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Carte de l'Archipel des Iles Gilbert . . .

Stock#: 54421
Map Maker: Duperrey
Date: 1824
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 20 x 14 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

First Map of the Gilbert Islands Archipelago, from the Duperrey Expedition

This is the first map to show the entire archipelago of the Gilbert Islands as they were explored by Louis Isidore Duperrey on his circumnavigation from 1822-25. Duperrey was the first European to chart the islands, although earlier Europeans had fleetingly encountered individual islands. The chart was published as part of Duperrey's massive voyage publication that chronicled his voyage and the new geographical and natural historical discoveries he and his crew made.

The chart is a story of Duperrey's ship, the *Coquille's*, journey through the atolls that make up the geographic feature. As the unadorned title explains, the ship passed through in May 1824. The frigate began in the southeast, entering the chart's frame on May 15. From there they skirted the islands, crossed the equator, and ventured northwest, leaving the area via the Marshall Islands on May 28.



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As the route passes various islands, their names are given with their year of naming. Some include "et 1824", indicating that Duperrey and his crew confirmed the discovery. Duperrey left his own stamp in the Marshall Islands, where he named a small group after his own ship.

The Gilbert Islands

On this chart, the Gilbert Islands are subdivided into three smaller groups, the Bishop, Simpson, and Scarborough Islands, all of which refer to earlier British voyages. The latter name, Scarborough, is derived from a ship of the same name. The *Scarborough* and the *Charlotte*, East India Company ships, commanded by British captains Thomas Gilbert and John Marshall, carried convicts to Botany Bay as part of the First Fleet in 1788. On their return trip, they passed through the island groups now named for them; those islands dated 1788 on this chart refer to their observations.

Bishop refers to Captain Charles Bishop, who commanded the *Nautilus*. Bishop sailed all over the Pacific in search of profit from furs. In Canton, while undergoing repairs, he took on Richard Simpson as super cargo. After returning failed missionaries of the London Missionary Society to Sydney from Tahiti, Bishop met George Bass, who would become the namesake for the Bass Strait.

In May 1799, Bishop sailed for Canton with Simpson and Bass. They carried letters of marque, perhaps the first issued by the fledgling local Vice-Admiralty Court, that would justify any attacks they made on Spanish ships. En route, they passed through the Marshall and Gilbert Islands, hence the names of Simpson and Bishop as toponyms. The *Nautilus*, sold when Bishop reached Canton, is remembered with Nautilus Reef, in the southeast of this chart.

Those islands labeled 1809, like Elizabeth and Hall Islands, were named by John Purdy, commander of the *Elizabeth*. The islands had also been encountered before Gilbert, Marshall, Bishop, Simpson, and Purdy. Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, voyaging for Spain in the early seventeenth century, named two islands of the group the Buen Viaje Islands. In the 1760s, John Byron passed by during his circumnavigation.

These previous encounters, brief and vague as they were, were consolidated by Adam Johann von Krusenstern, who led the first Russian circumnavigation of the world. Krusenstern named the island group after Gilbert, with the smaller sub-groups named for Bishop, Simpson, and Scarborough. The first charting of the entire group, however, would be performed by Duperrey.

Louis Isidore Duperrey and the Voyage of the Coquille

Louis Isidore Duperrey (1786-1865) joined the French Navy as a teenager in 1803. On Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet's Pacific voyage (1817-1820), Duperrey served as a lieutenant, lending him valuable



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experience, particularly in hydrography. Freycinet had gained similar experience on a previous Pacific voyage, that of Baudin in 1800-3. When Duperrey sailed in command of his own South Seas expedition in 1822, he took with him Jules Dumont d'Urville, who in turn would lead yet another French Pacific voyage.

After returning with Freycinet, Duperrey proposed a circumnavigation to confirm the location of several islands and to seek out new scientific information. His proposal was received favorably, and the *Coquille* left Toulon on August 11, 1822. The ship rounded Cape Horn, skirted the western coast of South America as far north as Peru, then set out west through the Tuamotus to Tahiti. They intended to land in Australia, but a storm forced them northwest of the continent, into the Santa Cruz and Solomon Islands, then back over New Guinea to western and southern Australia and New Zealand. They left New Zealand in April 1824 and were passing through the Gilbert Islands a month later, as this chart shows. The ship returned to Marseilles nearly a year later, in March 1825.

Duperrey's major geographic contribution had not been discovery so much as improvement of vague information, as was the case with the Gilbert Islands. He not only was the first to chart the entirety of the Gilberts, but also the Caroline Archipelago. Duperrey and d'Urville were accompanied in the *Coquille* by two surgeon-naturalists who collected a mountain of botanical and zoological specimens and drawings. Unfortunately, the specimens were lost when the ship they were transported in sank off the Cape of Good Hope in 1824.

Upon his return to France, Duperrey gathered the surviving materials from his naturalists and officers and started to write the official narrative of the voyage. The project was vast and would eventually produce nine volumes of text and four atlases of plates and maps published in the large format of the French '*grands voyages*'. The books described 264 birds and quadrupeds, 1200 insects, 288 fishes, 63 reptiles, and numerous plants. However, the entire collection was never completed, with parts of the hydrographic volumes and the botanical compendium left unfinished. This chart came from the hydrographic atlas published in 1827. Examples of the hydrographic materials remain scarce on the market.

Ambroise Tardieu

A final detail about this groundbreaking map is that it was engraved by the noted geographer and engraver Ambroise Tardieu (1788-1841). Tardieu hailed from a family of famous engravers and received his training from his uncle, Pierre Alexandre Tardieu. Exceptionally skilled at portrait engraving, Ambroise was also noted for his geographical work. He was appointed as the main cartographic engraver to the government of France, hence his involvement in the Duperrey publication. Ambroise also published several of his own atlases.

This is an exceptional piece with historical importance and would make a considerable addition to any



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collection of the cartography of Micronesia, early Australia, or of Pacific exploration.

Detailed Condition: