



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## San Francisco. Bird's Eye View.

**Stock#:** 57175  
**Map Maker:** Gifford  
**Date:** 1864  
**Place:** San Francisco  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 28 x 40 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### *First State of Charles Gifford's Rare 1864 View of San Francisco*

One of the rarest and most sought after early views of San Francisco, by San Francisco's most iconic viewmaker, Charles Braddock Gifford.

Gifford's view of San Francisco would become the template for a number of other views of the City in later decades, including Currier & Ives iconic view of 1878. In 1868, Gifford would publish a similar view of the City, but from a more northerly perspective, looking down the peninsula.

This rare view was copyrighted in 1864 by Robinson & Snow in San Francisco, noting that it was "Drawn & Lithographed by C.B. Gifford" and "Printed by L. Nagel S.F."

Gifford's view provides a remarkable image of San Francisco from the southeast looking out towards the Pacific Ocean. The two distinctive grid patterns in San Francisco's urban design can be seen, showing the continuous rows of business blocks lining the streets west of Yerba Buena Cove.

The waterfront is alive with all manner of sailing ships and a few steam vessels, with the wharves, piers and bustling waterfront teeming with commercial activity.

The view immediately pre-dates the development of Golden Gate Park. Frederick Law Olmsted had prepared a plan for a system of parks for San Francisco that was rejected in 1866, but in 1870 the city purchased the land for the park and hired William Hammond Hall to plan its 1,013 acres.

Charles B. Gifford was a prominent San Francisco artist who was active from approximately 1860 to 1875.



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Reps records his first smaller views of the San Francisco area as a small view of the *Mission Dolores . . . from the Potrero Hill* (1860) and *North Beach . . . From Russian Hill* (1862). In 1862, Gifford's mammoth *Panoramic View of San Francisco* was first published. This five sheet, nine foot, panoramic 360 degree view of early San Francisco from the top of Russian Hill was unquestionably "Gifford's finest and most ambitious view" and Peters refers to it as an "important and rare panorama."

Gifford's 5 sheet panorama was followed by the first state of Gifford's *San Francisco. Bird's Eye View* in 1864, with a second state published by Snow & Roos, also in 1864. In addition to San Francisco, Gifford created views of San Jose, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Vallejo

#### Rarity

The present example was purchased at auction in 2018. Prior to 2018, there are no published auction records for this view going back more than 50 years.

An equally rare key sheet was published in 1864 to go with this view, entitled *Key to Robinson & Snow's View of San Francisco, 1864*. We have only seen the key sheet on the market once in the past 25 years.

#### **Detailed Condition:**