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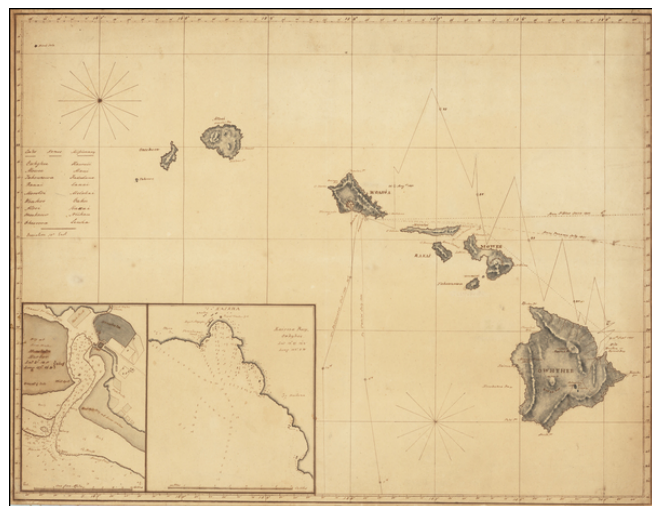
7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Early Hand Drawn Map of the Hawaiian Islands]

Stock#: 62429
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1850 circa
Place: n.p.
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: VG
Size: 24 x 18.5 inches
Price: \$ 11,500.00



Description:

Early Manuscript Chart of Hawai'i/Sandwich Islands with Track of the HMS Swift

Finely executed chart of the Hawai'ian Islands, drawn from contemporary sources, including the first Admiralty chart of the archipelago.

This example includes a ship's track, the route of the *HMS Swift*, a packet brig that served in the Pacific station of the Royal Navy.

Although intended as a nautical chart, the manuscript also includes remarkable topographical detail for the period. These include references to the active volcanos on the big island, *Mowna Roa* (Moana Loa) and *Mowna Kea* (Moana Kea), as well as *Mowna Huari* (Hualalai) and *Kilaunoa* (Kiluaea). On Maui, *Mowna Haleakala* is named. These peaks would have been visible from the sea, making them important viewpoints for sailors. On the island of Hawai'i, riverine networks are also marked.

The chart includes two large insets, each with their own scale, one of Honolulu Harbor and another of Kailua Bay on the island of Hawai'i. The former includes sounding depths, geographic coordinates, tidal information, and obstructions such as reefs. The harbor's numerous fish ponds are also shown, as is the basic layout of the village of Honolulu.

The other inset, of Kailua Bay, also includes sounding depths and geographic coordinates. The bay houses several buildings that are labeled, which include mortars, the Royal Magazine, and the Royal Timber Yard. There is also a tomb, that of Tamahama, the Europeanized version of the name of a high-ranking



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Hawai'ian leader.

Kailua Bay was important for nineteenth-century shipping and the Hawai'ian monarchy, but it was also one of the earliest anchorages to be charted. This inset is based on Louis Isadore Duperrey's chart of the bay published in 1826 as part of the materials on Louis de Freycinet's Pacific voyage (1817-1820). However, Duperrey labeled the bay Karakakoa, mistaking it for Kealakekua Bay. It was not listed as Kailua or Kairua on the chart, although this was mentioned in the voyage account, causing some confusion on later charts, including those of the Admiralty.

This manuscript chart includes a table comparing Cook's names for the nine Hawai'ian islands to the names used by the missionaries, underlining the main ways by which Europeans interacted with Hawai'ians: commercial navigation and Christianity. This table was also included on the Admiralty chart of the islands released in 1841, as were the two insets, titled "Honorurou Harbour" and "Karakakoa Bay."

The map identifies six distinctive sailing routes, two local and four beginning or ending outside the Hawai'ian Islands:

- From San Blas (Mexico) June 5, 1850
- To Tahiti July 6, 1850
- From Panama July 21, 1851
- Honolulu to Hilo August 26-31, 1851
- Hilo to Honolulu September 10- ?, 1851
- To Valparaiso October 23, 1851

With the help of Nick Steward and after checking the records book of the officers and historical newspapers, we can confirm that this is the track of the HMS *Swift*, a packet brig led by Commander William Cornwallis Aldham.

Early charting of Hawai'i: Cook to Freycinet

This chart is based on the first chart of Hawai'i released by the British Hydrographic Office in the mid-nineteenth century. That chart in turn was based on initial surveys by James Cook, who was the first European to encounter Hawai'i on his third, and final, voyage. Indeed, Cook was killed on Hawai'i during that voyage.

[The first chart of the islands](#) was released along with the account of the third voyage in 1784. It was drawn by Lieutenant Henry Roberts under the direction of Cook and includes an inset of Kealakekua Bay, where Cook died. The chart also includes the track and anchorages of Cook's



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ships, *Resolution* and *Discovery*.

The French explorer Jean-Francois de Galaup Comte de La Perouse produced two further maps of the islands. He was followed by the British fur traders Portlock and Dixon, with manuscript maps from the Spaniard Quimper and the American fur trader Ingraham.

George Vancouver, who had sailed with Cook, visited Hawai'i in the early 1790s, when he was in command of his own exploratory voyage. He honed the charting of the islands. In 1798, Vancouver published the first complete map of the islands, which was drawn by Lieutenant Joseph Baker.

Other explorers also contributed to detailing the cartography of the Hawai'ian Islands, including the Russian explorer Urey Lisiansky, who commanded one of the ships of the Krusenstern expedition. For this manuscript chart, an important predecessor is certainly the first known plan of Honolulu, completed by Otto von Kotzebue, another Russian explorer, which was published as part of a spectacular atlas in 1821-3. This was followed by another, less-detailed, Russian plan, by Tabulevitch, published in 1822.

Soon [whalers and other commercial vessels](#) were crowding Hawai'ian ports, demanding even more detailed surveys. In addition to the plan of Kailua discussed above, Duperry also published a plan of Honolulu, although it is at a smaller scale than that used on this manuscript chart's inset.

Subsequent charting of Hawai'i (1820-1850) and the sources for this chart

Unfortunately, on the first royal visit of Hawai'ian monarchs to Britain, King Liholiho and his wife, Kamamalu, died of measles. In command of the *Blonde*, Lord George Anson Byron was tasked with returning their bodies to their native islands. The account of the voyage was published in 1826, but the charts based on Lieutenant Charles Robert Malden's sketches were not published by the Admiralty until 1841.

Malden's plan of Honolulu is the base plan for this manuscript chart's inset as well as the plan used on the initial Admiralty chart of the islands. Subsequent charting, by the United States Exploring Expedition (US Ex Ex) for example, was not integrated into the Admiralty charts or this chart. US Ex Ex visited Hawai'i in 1840-41. Its officers produced a plan of Honolulu Harbor as well, with many more soundings and street plans than those that were on the Malden plan.

This manuscript's insets and the larger chart of the islands bears a strong resemblance to Admiralty chart 1510, first published in 1841. As Andrew Cook explains, this chart was compiled in the Hydrographic Office under the supervision of Francis Beaufort, who based the inset of Honolulu primarily on Malden with some revision based on Duperry. On this first Admiralty chart, the inset was still labeled "Karakakoa



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Bay,” but by 1843 this had changed to “Kairua Bay,” as it is on this manuscript map.

There are small differences, such as slightly exaggerated altitudes for the volcanoes, listed on the manuscript map, but there is no doubt that the Admiralty chart provided the base for this manuscript work. By 1871, the Admiralty chart’s insets had changed to include “Hilo or Byron Bay” in addition to the two shown here. The chart was retired in 1881, when it was replaced by a smaller-scale chart 1510.

Tracking the *Swift* and the Pacific Station

Soon after Cook’s initial encounter, fur traders and then whalers began to frequent Hawai’i. The islands are located in a geographically convenient place for ships to stopover and were a source for salt, sandalwood, and fresh provisions. The first missionaries arrived in 1820; from then onward their ships also added to the traffic arriving in Hawai’ian harbors. As Nancy Shoemaker explains, “...by the 1820s, [Hawai’i] had fully entered the world economy to become a major trading depot and recruitment center for seafaring laborers” (93).

Between 1778 and 1819, 131 European and American vessels docked in Hawai’i. Between 1824 and 1849, over a thousand commercial ships and three thousand whaling ships stopped over in the islands. This made Hawai’i one of the busiest ports in the Pacific, and the world, by 1850-1, when the *Swift* was sailing the voyages plotted here.

The *Swift* was part of the Royal Navy’s Pacific station. Initially, the Pacific squadron fell under the command of the South America Station, operating out of Valparaíso, Chile. In 1837, the station split, forming the Pacific Station. Whatever the command structure, Hawai’i was an important stopping point for Royal Navy ships.

The *Swift* was a packet brig—a two-masted, square-rigged vessel used for the transport of mail, goods, and people. When the voyages shown here were sailed, the ship was under the command of William Cornwallis Aldham (1809-1878). Aldham joined the Navy at age eleven and was made lieutenant a decade later, in 1832. He commanded his own ship in 1844 and was made post-captain in 1853. He gained rear-admiral and vice-admiral status as a retired serviceman, dying in Egypt in 1878. Aldham’s naval career took him to the Mediterranean, the Cape of Good Hope, the West Indies, North America, and the Pacific. He commanded the *Swift* from 1849 to 1857.

This manuscript map, most likely by one of Aldham’s officers, shows an intriguing involvement by the author with navigation and hydrography. Manuscript charts like this are a rare survival and this one certainly reflects the importance of Hawai’i to global commerce and politics in the mid-nineteenth century.



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Detailed Condition:

Minor toning.