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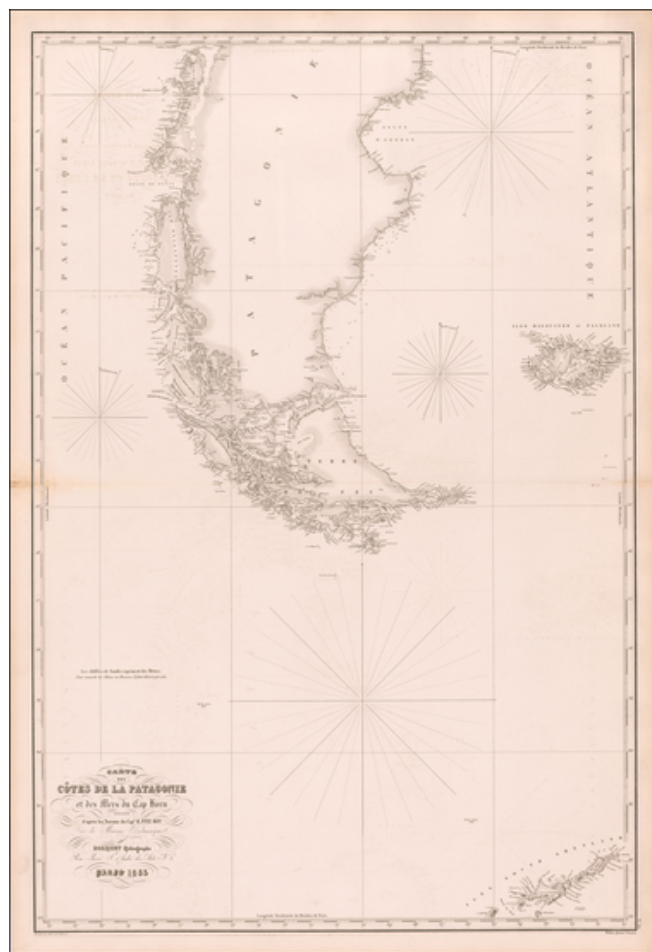
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Carte des Cotes de la Patagonie et des Mers du Cap Horn Dressee d'apres de Travaux du Cap.e R. Fitz Roy de la Marine Britannique . . . 1853

Stock#: 58687
Map Maker: Robiquet
Date: 1853
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 26.5 x 38.3 inches
Price: \$975.00



Description:

Rare separately published sea chart of the southern tip of South America, the Falkland Islands and the South Shetland Islands, published in Paris by Aime Robiquet.

The chart lists Captain R. Fitz Roy of the British Admiralty as the source for the map content.

The First Surveying Voyage to Tierra del Fuego, 1826-30

Finding a safe passage around the southern tip of South America was one of the great imperatives of global shipping. Rounding Cape Horn itself was always fearsome, and while the Strait of Magellan held



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out the promise of a more sheltered route, its labyrinthine passages were not sufficiently understood. While the Strait itself had been surveyed in a cursory fashion by Captain James Cook, a far more exacting survey, employing the latest equipment was in order.

In 1826, the Royal Navy dispatched the *HMS Adventure* and its smaller companion, the *HMS Beagle*, to survey the coasts of southern Patagonia, and the Strait of Magellan in particular. The *Beagle* was commanded initially by Captain Pringle Stokes, while the overall command of the voyage fell under Captain Phillip Parker King, aboard the *Adventure*. The relatively nimble *Beagle* was charged with the far more treacherous aspects of the survey, essentially circumnavigating Tierra del Fuego. Highly advanced trigonometric surveys of the shorelines were conducted with theodolites, while copious soundings of the seafloor were taken, and navigational hazards noted. During this survey the *Beagle Channel*, the interoceanic passage that ran between Tierra del Fuego and Navarino Island, was discovered.

The voyage was not without mishap, however, as Captain Stokes committed suicide, only to be replaced by the energetic Lieutenant Robert FitzRoy. While only 23 years old, he proved to be a highly competent surveyor and leader. Towards the end of the voyage, a group of native Fuegians stole one of the *Beagle's* tenders. In response, FitzRoy took some Fuegians hostage, and while the situation was eventually diffused, it made for an unusually melodramatic surveying expedition.

Upon the **Beagle** and *Adventure's* return to England a chart was apparently published depicting the survey's findings. However, no chart of this description is known to survive, and the only record we can find of the chart is in *The Nautical Magazine* (London, June 1832).

The Second Surveying Voyage to Tierra del Fuego, including Charles Darwin, 1831-6

While the Admiralty was highly impressed with the surveys thus far, the project was far from complete. At FitzRoy's behest, the *Beagle* was dramatically retrofitted and kitted out with the most advanced scientific and navigational equipment. It also occurred to FitzRoy that while he and his men performed hydrographic surveys, someone should conduct a scientific appraisal of the land itself should be undertaken. Through an unlikely chain of inquiries they selected Charles Darwin, a brilliant but obscure amateur naturalist, who was otherwise on track to becoming a rural clergyman.

The second surveying voyage of the *Beagle* departed England in December, 1831. Over a two-year period FitzRoy and his crew painstakingly completed their surveying mandate, while Darwin combed the barren landscape "geologizing". Prefiguring the ingenious insights that would later make him famous, Darwin made highly important observations with respect to the geology, biology and anthropology of this mysterious land and its inhabitants. Once the surveying mandate was complete, the *Beagle* headed across



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the vast expanse of the Pacific, giving Darwin his first exposure to the unique flora and fauna of New Zealand and Australia. The expedition returned to England in October 1836, and the chart that was the antecedent of the present chart was published in the early months of 1837.

Darwin published his intellectually brilliant and highly entertaining account of the voyage as his '*Journal & Remarks*', the third volume of FitzRoy & Darwin's *Narrative of the surveying voyages of his Majesty's ships Adventure and Beagles between the years 1826 and 1836* (1839), which was subsequently popularized as the *Voyage of the Beagle*. His account became a best seller, and established his celebrity as a naturalist.

Robert FitzRoy (1805-1865) was a navigator, meteorologist and Colonial Governor of New Zealand. He began his command of the Beagle in 1828, at the commencement of its surveying work in Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and the Straits of Magellan. The first survey concluded in 1830, with a second survey commenced in December 1831 and was completed in 1836. The voyage's interest was increased by the presence of Charles Darwin as naturalist, with whom FitzRoy collaborated in the Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of HM Ships *Adventure* and *Beagle*, FitzRoy being responsible for the first two volumes and Darwin for the third. In 1837, FitzRoy was awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society for his achievements.

Rarity

OCLC locates a single example (Bibliotheque Nationale de France). We note also a copy in a Robiquet composite atlas in the Library of Congress, dated 1849 (Phillips 909).

Detailed Condition: