



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

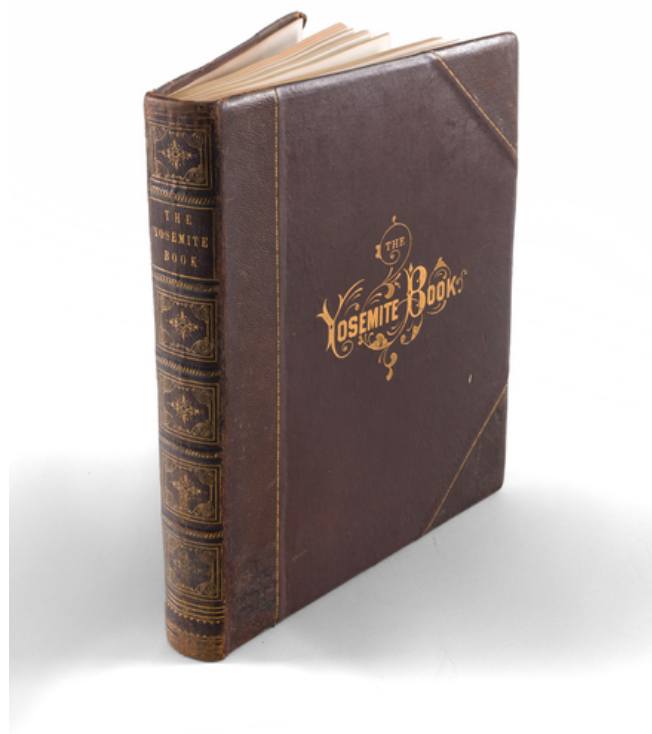
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**The Yosemite Book; a Description of the Yosemite Valley and the Adjacent Region of
the Sierra Nevada, and of the Big Trees of California, illustrated by Maps and
Photographs.**

Stock#: 94231
Map Maker: Whitney / Watkins
Date: 1868
Place: New York
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 10.25 x 12.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

With Original Albumen Photographs of Yosemite by Watkins

One of the most beautiful photographically-illustrated books of the American West, *The Yosemite Book* contains a suite of 28 visually stunning mounted albumen photographs of the natural wonders of Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove, mostly the work of the great photographer of the West, Carleton E. Watkins. Of the 28 photographs 24 were taken by Watkins, with the remaining images by W. Harris. Watkins accompanied the survey party charged to examine Yosemite, taking the majority of the photographs used to illustrate this book.

The Yosemite Book was the culmination of the regional survey undertaken by State Geologist Josiah D. Whitney (1819-96) and his team... with twenty-eight original photographs - twenty-four of



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Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove taken by Watkins in 1866, and four others by W. Harris - Zamorano Select.

The text was mostly based on field work by Clarence King undertaken in 1866, but was also drawn from other sources.

*After 1861 Watkins's next opportunity to be in Yosemite with his large camera was provided by Josiah D. Whitney, who was chief of the California State Geological Survey (CGS). Whitney organized an intensive program of fieldwork for the summers of 1865 and 1866. Watkins was included as a sponsored guest but apparently not as a salaried employee of the team, which included William H. Brewer as chief botanist; Clarence King, geologist; and Charles F. Hoffmann and James T. Gardner, topographers... Moreover, twenty-four Watkins photographs, each approximately 15.24 x 20.32 cm (6 x 8 in.), were mounted on the pages of Whitney's ambitious publication, *The Yosemite Book*, which was published in 1868 and issued in an edition limited to 250 copies. Because they can be securely dated, Watkin's Yosemite Book prints are valuable reference points to distinguish his work of 1865-66 from that of 1866, and also from that after 1867 - Weston Naef, "The Great Yosemite Valley and Related Picture" in *Carleton Watkins: the Complete Mammoth Photographs*, page 46.*

Currey & Kruska have justifiably declared *The Yosemite Book* as "one of the major contributions to Sierra Nevada literature."

Weston Naef, the noted curator and photography expert already quoted above called *The Yosemite Book*, "Among the first American books devoted entirely to photographs of landscape, this volume was made at the suggestion of Clarence King, early patron of American photography and one of Whitney's assistants in Yosemite" - *Truthful Lens*.

A list of the photographs here follows:

1. The Yosemite Valley, from the Mariposa Trail.
2. The Bridal Veil Fall.
3. El Capitan.
4. El Capitan and Cathedral Rock, View Down the Valley.
5. Cathedral Rock, Near View from the Front.
6. Cathedral Rock and Spires.
7. The Cathedral Spires.
8. The Three Brothers.



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9. Sentinel Rock.
10. The Yosemite Falls.
11. The Yosemite Falls, from Sentinel Dome.
12. The North Dome, Royal Arches and Washington Column.
13. The North Dome.
14. The Half Dome.
15. View up the Canon of the Illilouette.
16. The Vernal Fall.
17. The Nevada Fall and the Cap of Liberty.
18. The Nevada Fall, Near View.
19. Views from Sentinel Dome. No. 1.
20. Views from Sentinel Dome. No. 2.
21. Views from Sentinel Dome. No. 3.
22. View Looking Towards the Nevada and Merced Falls, from Glacier Point.
23. The Grizzly Giant, Mariposa Grove.
24. Base of the Grizzly Giant.
25. Summit of Mount Hoffman.
26. Lake Tenaya.
27. Cathedral Peak, from Soda Springs.
28. Valley of Mount Lyell Fork of the Upper Tuolumne.

The maps:

The maps were probably the best produced of Yosemite at the time:

- *Map of the Yosemite Valley from surveys made by order of the Commissioners to manage the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Big Tree Grove by C. King and J. T. Gardner. 1865.*
- *Map of a portion of the Sierra Nevada adjacent to the Yosemite Valley from surveys made by Chs. F. Hoffman and J. T. Gardner, 1863-1867.*

Rarity

Only 250 examples of this book were issued with original photographs, which is clarified in a footnote by Whitney on page 13 of the introduction: "As only a small of prints could be obtained from the photographic artist, the number of copies of the illustrated volume, or the present *Yosemite Book*, which could be issued



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was necessarily limited to 250." A smaller format version, without original photographs, was issued shortly after the present sumptuous production to serve as a popular guidebook to Yosemite. Nice examples of *The Yosemite Book* with all of the photographs, in clean condition bound in the original binding, have become quite scarce in the market. When the DeGolyer Library mounted their 1990s exhibition of photographically-illustrated books about the West, titled *To Delight the Eye*, the *Yosemite Book* was notably absent from the exhibition, however it was listed in the appendix as within the scope of the show.

Provenance:

Presentation inscription by Charles A. Joy, Professor of Chemistry at Columbia, an early associate of Josiah D. Whitney's in the U.S. Geological Survey who also served as president of the American Photographic Society.

Detailed Condition:

Quarto. Original three-quarter morocco and cloth, all edges gilt. Spine gilt. Gilt title on front cover. Marbled endpapers. Lower corners lightly bumped. Moderate rubbing to binding edges. Abrasions to title page due to sympathetic ink stamp removal. A touch of foxing to title page and first half dozen text leaves. Two-inch marginal tear to first contents leaf. Else a clean, very nice example, with the photographs all being beautiful prints in excellent condition. 116 pages plus 28 original albumen photographs and 2 folding maps. Early inscription on front flyleaf: "To Minnie Meyer, With best wishes from Charles A. Joy, Columbia College, June 26, 1869." Pictorial bookplate of Charles Atwood Kofoid.