



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

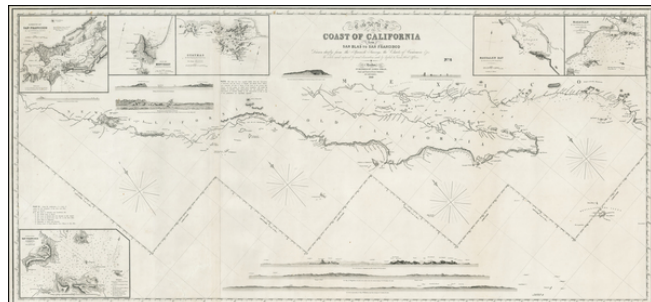
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Chart of the Coast of California from San Blas to San Francisco Drawn chiefly from the Spanish Surveys, the Charts of Vancouver &c. the whole much improved by recent observations made by English and French Naval Officers . . . 1849

Stock#: 32059
Map Maker: Imray
Date: 1849
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 58 x 26 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Striking large scale blue-backed sea chart of the California at the outset of the Gold Rush, published by James Imray.

Visually striking and rare sea chart from the California Gold Rush era, pre-dating the first American published charts of the West Coast and almost certainly the best available chart for gold seekers coming to the Gold Regions by Sea. The chart is a working blueback chart depicting the California coast from Cape Corrientes in Mexico northward to Trinidad Bay, California. Two of the land profiles depict approaches to San Francisco, and another is for Monterey.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, as the popularity of the sea atlas declined, the rolled blueback chart, issued by private British publishers, became one of the standard navigational aids. Although published privately, cartographic and hydrographic information was obtained from official sources, primarily the British Admiralty. The firm of James Imray & Son was the foremost publisher of these charts, and the present chart is an outstanding example of the firm's craftsmanship.

The large blueback chart was intended to be consulted at sea. Mounted on tough blue paper, and rolled for ease of storage and spreading out on the charting table, it was a working navigational aid, frequently consulted and often marked with notes from prior voyages. Such blueback charts are especially scarce because of their ephemeral use. Once obsolete, it was dangerous not to destroy an outdated sea chart. Most working charts did not survive beyond the publication of the next edition.

This private chart would have been sold to British sea merchants and others plying the Pacific Coast, including the international rush of gold-seekers in 1849. There was also a very active trade between



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California and Hawaii in the 1840 and 1850s, as well as use along the old routes of the Manila Galleon Trade.

This chart was published and sold in London by James Imray (1803-1870), who owned and operated a "Navigation Warehouse & Naval Academy," the foremost publisher of sea charts. Imray originally was in the stationery and account book publishing business. In 1836 he joined with Michael Blachford, a sea chart publisher based in London. The partnership flourished and soon began to compete with the larger firm of Norie and Wilson. In 1846 Imray bought out Blachford, taking over as sole proprietor. The firm, later led by descendants, survived into the 20th century and is active today.

Detailed Condition:

Original bluebacked sea chart. Tear on center left side, extending into image. Expertly repaired and nearly invisible except on very close inspection.