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China Sea. Sheet II (South East), Bruit River to Calamian Island 1859.

Stock#: 35029
Map Maker: British Admiralty
Date: 1867
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 37.5 x 24.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The authoritative sea chart of the Northern Borneo and Palawan by Britain's Royal Navy, made during the reign of James Brooke, the legendary 'White Rajah' of Brunei.

This important work was part of a series of charts of the South China Sea issued by the British Admiralty's United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (U.K.H.O.). It embraces all of northern Borneo, including modern day Brunei, Sarawak, Sabah and part of Kalimantan, as well of the entire Philippine island of Palawan.

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 an undated edition



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following corrections to February 1867.

At the time that this chart was made, the north coast of Borneo was of great interest to the British Empire. Long neglected by the Dutch, who nominally held the rest of the island (Kalimantan), British officials and adventurers had long eyed the region's vast wealth in rubber and hardwood timber. In 1842, the English adventurer James Brooke (1803-68), managed to gain control of Brunei and much of Sarawak, making him the first 'White Rajah' in Asia. His family would rule the kingdom until 1946. Meanwhile, the long, narrow island of Palawan remained part of the Spanish Philippines.

The waters to the north of Borneo and east of Palawan were an important shipping lane connecting Hong Kong and Singapore to the broader Pacific. Accordingly, the chart features the 'Course recommended to Hong Kong in the N.E. Monsoon' and the 'Palawan Passage'. As evidence that the chart was a practical aide to navigation, the present example features contemporary manuscript ships' tracks in red crayon.

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

Detailed Condition:

Areas of light toning, contemporary manuscript additions of shipping tracks in red crayon.