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(San Diego Photograph) [Large bird's-eye photograph of downtown San Diego, with the Hotel del Coronado and Point Loma in the distance]

Stock#: 94504
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1895 circa
Place: n.p. (San Diego?)
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 20.75 x 11 inches
Price: \$ 1,400.00



Description:

Large Bird's-Eye Photograph of San Diego circa 1895

An unusually large photographic view of late 19th-century downtown San Diego. A splendid view of the built environment of San Diego circa 1895, looking towards Point Loma and Coronado from the northeast. The Hotel del Coronado is visible in the distant background. This photograph view embodies the economic quiescence of the 1890s in San Diego - coming off the boom of the 1880s the town appears sleepy yet peaceful, with nary a construction site to be seen. Plenty of church spires and staid Victorian homes blanket the land, with only a handful of larger business buildings and hotels. Painted signs on building facades advertise real estate as lonely vacant lots in the foreground await the wise investor.

At the time of this photograph San Diego was grappling with the aftermath of an economic downturn in the early 1890s, leading to a general slowdown in development. The photograph reflects the serene and tranquil ambiance of a town that was yet to experience the bustling urbanity it would come to embody in the future. However, the iconic Hotel del Coronado looms in the distance, a link to the high rolling tourism of the boom years, while hinting at the city's potential as a tourist destination in the future.

Dating the image

The Hotel Brewster, built in 1888 on the southeast corner of 4th Avenue and C Street, across from the U. S. Grant Hotel, is visible with its original cupola intact. By 1910 the cupola had been removed. Not a single automobile can be seen in this view. This photograph was almost certainly made in the 1890s, likely around 1895. For a comparison scene see the well-known 1874 Parker & Parker *Sectional View of San Diego City and Harbor*, taken from essentially the same perspective.



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Rarity

While cabinet card format photographs of 19th-century San Diego are met with in the market with some regularity, such large format photographic views of San Diego from this time period are very scarce.

Detailed Condition:

Original albumen photograph. Mounted on card. Age toned. Some spot stains in center sky region. Discoloration along extreme right-hand margin due to previous framing. Overall a sharp image in generally very good condition.