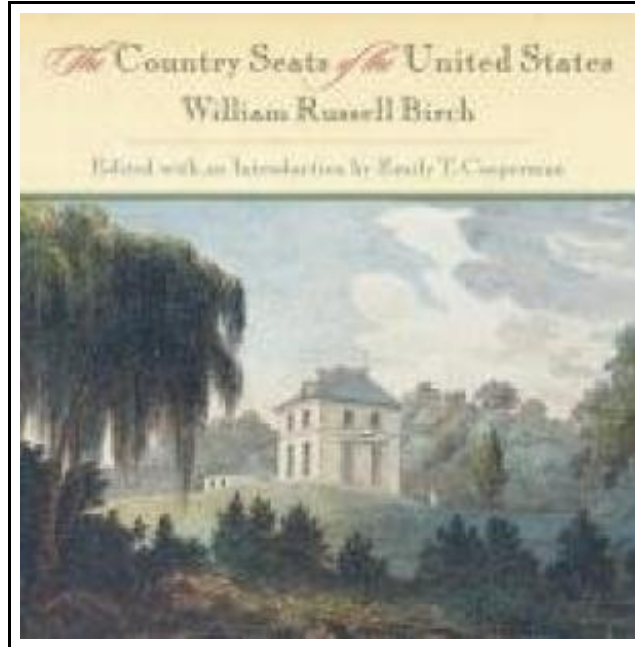


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University of Pennsylvania Press, United States, 2008. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 231 x 226 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. William Russell Birch (1755-1834) has long been recognized as the first artist to achieve true commercial success in depicting American scenes for the domestic market. In his early career in London, Birch was influenced by the landscape painters whose work arose in the rich artistic ferment he encountered there in the 1770s and 1780s. After immigrating to Philadelphia in 1794, Birch sought to make his living recording scenes of the young republic, the better to promote taste in architecture and landscape design. The illustrations in his copperplate books soon proved to be vehicles for developing uniquely American pictorial subject matter. Of these, *The City of Philadelphia* in 1800 became very successful, going through four editions from 1800 to 1828. Birch's third publication, *The Country Seats of the United States*, first published in 1808, was the result of the engraver's travels through the mid-Atlantic, as well as his intimate knowledge of the Philadelphia region. Both of Birch's American books are of considerable importance in documenting the cultural developments of the young nation. *The Country Seats of the United States* consists of twenty plates depicting eighteen estates, all but one of which were located on the eastern seaboard between Mount Vernon in the south and New York City in the north, with many properties along the Schuylkill River near Philadelphia. The remaining property in New Orleans was included to represent the recent Louisiana Purchase. Reproduced in its entirety with twenty color plates, this edition includes Birch's introduction and comments on the images, and a biographical essay situating Birch within his world and discussing the individual sites Birch depicted.



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