]

Salmon Hall, a book seller in New Bern, was either ignorant of the American origin of the British review, or perhaps was just being a savvy salesman when making reference to it. Hall's December 9, 1808, advertisement in the *New Bern Morning Herald* reads as follows:

It might be supposed and past occurrences have evinced that the Reviewers of G. Britain have no predisposition to pronounce favorable opinions on works of genius in America. It may sometimes happen that their prejudices are superceded by a spirit of justice, but we could scarcely hope that indulgence would be extended by them to deficiencies in American productions. We may fairly presume then, that when praise is bestowed, it is justly merited. We are happy to be able to state the following [from] Dr. Aikins's Athenaeum, a work particularly entitled to credit because its author is himself eminent as a geographer, and has every opportunity of determining the value of essays in this department of science.

Hall's ad then reproduces the review from *The Athenaeum*, after which Hall concludes with this statement:

The above mentioned Map may be had at S. HALL'S Book Store.

The November 10, 1808, issue of *The Star* (Raleigh) contained the following editorial, quite peculiar in that it relates to the undated first state of the map:

More than twelve years ago Messrs. Jonathan Price, of Pasquotank, and John Strother, now of Buncombe, contemplated and promised a map of North Carolina, and commenced surveys of the state. Their design was patronized by the legislature, and by a very large subscription by individuals, for the purchase of the map. After a long delay, when, if the design was remembered, publick expectation was no longer awake, we hear the publication announced in Philadelphia, and very lately, the map has been exhibited in this state. It is on a very large scale, elegantly engraved and coloured, and is believed to be very accurate. A few mistakes occur in the names of places, but they are such as will lead no inhabitant of the state into error. Greene county, for instance, is called by its former name of Glasgow, and

Ashe county has the name of Davie. Some new discoveries, made by recent surveys of the western part of the state to settle the boundary between it and South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, are not included, probably by those surveys having been made after the map was in the hands of the engraver. The [south]western limits are not, therefore, well defined. The whole of our peculiar and dangerous coast is delineated with great minuteness and accuracy, and it is said to be the best guide to navigators of any chart hitherto published. The civil divisions into counties are distinctly marked and coloured. "The roads, rivers, towns, places of publick worship, villas, hills, and swamps are so minutely marked, that the map may be deservedly ranked among the most instructive publications of this class."

The above review in *The Star* was reprinted in the February 1809 issue of *The Monthly Anthology*, and *Boston Review*, the second review published in that periodical in less than one year.[3]

One of the most intriguing advertisements for the map appeared in the May 8, 1808, issue of the *United States Gazette*, a Philadelphia newspaper. There is no entry for 105 Spruce Street in the Philadelphia Directory for that year.

*Just Published and for Sale,
No. 105 SPRUCE STREET,
A COMPLETE MAP of the state of
North Carolina, the whole survey from
admeasurement by the authors, and corrected
both as to latitude and longitude by every
needful astronomical observation, in the ex-
ecution of which they have spent many years.
The map is five feet by two feet ten inches
engraved by William Harrison, of this city,
in an elegant manner; showing, in an accurate
and distinct manner, every thing that
can make a map useful and ornamental.
It is now offered to the publick, with a
hope that the authors may, in some measure,
be rewarded for their labours and expense
by a liberal extension of publick patronage.
Jonathan Price John Strother.*

From 1808 to about 1812, ads such as the one below appeared in various North Carolina newspapers.

PRICE & STROTHER'S
MAP of NORTH-CAROLINA
May be had at J. Gales's Store—Price 2
On Canvas and Rollers,

Ad for the Price-Strother map of N from the May 17, 1811 issue of the *Raleigh Register*

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The latest advertisement found for the *map* thus far is in John Melish's catalog from 1819:

71. PRICE AND STROTHER'S MAP OF
NORTH CAROLINA—3 sheets, mounted, \$8 50.

1826 SALE of the COPPER PLATES

James Porter advertised the sale of the copper plates for the Price-Strother map of North Carolina in William Fry's *National Gazette and Literary Register* (Philadelphia, PA), on Thursday, May 25, 1826. The ad, appearing on page 3, reads as follows:

Price & Strothers' Map of the State of North Carolina.

FOR SALE, the Copperplates of the above large Map, in complete printing order, nearly new. It is presumed that from four to five thousand perfect impressions could be taken from the plates without retouching: the engraving is elegantly executed, and it is believed that this is the only Map of the State of north Carolina, taken from actual survey, that is to be had at the present time. Persons wishing to purchase, or view the plates or impressions, will please call on James Porter, No.2 North Eighth street, where the plates have been left for sale at a very reduced price.

James Porter was listed in the 1825 Philadelphia Directory as a "copper plate engraver" at 220 Walnut. He is likely best known for engraving one of the earliest facsimiles of the Declaration of Independence (the Binns edition of 1819).

The plates apparently were purchased by Robert Desilver. He published an "improved to 1826" revision of the Price-Strother map. No advertisements for this revised issue have been found. Two surviving copies of the 1826 map are known, one in the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the other in The MacLean Collection.

The information in this post is referred to in [Footnote 74](#) and [Footnote 105](#) in the [Price-Strother article](#).

[1] Scanned and available on line at <http://goo.gl/Yzoiz>

[2] Scanned and available on line at <http://goo.gl/uCRBe>

[3] Scanned and available on line at <http://goo.gl/FENTG>