



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
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**Chart of the Red Sea, from Jiddah, to The Straits of Bab-El-Mandeb, Surveyed in the  
Years 1830, 31, 32 & 33, By Captn. Elwon & Lieut. H.N. Pinching, and completed in  
1833 and 34 by Comder. R. Moresby, Indian Navy . . .**

**Stock#:** 53480  
**Map Maker:** Walker / East India Company  
**Date:** 1836 (1870)  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 25 x 38 inches (each)  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***These Beautiful Maps of the Red Sea . . . Will Ever Remain Permanent Monuments of Indian Naval Science, and the Daring of its Officers and Men (Richard Burton)***

A remarkable 2-sheet map of a portion of the Red Sea, surveyed by the Indian Navy between 1830 and



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1833 and first published by the East India Company in 1836. The pair is one of two sets of charts, covering the entirety of the Red Sea.

Moresby's survey is a landmark work in the history of the mapping of the Red Sea and charts are of the highest importance in its cartographic history. The present editions, reflect updates and corrections made in November 1863, October 1865, September 1868 and July 1870.

The corrections reflect not only improvements from the original charts, but the addition of all place names in Arabic and the addition of elevations of the coastal mountains shown on the charts. Navigational improvements such as lighthouses are also added.

The survey was conducted by 'Her Majesty's Indian Navy' (created in 1830 from the East India Company's Marine), in order to make the new 'Overland Route' (via Suez) to India safer. Two brigs, the 'Benares' under Captain Elwon and 'Palinurus' under Captain Moresby, spent over 4 years undertaking a detailed survey of the Red Sea. Moresby wrote of the hardships and reported that the Benares caught on reefs 42 times in the first two years. Both Elwon and Moresby were frequently ill, and Pinching, Elwon's assistant surveyor, died of smallpox in 1833 off Aden. Elwon was then transferred to the Persian Gulf, leaving Moresby to complete the Red Sea Survey.

Moresby's work includes more than just basic sailing directions: the charts also mark the sources of food and water, and more. Sherm Braickhah, for example has a note 'Good □ for a small vessel, and stock procurable but natives not to be trusted'. The remarkable accuracy of the charts played a huge part in making the Red Sea a modern trade route, and in facilitating the building of the Suez Canal twenty-five years later.

The charts were utilized by the explorer Sir Richard Burton, who praised them in his *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856), who wrote:

*The beautiful maps of the Red Sea, drafted by the late Commodore Carless, then a lieutenant, will ever remain permanent monuments of Indian Naval Science, and the daring of its officers and men.*

#### **Rarity**



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The Moresby Charts are extremely rare, especially as a complete 4 sheet set. We note complete sets in the British Library, BnF and Library of Congress. OCLC lists incomplete sets at the National Maritime Museum and University of Glasgow. The Qatar National Library Digital Collection illustrates 1 sheet of 4.

We note no examples appearing at auction or in dealer catalogs and only the lower 2 sheets of a circa 1850 example currently offered by a dealer for 5000 GBP.

**Detailed Condition:**

2-sheets, unjoined. Minor soiling and a few minor marginal tears.