



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

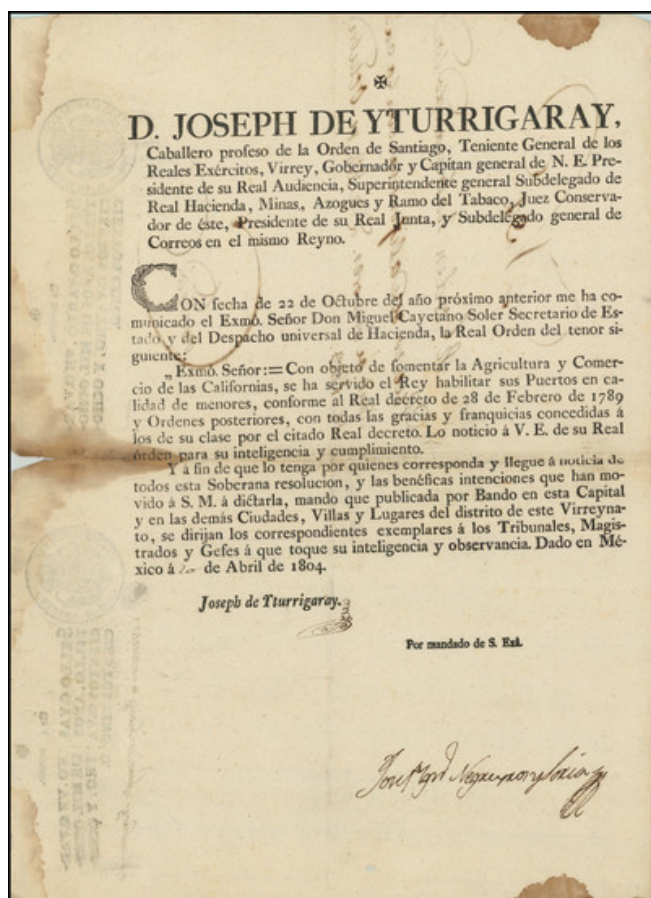
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**(Early California Trade) [Royal Decree of October 22,1803, to encourage trade in California]. D. Joseph de Yturrigaray, Caballero profeso de la Orden de Santiago, Teniente General de los Reales Exércitos, Virrey, Gobernador...Con fecha de 22 de Octubre del año proximo anterior...la Real Orden...Con objeto de fomentar la Agricultura y Comercio de las Californias, se ha servido el Rey habilitar sus Puertos en calidad de menores...**

**Stock#:** 93851  
**Map Maker:** Iturrigaray  
**Date:** 1804  
**Place:** Mexico  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 12.5 x 17 inches  
**Price:** \$ 4,500.00



**Description:**

***The Viceroy of New Spain Foments California Trade in 1804***

***Elevating the California Ports in 1804***

This rare broadside decree, issued by the Viceroy of New Spain Joseph de Yturrigaray, and printed in Mexico City, concerns the status of the ports of California. Specifically, the royal order was intended to



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encourage trade on the California coast.

Under this decree, dated October 22, 1803, ports in Upper and Lower California were granted a higher official status by Spain. The new recognition facilitated additional imports and exports and addressed the problem of supplying the California missions. The new directive aligned with an earlier law passed on February 28, 1789, which relaxed trade rules in the Spanish colonies in general. Despite these efforts, this decree can be seen as a case of "too-little, too-late" on the part of Spain, as there was no significant increase in trade, and the dominant "merchants" remained the established smugglers.

The timing of this decree is interesting as it comes at a moment when foreign traders, notably Yankee sea captains such as William Shaler, were already well entrenched in the lucrative smuggling trade along the California coast. This trade, which centered on exports of sea otter pelts, continued to flourish despite prohibitions by Spain. Indeed, Shaler handily blasted his way out of San Diego on March 22, 1803 in the so-called Battle of San Diego Bay, which pitted Shaler's brig Lelia Byrd against the Spanish soldiers of Fort Guijarros, in the only ship-to-shore battle on the Pacific Coast between Spain and the United States.

The present Mexico City printing, issued in April 1804, is signed by Iturrigaray with his manuscript rubric. Also signed by Josef Ignacio Negreyros y Soria.

### **Provenance**

Likely the copy sold in 1968 for \$225 from the stock Edward Eberstadt & Sons; then sold by John Howell, Books, circa 1979.

### **Rarity**

Original printed items concerning California trade at this early date are rare in commerce. OCLC locates only two examples of this rare broadside decree, one at the Bancroft Library. Not in Medina, Mexico.

### **Detailed Condition:**

Broadside. Horizontal fold through center. Old brown stains to upper and lower right corners, as well as lighter dampstaining at center of left margin, the latter affecting two words. Small nick to center left



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margin area, printing not affected. Two ink papel sellado stamps on verso, with manuscript docketing: "N. 91. R[ea]l orden habilitando los Puertos de Californias con la calidad de menores. De 22, de Octubre de 1803."