



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(San Diego Photograph) 349. Marriage Place of Ramona. Tile-Roofed Adoba at Old Town. Pepper Tree [Estudillo adobe in Old Town, San Diego]

Stock#: 92621
Map Maker: W.G. Walz & Company / Coonley
Date: 1894
Place: San Diego
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 7.5 x 4.5 inches
Price: \$ 345.00



Description:

Early Boudoir Photograph of a San Diego Landmark:

The Estudillo Adobe (aka Ramona's Marriage Place)

A nice original 19th century albumen photograph of the Estudillo House, an early adobe house in San Diego's Old Town, built in 1827 during California's Mexican era. The house began to be styled as "Ramona's Marriage Place" due to the popularity of Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 novel Ramona.

This book did much to romanticize the Californio period of California history, and spurred tourism to Southern California. The opening of the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Railway did the rest, bringing in large numbers of tourists to San Diego and other locations connected with the novel. While Jackson never actually disclosed the locations in the novel, an 1887 article in the *San Diego Union* declared the Estudillo house to be the fictional "Ramona's Marriage Place." However, there is no evidence that Jackson even visited the house. In the novel Ramona was married in "a long, low adobe building which had served no mean purpose in the old Presidio days, but was now fallen in decay; and all its rooms, except those occupied by the Father, had been long uninhabited". Apparently the caretaker of the old adobe casa sped up the process of decay, selling off pieces of the building to avid collectors. The present image dates from 1894, and certainly shows the adobe in a state of degradation. It has long since been restored as an important historical landmark.

The photograph is signed in the negative by Henry Ellis Coonley (1865-1942), who was active in San Diego and specialized in such views of San Diego. A photo dealer's name is stamped in purple ink on the mount: "W. G. Walz Company / B. Burnell, Manager, San Diego." The verso of the mount has an additional stamp:



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"From the San Diego Curiosity Store / S. E. Cor. 5th & F Sts."

Burnell & Walz appear as operators of a Mexican art and curio store in advertisements in the San Diego *Sud California Deutsche Zeitung* from 1888 to 1890.

Detailed Condition:

Original boudoir card format albumen photograph on card mount measuring 5 1/4 x 8 1/2 inches. Overall a very nice image. Signed in the negative: Coonley, Photo. Copyrighted 1894.