



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
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**A New Chart of the China Sea, with its Several Entrances Drawn from a Great Number
of Draughts, Journals and other Nautical Documents, Regulated by Astronomical
Observations . . .**

Stock#: 36599
Map Maker: Laurie & Whittle
Date: 1802
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 36 x 24 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A rare and historically important sea chart from Laurie & Whittle's *East-India Pilot*, the definitive maritime atlas of East Asia of its era.

This highly detailed chart embraces most of the South China Sea, then as now, one of the world's busiest shipping corridors. It extends northwards to include the southern coasts of China (including the future site of Hong Kong, founded in 1841, and the "European Factories" at Canton [Guangzhou], established since 1686), as well as the western coasts of Taiwan and the Philippines. Southwards it details the coasts of



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Vietnam and Cambodia and the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula (including the future site of Singapore). It also encompasses all of the island of Borneo, and the adjacent coasts of Sumatra and the Celebes.

While the basic template is derived from Dutch (Van Keulen) and French (Manneville) charts, the present chart features numerous improvements gained from the observations and surveys of ships employed by the English East India Company (EEC). While the EEC, founded in 1600, had thus far been primarily engaged with trade on the Indian Subcontinent, during the Napoleonic Wars (1795-1815), when this chart was produced, the Company had been aggressively expanding its operations into the South China Sea. In 1811, the British seized key areas of modern Malaysia and Indonesia from the Dutch, opening the way to the founding of Singapore by Stamford Raffles in 1819. The British presence in Malaya was made permanent following the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824. Moreover, while European trade with China had since 1757 been technically limited to the port of Canton, beginning with George Macartney's 1793 British embassy to Beijing, the EEC had been working to increase both its sanctioned and illicit trade with the Middle Kingdom. Importantly, the present chart was the definitive map of record used by the EEC and the Royal Navy during this critical period.

On the chart, the seas are crossed with rhumb lines, while inshore areas feature numerous bathymetric soundings, and the locations of navigational hazards. The labeled and dated tracks of ships traverse the seas, such as the "Track of the Pitt Capt. E. Manning Towards China 1789", indicating some of the sources of the chart's improved hydrographic intelligence. The general perspective is augmented by the inclusion of six profile views and three cartographic insets, based on recent observations.

The chart is one of the most important maps from the 1802 edition of Laurie & Whittle's *East India pilot, or, Oriental navigator*, first published in 1794. This maritime atlas was the definitive guide for navigation in Eastern Asia during its time, and its charts formed the basis for the subsequent works produced by the likes of William Heather and John William Norie. The firm of Robert Laurie and James Whittle had a privileged relationship with both the EEC and the Royal Navy, and from the period extending roughly from 1790 to 1810 had special access to the the latest manuscript charts which arrived on ships returning to England from Asia.

The chart rarely appears on the market, especially in such fine condition, and is considered to be an anchor piece for any fine Southeast Asia and China collection.

Detailed Condition:



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Minor marginal tears, expertly repaired on verso.