



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

(19th-Century California Photograph) [Bird's-eye photograph view of Grass Valley, Cal. 1876]

Stock#: 95393
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1876
Place: [Grass Valley, California]
Color: Uncolored
Condition: Good
Size: 11 x 9 inches
Price: \$ 750.00



Description:

Early Photographic View of a Classic California Gold Rush Town

A nice bird's eye view photograph of Grass Valley, California. Plenty of wooden houses can be seen snugly packed into the neat-looking town center, with a church or two and a schoolhouse.

The history of Grass Valley is intimately tied to the Gold Rush. Originally dubbed Boston Ravine, the town was later named Centerville. Gold was discovered nearby in 1850, and a post office was established in 1851. The prominent mining operations in Grass Valley revolved around the North Star, Empire and Idaho-Maryland mines, among California's richest mines. From 1868 until 1900, the Idaho-Maryland mine was the most productive in the district. In later years the North Star and the Empire produced the most gold in Nevada County.

Although unattributed, the present view of Grass Valley was likely made by one of the early photographers active in the town in the 1870s, or perhaps by an itinerant operator. One possibility is Frank George Abell (1844-1910). Abell worked with photographer William Shew in San Francisco in the 1860s. After a stint in San Diego, he returned to northern California setting up Abell's New Mill Street Gallery in Grass Valley. By 1874 Abell was leading the life of an itinerant photographer, traveling throughout northern California. By the late 1870s, he had set up shop in Oregon (see Palmquist and Kailbourn, *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West*, pages 77-78).



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

**(19th-Century California Photograph) [Bird's-eye photograph view of Grass Valley, Cal.
1876]**

Rarity

Such large original photographs of Grass Valley from the 1870s are quite rare in the market.

Detailed Condition:

Original albumen photograph print. Mounted on backing sheet. Handwritten caption in an early hand (on mount): "Grass Valley, Cal. 1876." Small mended tear to lower margin of mount. Another tear to left margin of mount. Photograph image is generally sharp, especially in the foreground. Overall condition is quite good. Verso of mount with some early printed ephemera.