



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

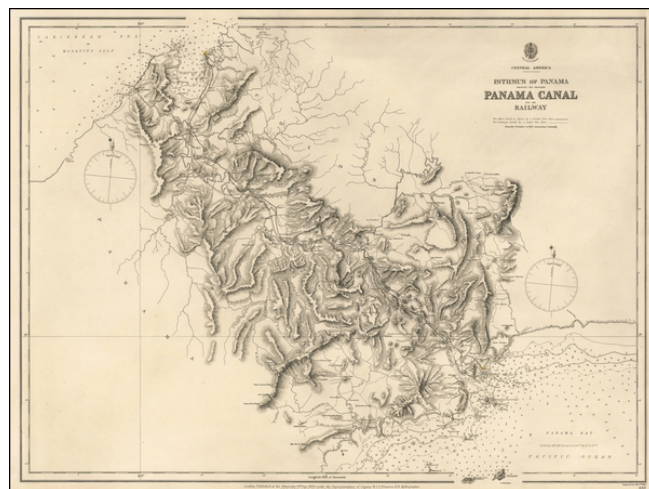
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Isthmus of Panama Showing The Proposed Panama Canal and the Railway . . . 1885

Stock#: 51515
Map Maker: British Admiralty
Date: 1885
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 26.5 x 18.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Highly detailed map of the Isthmus of Panama, published by the British Admiralty.

Extending from Mosquito Bay in the Caribbean Sea to Panama Bay in the Pacific, the map provides a remarkable topographical treatment of the region.

This British Admiralty chart was published four years after construction had begun on the Panama Canal by French diplomat Ferdinand de Lesseps. The initial construction of the canal by the French began in 1881 and was abandoned in 1889 as a result of bankruptcy and a high mortality rate among workers due to disease and accidents.

The map also shows the Panama Canal railway, which was built by American investors between 1850-55, and was integral in the building of the canal years later. The chart shows the extreme topography between Panama City and Colon and gives good hydrographical detail of the surrounding bays. Engraved by Edward Weller and sold by J.D. Potter.

History of the Panama Canal

The first mention of a canal across the Isthmus dates to 1534, when the Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain ordered a survey of a proposed route to shorten the distance between Peru and Spain. In 1788, Thomas Jefferson suggested that the Spanish should consider such an endeavor, and the Spanish expedition undertaken by Alessandro Malaspina between 1788 and 1793 spent some time in the region, allowing Malaspina to set forth a plan for the construction of the Canal.



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Between the 1840s and 1870s, a number of American, British and French proposals were made, culminating the commencement of work on the construction of the canal, as a result of the success of the Suez Canal. After two French companies failed to complete the route. In 1902, the French were actively seeking American involvement in the project.

On January 22, 1903, the Hay-Herrán Treaty was signed by United States Secretary of State John M. Hay and Colombian Chargé Dr. Tomás Herrán. For \$10 million and an annual payment, the Treaty granted the United States a renewable lease in perpetuity from Colombia on the land proposed for the canal. The treaty was ratified by the U.S. Senate on March 14, 1903, but the Senate of Colombia did not ratify it. Bunau-Varilla told President Theodore Roosevelt and Hay of a possible revolt by Panamanian rebels who aimed to separate from Colombia, and hoped that the United States would support the rebels with U.S. troops and money. Roosevelt changed tactics, based in part on the Mallarino-Bidlack Treaty of 1846, and actively supported the separation of Panama from Colombia and, shortly after recognizing Panama, signed a treaty with the new Panamanian government under similar terms to the Hay-Herrán Treaty.

On November 2, 1903, U.S. warships blocked sea lanes for possible Colombian troop movements en route to put down the rebellion. Panama declared independence on November 3, 1903. The United States quickly recognized the new nation. On November 6, 1903, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, as Panama's ambassador to the United States, signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, granting rights to the United States to build and indefinitely administer the Panama Canal Zone and its defenses. This is sometimes misinterpreted as the "99-year lease" because of misleading wording included in article 22 of the agreement.

Rarity

The map is quite rare on the market. OCLC locates only 2 copies (Cambridge University and British Library).

Detailed Condition: