



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

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**The Sacramento Valley from The American River to Butte Creek, Surveyed & Drawn by  
Order of Gen.l Riley . . . by Lieut Derby . . . September & October 1849**

**Stock#:** 83850  
**Map Maker:** Derby  
**Date:** 1849  
**Place:** Washington  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 17.5 x 22 inches  
**Price:** \$ 795.00



**Description:**

***A Gold Rush Map of "Major Importance" (Wheat) -- One of the Earliest Maps of the Gold Regions of California Based Upon Actual Observations***

Important California Gold Rush map by Lt. George H. Derby, from Tyson's *Information in Relation to the Geology and Topography of California*, perhaps the earliest scientific work on the Gold rush.

The Sacramento Valley Gold Region map of 1849 is a splendid portrayal of a momentous time in California history. Commissioned by General Riley and meticulously drafted by Lieutenant George H. Derby, the map reflects the diligence and precision, offering the first detailed overview of the vibrant landscape that was the epicenter of the Gold Rush. As part of Tyson's comprehensive study on the geology and topography of California, this map might be among the earliest scientific investigations into this explosive period.

The map covers territory from 10 miles south of Sacramento up to the Oroville region. Its horizontal span



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extends from the present-day city of Colusa to what was then known as Colluma, known today as Coloma.

The landscape illustrated is a tribute to the early efforts of Lt. Derby. Rivers, with an attempt to illustrate the primary topographical features at a moment in time when no part of California had been systematically surveyed and vast areas remain unexplored.

The map intricately delineates several early roads including Benicia, Shadon's Ranch, Daylor's Rancho, and Vernon. Of particular interest is the Lawson's Route-Emigrant's Road, perhaps an early thoroughfare for those fortune-seekers who descended upon California from all corners of the world. Moreover, it pinpoints several key areas of interest such as Rose's Rancho, Rose's Bar, Cordua's Bar, and the cryptically named "Diggers" located along the winding Yuba River. Similarly, the map marks out Mormon Isla, Karnakas Diggings, and Dry Diggings on the American River.

This document goes beyond a simple geographical representation; it immerses the viewer in the atmosphere of a pivotal historical period offering the first meaningful image of the area which would grip America with Gold Fever in the coming years. It serves as a baseline for the Gold Rush's transformative impact on the region, influencing its geography, settlements, and roadways.

Carl Wheat describes the map as being of major importance, being one of the earliest maps of the region based upon actual observations.

**Philip Thomas Tyson** (1799-1877) was a celebrated American geologist and agriculturist whose work left an indelible mark on the scientific understanding of the mid-19th-century United States.

Throughout his life, Tyson championed the cause of scientific agriculture, seeking to apply his understanding of geology to improve farming techniques and boost productivity. He was instrumental in setting up the Maryland Geological Survey in 1834, using this position to investigate the state's mineral resources. His contributions went beyond local level; his work, "Geology and Agriculture of Maryland," influenced national agriculture policy, and he served as a geologist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

However, Tyson's most notable contribution came during the California Gold Rush. His extensive geological survey of California and subsequent report, "Information in Relation to the Geology and Topography of California," helped miners understand the topography and was instrumental in fueling the Gold Rush. The maps that accompanied his report, including the Sacramento Valley Gold Region map crafted by Lieutenant George H. Derby, were invaluable resources for prospectors seeking their fortunes in California's golden fields.



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**George Horatio Derby** (1823–1861) was a military officer and humorist whose unique combination of technical skill and artistic talent played a significant role in capturing the geographical realities of the mid-19th-century American West. Born in Massachusetts, Derby graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1846. His early career saw him stationed in several frontier outposts, exposing him to the expansive landscapes that he would later expertly illustrate.

Derby's most significant contribution came during his service in California, as the Gold Rush was beginning to reshape the state's landscape and population. Tasked with conducting a survey of the Sacramento Valley by General Riley, Derby crafted the Sacramento Valley Gold Region map in 1849. This map, based on meticulous observations, provided invaluable insights into the region's geography and topography.

However, Derby's legacy is not just defined by his cartographic contributions. He also achieved fame as a humorist under the pseudonym "John Phoenix." His humorous writings provided a lighter counterpoint to his detailed, scientifically rigorous work as a topographer, revealing a multi-faceted individual who blended technical expertise with a keen sense of humor.

**Detailed Condition:**