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China Sea Sheet III (North West) Cam Ranh Bay to Hong Kong 1859.

Stock#: 35003
Map Maker: British Admiralty
Date: 1863
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 25 x 38 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The authoritative sea chart of the southwestern coasts of China and northern Vietnam showing the main shipping route into Hong Kong during the era of the Second Opium War.

This important work was part of a series of charts of the South China Sea first issued by the British Admiralty's United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (U.K.H.O.). It embraces the northwest part of the sea, extending from Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam to just east of Hong Kong. It includes the entire Pearl River Delta, the coasts of western Guangdong and Guangxi, the Gulf of Tonkin, the island of Hainan, the northern two-thirds of the coasts of Vietnam, as well as the Paracel Islands.



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The chart is based on over a generation of continually updated surveys conducted by the Royal Navy. The coastlines are demarcated by advanced trigonometric surveys, while the sea itself features numerous bathymetric soundings. It was first issued in 1859, with the present chart being the third edition, featuring corrections up to May 1863.

Importantly, the present chart played a critical role in assisting both the Royal Navy and mercantile concerns in consolidating their vast interests in the China trade during a critical time. The Treaty of Tianjin (1860), which concluded the Second Opium War (1856-60), greatly increased Western trade privileges in China. The chart illuminates East Asia's most important shipping route, that which linked Singapore with Hong Kong, as noted on the map by the intermittent line labeled 'Usual route to and from Hong-kong in fair monsoon'. The practical utility of the chart is further confirmed by the presence of contemporary manuscript additions in pencil detailing the progress of ships en route to Hong Kong. The inclusion of Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam on the chart is significant, as it was considered to be the finest deep-water shelter in Southeast Asia, and major victualing point for European vessels.

The chart features the imprint near at the bottom: '*London: Published at the Admiralty 4th April 1859 under the Superintendence of Capt. Washington R.N.F.R.S. Hydrographer. Corrections Dec. 1862, May 1863. Sold by J.D. Potter, Agent for the Admiralty Charts 31 Poultry and 11 King Street Tower Hill.*'

The present chart is scarce, as such working sea charts have a low survival rate.

Detailed Condition:

Several minor stains near the island of Hainan, contemporary manuscript annotations of ships' tracks off of the coast of Vietnam.