



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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The Australian Colonies

Stock#: 38149
Map Maker: Stanford
Date: 1859
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 27.5 x 15.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare 1859 map of Australia, depicting a very unusual and short-lived interval in the internal territorial evolution of Australia.

This fascinating map shows Australia as it appeared in the early months of 1859, featuring a peculiar combination of interim inter-colonial boundaries. It is one of the only maps to show this arrangement, for it existed for a mere matter of months.

All of the various jurisdictions are distinguished by their own bright colors. The northern boundary of New South Wales (colored in orange) is defined at 26° South, a line which really was only officially observed from February 1846 to April 1847. While this 'ghost boundary' had since been considered the unofficial northern boundary of the New South Wales, it technically did not exist, as all of the northern and central regions of Australia (colored here in yellow) were actually considered to be part of that colony.

This situation would remain the case until June 6, 1859, when the new colony of Queensland was created in northeastern Australia and so moving the northern border of New South Wales considerably further to the south. It seems that the present map was made in the months leading up to the creation of Queensland, when officials in London were still debating the location of the future boundary between New South Wales and its anticipated neighbor to the north.

The other curious feature of the map is that the yellow addition to New South Wales reaches all the way around South Australia (colored in green) to form a narrow strip between Western Australia (colored in pink) and South Australia. This irregular and impractical formation would remain in place until 1860, when the western boundary of South Australia was moved westwards from 132° to 129° East, so as to form a direct border with Western Australia.



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Interestingly, *Stanford's Library Map of Australasia* (1859), a more common map, printed the same year as the present map, features the 'wrap around' of territory around South Australia but not the 'ghost boundary' delineating the northern limits of New South Wales.

In 1863, the part of the yellow territory that lay immediately to the north of South Australia and between Queensland and Western Australia, would become part of South Australia, until it split to become the Territory of Northern Australia in 1911.

The map features a large inset of Tasmania, which was only renamed from its original name Van Dieman's Land, in 1856.

The publisher of the map, Edward Stanford, was then on his way to becoming the leading mapmaker of the British Empire. He maintained a close association with the Colonial Office and the Royal Geographic Society, so giving him privileged access to cutting-edge sources and an advantage over his competitors. Importantly, the present map represents Stanford's first of his many maps of Australia.

The present map grants a 'snap-shot' of an unusual and short-lived interval in the internal territorial evolution of Australia. It is also quite rare. We have not been able to trace another example as having appeared on the market since 1990.

Detailed Condition: