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A Map to Illustrate the War in China Compiled from Surveys & Sketches of British Officers and Other Information by James Wyld, Geographer to the Queen and H.R.H. Prince Albert . . . 1842

Stock#: 47835
Map Maker: Wyld
Date: 1842
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 30 x 13.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare separately issued hand-colored engraved map of eastern China published during the First Opium War (1839-1842).

The map includes several insets:

- Attack of Canton under the command of Sir Hugh Gough KCB 25th May 1841.
- Attack on the Forts in the Canton River
- The Harbour & Island of Amoy
- Plan of the City of Pe-Kin
- Plan of the City of Ting-Hai in Chusan

First Opium War

The First Opium War came about in large part because of Chinese efforts to stem the flow of opium from British India into the country. Opium was one of the few foreign goods in demand in China, and as such, the British exported it to China, usually through middlemen, in an effort to even out the balance of trade. After Qing Dynasty officials took decisive steps to end the import of the drug, the British fleet made its way up the Chinese coast attacking forts and cities, starting near Canton in June of 1840.

The war concluded with a decisive British victory; having suffered only 69 killed, the British killed or wounded some 18,000-20,000 Chinese.

The present map illustrates the theater of the war along the east coast of China.



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James Wyld

James Wyld was a geographer, map-seller, and member of the British Parliament. He is best known for Wyld's Great Globe, a hollow sphere which contained a staircase and elevated platforms, allowing the public to climb and view the surface of the Earth.

Wyld was the sole owner of a thriving family map-making business based in Charing Cross. His maps covered regions from London to the gold fields of California. His maps were highly regarded and he had, as his father before him, an excellent reputation as a map-maker. Wyld was elected as a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1839 and was appointed Geographer to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

Wyld had an opportunistic approach to the business. He was not only a prolific publisher of maps and guides but also a founder and patron of the Association of Surveyors and the Surveyors' Institution. He supported the Surveyors' Institution in an effort to lobby against the Ordinance Survey, as he felt its activities threatened his business. While his lobbying efforts failed, he did become one of the distributors of its printed maps.

Detailed Condition:

Restoration to top left border, with portion of border added in facsimile.