



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Entrances to Auckland Harbor Surveyed by Captn. J.L. Stokes Comr. B Drury and the Officers of H.M.S. Acheron and Pandora 1849-55.

Stock#: 55767
Map Maker: British Admiralty
Date: 1857 (1872)
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 24.4 x 18.1 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The First Modern Survey of Auckland Harbour Originally Produced from the Surveys of John Lort Stokes

Rare early sea chart of Auckland Harbor, first published by the British Admiralty in 1857.

The chart was first issued in 1857, with a second state issued in 1863 and a third state in 1872. The present example includes minor corrections to 1876. The map was again updated in 1884 by Lieutenant C.F. Oldham, *H.M.S. Lark*. The chart is the primary sea chart for Auckland Harbour, which was still being published in revised editions well into the 20th Century

The present example includes early pencil marks, from usage at sea, extending from Ponui Island and Oreri Point in the east to the Waitemata River and the town of Auckland in the west. The chart shows lighthouses, topographical features, some early roads, forts, churches, soundings and all the usual detailed information associated with an admiralty chart.

John Lort Stokes and the Early Surveys of New Zealand

The chart was created under the direction of John Lort Stokes, the most important early British Naval Surveyor in New Zealand. Born in 1811, by 1828, he was assigned at a young age to the *HMS Beagle*, on which he served three commissions, from 1828 to 1836, under the command of Robert FitzRoy. From 1826 to 1830 and from 1831 to 1836 the *Beagle* surveyed the southern parts of South America, and, with Stokes as assistant surveyor, made a circumnavigation of the globe to compile a meridian distance survey.



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In February 1837, Stokes was promoted to lieutenant, and appointed assistant surveyor to J. C. Wickham on the third voyage of the *Beagle*. When Wickham left the service in March 1841, Stokes assumed command, being confirmed in this position later that year. On this voyage the *Beagle* surveyed the north-west coast of Australia, Torres Strait and the Arafura Sea, and produced the first adequate survey of Bass Strait. At Sydney in January 1841, Returning to England in 1843, Stokes spent the next two years recording his Australian voyage in Discoveries of Australia, which was published in London in 1846.

Promoted to Captain, was next appointed in October 1847 to command *HMS Acheron*, which was to make the first full hydrographical survey of New Zealand, between November 1848 and March 1851. The *Acheron* sailed from Plymouth in January 1848, and after calling at Rio de Janeiro, the Cape of Good Hope and Australia, arrived at Auckland on November 7, 1848.

When he arrived, New Zealand lacked a detailed coastal survey. Its chain of New Zealand Company settlements was linked by a growing number of local craft and trading vessels, but the greatest need was for safe havens and anchorage for the immigrant passenger vessels. Stokes first surveyed the Waitemata Harbour, before travelling south at the end of January 1849 to Wellington, Akaroa, Lyttelton and Otago. He then undertook an examination of Cook Strait, the Marlborough Sounds and Nelson coastal waters. After maintenance and coaling in Sydney, an extensive itinerary took the *Acheron* from Auckland to as far south as Bluff, and Ruapuke and Stewart islands. Stokes next surveyed Cook Strait, visiting Kapiti Island, Port Gore and Tory Channel. On the final leg of the *Acheron's* journey he investigated Foveaux Strait and the south-west fiords, including Dusky and Milford sounds.

The *Acheron's* voyage produced many valuable charts, coastal views showing landmarks such as harbor entry points, 'astronomically determined' positions giving longitude, latitude and tidal range, and reports of geographical, scientific and human interest. Stokes made major corrections to existing charts of the South Island, producing the first accurate chart of Foveaux Strait. In addition to his own team of nautical experts, including G. H. Richards and F. J. O. Evans, both of whom later became Royal Navy hydrographers, he was accompanied by a number of able naturalists, such as David Lyall, and on the last Cook Strait expedition, William Swainson. Several reports of inland explorations were made, including Stokes's own accounts of the Waimakariri valley and the Canterbury Plains. While exploring the Foveaux Strait area, Stokes reported to Governor George Grey that local Maori were willing to sell land to the government; negotiations for the Murihiku block subsequently began in 1852.

Stokes returned to England after the *Acheron* was paid off in Sydney in 1851. Although he felt that the survey could have been extended and completed within a few months, the *Acheron* was instead replaced by the sail-powered *Pandora*, which continued the survey for another four years.



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John Lort Stokes's hydrographical surveys were highly regarded for their accuracy. A measure of his skill is that his survey of New Zealand waters, the first of its kind, remained in use until the 1930s.

Rarity

The chart is very rare on the market. We note no examples offered by dealers in over 20 years. The 1896 number at the lower right corner references the chart number, not the date of publication.

Detailed Condition:

Includes pencil marks from early usage at sea.