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Topographical Map of Central California together with a part of Nevada [Sheet III and IV]

Stock#: 87166
Map Maker: Hoffmann / Whitney
Date: 1872 (ca)
Place: New York
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 49 x 25.25 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Extremely rare set of two maps (Sheet III and Sheet IV) of Josiah Whitney's monumental (and never finished) map of Central California and part of Nevada.

Sometime after 1870, J.D. Whitney commissioned a four-sheet map of Central California on a Scale of 1:380,160, of which only one sheet was completed and the other three sheets partially completed.

Charles Hoffmann (for whom Mt. Hoffmann in California was named) was selected as the principal topographer for the project, which also included V. Wackenreuder, J.T. Gardner, A. Craven, and A.D. Wilson as his field assistants. While opinions differ on how much of the map was completed, Rumsey was able to locate only the lower two sheets of the map, while Wheat states that three sheets were present in the Farquar collection. (See #1238, footnote 43). Warren Heckrotte owned a set of 4 sheets, the upper two being proofs that were largely incomplete and unfinished, with significantly less topographical and other details.

The differences between the finished sheet (Sheet IV) and the partially finished sheets (Sheets I, II and III) is illustrated in the present set. Sheet III (the most complete of the three unfinished sheets), still includes an incomplete topographical finish, as illustrated by the contrasting depictions of the mountain ranges in Calaveras and Tuolumne counties.

The present pair extends from Sonoma and Napa Counties in the north to Monterey County in the south and Owens Lake and Columbus Nevada at the eastern extremes of sheet IV, centered on the gold regions.

This Hoffmann-produced map is identified as the source information for the highly influential 1873 California Geological Survey Map, making it safe to surmise that the map was issued in or before 1873,



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with various scholars attributing dates between 1870 and 1873. We offer here Sheet IV, which includes Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Mono Counties in the north (along with Esmerelda County Nevada), and extends south to Owens Lake, Visalia and the Tule Swamp, and a significant portion of Inyo, Fresno and Tulare Counties (pre-dating the creation of several other counties in the region).

A native of Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Charles Hoffman was the topographer of J.D. Whitney's State Geological Survey (1860-1874). Hoffmann was one of the pioneers of modern topography and is responsible for the adoption of the contour line for the topographical atlas of the United States, made by the USGS. Of the extant sheets, the southwest sheet is perhaps the most important, being the first comprehensive map of the High Sierra. The detail in the map is truly extraordinary and includes significantly more detail in the region than any map to date.

Detailed Condition:

Original hand-color in outline. Two sheets of wove paper joined as one. Backed with modern archival linen. Minor toning.