



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

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(858) 551-8500
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(California Lithography) N.S.G.W. Certificate of Membership. This is to Certify that [blank] is a member of Native Sons of the Golden West

Stock#: 93308
Map Maker: Olsen
Date: 1902 circa
Place: San Francisco
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 19.5 x 26.25 inches
Price: \$ 3,400.00



Description:

A Tour-de-Force of Californian Lithography:

Large Scale Pictorial Membership Certificate for the Native Sons of the Golden West

An impressive lithographic production, this pictorial membership certificate for the Native Sons of the Golden West is a beautiful Californian allegory made up of historical symbolism from California's history as well as views of the state's natural wonders.

The certificate is signed by P. A. Crowley, president of the organization, but the document has not been issued to anyone, i.e. the space for the member's name is blank. The metal foil seal is embossed for a specific "Parlor" of the organization: "University Parlor No. 216. N.S.G.W. Palo Alto."



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Native Sons of the Golden West

The N.S.G.W. was founded as a patriotic fraternal organization in 1875 by General A. M. Winn, "To perpetuate in the minds of all native Californians the memories of the days of '49 to encourage a lively interest in all matters and measures relating to the promotion of the national interests and to the upbuilding of the State of California."

The organization was especially active in historic preservation and in the placement of plaques denoting historic structures and sites. In 1890 the Native Sons of the Golden West placed the first historical marker honoring gold discovery in California - which apparently gave rise to the state's honorific: "The Golden State".

Pictorial Elements in the Certificate:

Crowning the top of the sheet: the Golden Gate with sunburst above decorated with the initials N.S.G.W. Shows the entrance to San Francisco Bay, with several ships and islands in the foreground.

Beginning from the upper left corner of the sheet and continuing clockwise around a five-pointed star, the base of which bears the motto "Friendship, Loyalty, Charity," we see:

- Yosemite (including Half Dome)
- U.S. and California flags with California grizzly bear between the two flags. The eye of providence within the top triangle of the star.
- Sutter's Fort, flying an American flag.
- Gold panning tools
- California poppies.
- Giant sequoia tunnel tree.
- A young miner or pioneer wielding an American flag.
- Overland party crossing the Plains to California in covered wagons.
- Ploughing fields near the Pacific coast.
- Railroad depot at a Bay Area shipping dock
- Miners panning for gold.
- Statue of John Sutter
- Santa Barbara Mission.
- Portrait of P. A. Crowley between cornucopias.

Dating



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The Bancroft estimates the date of their example as ca. 1902, which date is based on the lithographer O.E. Olsen (who was active ca. 1902). Some sources suggest the O.E. Olsen Lithograph Company was established in 1905. Examples of the O.E. Olsen Company's work in the Jay T. Last Collection of Graphic Arts at the Huntington Library include full color lithographic orange box labels printed as late as 1920.

Rarity

A wonderful example of early 20th century pictorial Californiana. Rare in the market. OCLC locates only a single example, at Yale, and we note one other copy in the Bancroft Library. A completely different design for the N.S.G.W. membership certificate was made by Britton & Rey, ca. 1888, an example of which appeared in RBH.

Detailed Condition:

Original lithograph. Original metal foil blindstamped seal intact. Mounted on board. Vertical tear down the center of sheet (approximately half way down the sheet). Minor spotting and soiling in margin areas. Some wear to corners. Otherwise condition is quite good, with the imagery still very nice.