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Charleston Harbor And Its Approaches Showing the positions of the Rebel Batteries 1863.

Stock#: 40804mb
Map Maker: United States Coast Survey
Date: 1863
Place: Washington, DC
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 26.5 x 26.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Highly detailed chart of the area around Charleston and Charleston Harbor, published by the U.S. Coast Survey in 1863.

First issued in 1858 and updated during the Civil War, this extremely rare, separately-issued variant is overprinted to show the tactical situation around Charleston after the Union capture of Fort Wagner in September 1863.

The base chart depicts the entrance to the harbor from offshore and locates Kiawah and Folly Island, Light House Inlet, Sullivan's Island, James Island, and Hog Island, with Charleston flanked by the Ashley & Cooper Rivers. A trove of information, the charts include immensely detailed soundings; navigational hazards and aids such as lighthouses and light ships; and sailing directions. Also provided is detailed topographical and cartographical information on the adjacent coastal regions, including a detailed plan of Charleston and its streets, wharves and major landmarks.

This example of the chart is remarkable for being overprinted in color to show the tactical situation in and around Charleston, with particular emphasis on the siege of Fort Wagner in the Summer of 1863 and its capture on September 7th of that year. "National" and "Rebel" batteries, trenches, forts and warships are



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indicated in blue and red respectively, with "Rebel Batteries in possession [of] national Forces" overprinted in both colors and, in the case of Fort Wagner, proudly displaying the American flag. Distances from the city center are shown by means of concentric red circles at ½-mile intervals.

A note that "The National works constructed since the Capture of Ft. Wagner are not represented" suggests the chart was hurried through production immediately after the battle and rushed to policy makers and field officers for use in the ongoing efforts to take Charleston. This surmise is further supported by the relatively slapdash quality of the overprinting, which is entirely out of character a Coast Survey production.

Stephenson's Civil War Maps #379-382 records several versions of this chart, including variants lacking the added legend, the locations of iron clads and/or the concentric circles indicating distances; as well as another edition covering less area to the west and thereby omitting Kiawah and much of James Island as well as the western approaches of Charleston. Stephenson #379.5 describes a presumably earlier variant depicting "Batteries still held by the Rebels [on] July 17, 1863."

This chart was published during the Civil War and annotated to show concentric circles in 1/2 mile intervals for a total of 6 miles, depicting the distance from the center of Charleston and annotations including:

- "National" Batteries on Folly Island
- Rebel Batteries in possession of National Forces as of September 7, 1863
- Batteries still held by the Rebels as of September 7, 1863
- Trenches & Batteries of National Army during Siege of Ft. Wagner
- Positions of attacking fleet during action
- Usual positions of Rebel Iron Clads

There are at least 5 different charts of similar titles published by the US Coast Survey, with different scales and different annotations. See below for links:

- Same Title, different scale, 1/4 mile concentric circles:
<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:325391>
- Same Title, different scale, no annotations or concentric circles:
hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3912c.cw0378000
- Same Title, same scale, same concentric circles, but no mention of Iron clads or note below iron clads: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3912c.cw0382000>
- Same Title, different scale, no concentric circles, but includes annotations and key:



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hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3912c.cw0380000

- Same Title, different scale, 1/2 mile concentric Circles: maps.bpl.org/id/14548

We were not able to locate another example of this version of the map. All of the overprinted versions are of the utmost rarity--we have never seen another example on the market.

Detailed Condition: