



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Birdseye View of San Francisco and Surrounding Country

Stock#: 38715ct
Map Maker: Goddard
Date: 1880
Place: San Francisco
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 48 x 31 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A fine example of George Henry Goddard's Bird's-Eye large-format view of the San Francisco Bay area, considered to be one of the most artistically virtuous views of the great period of American lithography.

This magisterial view takes in all of San Francisco Bay, looking eastwards from a panoptic perspective above the Pacific Ocean. It is based on the original artwork of George Goddard, one of California's leading artists and mapmakers of the era. The Bay and certain large geographical features are foreshortened while certain small details are exaggerated, allowing the region to be captured with unique and visually pleasing artistry. The City of San Francisco dominates the foreground, while the view extends eastwards to the peaks of the Sierra Nevada. While most other bird's-eye view show the City of San Francisco, focusing on the downtown from the east or northeast, the scope and perspective of this view is extraordinary, being the product of Goddard's creative mind.

San Francisco, which then had a population of over 230,000, is shown to be a bustling port city, with its harbor teeming with vessels. Downtown San Francisco was then, as it is now, dominated by the diagonal cross of Market Street. The view is so finely detailed that one can identify individual buildings amidst the crowded streets. The heavily built up area extended as far west as Divisadero Street, while beyond are the barracks of the Presidio Military Reservation and the early outlines of Golden Gate Park, which was still in the process of being laid-out. The Golden Gate itself, the strait which connects the Bay to the open Pacific, is located in the lower left.

Across the bay is Oakland, a major port, which since 1869 was the western terminus of the Pacific Union Railroad. To the right, one finds San Jose and the agrarian area along the Peninsula that would later become home to Stanford University and Silicon Valley. In the upper left is San Pablo Bay, while below is



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the southern tip of Marin County, featuring Sausalito.

Goddard, who maintained a long-standing relationship with the leading San Francisco publishing firm of Britton & Rey, saw the first edition of the view issued in 1868, with a second edition following in 1875. The present third edition is greatly updated to reflect the city and region as it appeared in the late 1870s, and extends the view northwards to provide a more accurate and detailed rendering of Marin County and San Pablo Bay. This edition is also readily recognizable by the large imprint, "Publd. By Snow & May, 21 Kearney St. S.F.", located in the lower center. Snow & May printed the lithograph on behalf of Britton & Rey.

George Henry Goddard (1817-1906) was an artist and civil engineer and one of the most important figures of the first half-century of California's statehood. Originally from England, he studied civil engineering at Oxford University. Attracted by the promise of the Gold Rush, he immigrated to California in 1849. He initially sought to strike it rich in the goldfields, whereupon he made a number of fine sketches of historical importance, some of which were published, such as his *Sonora from the North* (1852). When his attempts to find El Dorado proved elusive, he became a professional surveyor, working for both the California government and acquiring lucrative contracts from private railway and mining companies. His surveys led to the publication of *Britton & Rey's Map Of The State Of California* (1857), one of the most important early state maps. In recognition of his groundbreaking surveys in the Sierra Nevada, one of the range's highest peaks (13,564 feet) was named 'Mount Goddard' in 1864.

Goddard moved to San Francisco in 1862, and produced two of the most celebrated 19th Century images of the city, the *Birds Eye View of the City of San Francisco* (1868) and the first edition of the present *Bird's Eye View of San Francisco and Surrounding Country* (1868). Goddard became wealthy from railway speculation and lived in a large mansion at the corner of Golden Gate and Van Ness Avenues. His residence was said to have been "crowded with invaluable collections of maps, minerals, paintings and other objects of historical Interest". Goddard's collection was of such high quality and great size that Stanford University proposed building a stand-alone museum to house his treasures. Sadly, Godard's home and collections were destroyed in the Great San Francisco Earthquake of April 1906, which was followed by Goddard's death at the age of 89 in December of that year.

Goddard's present masterpiece is regarded as one of the very finest 19th century images of the San Francisco Bay Area. The view is rare and is usually found in notably poor condition. While the present example has undergone some professional restoration, it's relatively fine condition makes it a choice example.

Detailed Condition:



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