



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

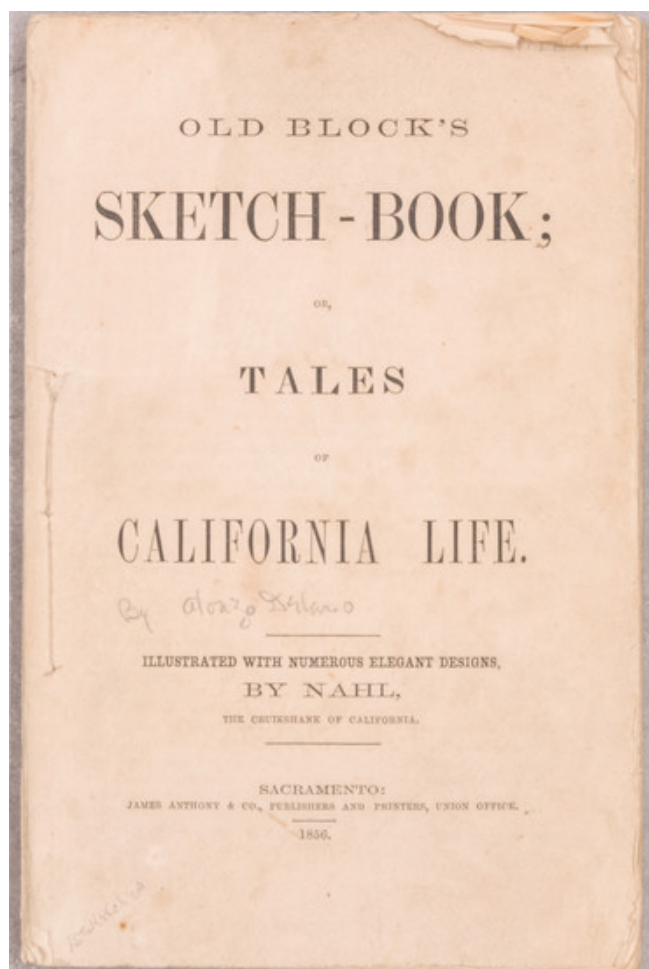
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**(California Gold Rush) Old Block's Sketch-Book; or Tales of California Life -- Illustrated  
With Numerous Elegant Designs, By Nahl, The Cruikshank of California.**

**Stock#:** 69366  
**Map Maker:** Delano & Nahl  
**Date:** 1856  
**Place:** Sacramento  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 6 x 9 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

"Both author and illustrator are characteristically Californian, and few volumes have a truer flavor of the Mother Lode than this result of their combined efforts ... The illustrator collaborated with 'Old Block' in other volumes but this particular selection is perhaps the happiest of their association" - Zamorano 80 (29)

A companion to the earlier *Pen-Knife Sketches*, this collection of stories and observations was dedicated by Delano ("Old Block") to the miners of California. He loved his miners and wrote with deep feeling about the lives they endured. In these sketches, he recalled his snug and cozy miner's cabin, his amigos like "Old Swamp" and Bogue, Sunday in the mines, his first day in Sacramento, the burning of Grass Valley, and a mountain storm. As so energetically told by Delano, Sunday was not a day of worship or rest but a time to



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frolic with horseracing, gambling, and drinking. Waxing nostalgic, Delano, a native of Auburn, New York, concluded with the following celebration of his new home: "There is probably no country in the world whose early settlement abounds in more thrilling incident, more daring adventures, or more hardy and chivalrous deeds, than that of our beloved California."

The full-page Armstrong engravings based on Charles Christian Nahl sketches of life in the mines and mining towns add greatly to the appeal of this Sacramento imprint. In particular, the last engraving presents a delightful portrait of this pioneer humorist. It humorously shows him "leaving this world on a black cat's back, with my face towards his tail." Leslie E. Bliss, Henry E. Huntington's first librarian, states in *The Zamorano 80*: "Both author and illustrator are characteristically Californian, and few volumes have a truer flavor of the Mother Lode than this result of their combined efforts."

We are aware of only three other copies coming up for sale in the last 20 years; \$5,750 at PBA in 2002; \$9,200 at Dorothy Sloan in 2003; and \$8,125 at Bonhams in 2016.

**Provenance:**

James N. Duck (his signature on the first page)  
Charles Kenny McClatchy Collection.

**Detailed Condition:**

Octavo. (Lacking original pictorial covers.) [2] iii [1] 78 [2, conclusion, verso blank] [2, ad for Union Printing, verso blank] pages. 15 wood engravings by Armstrong after drawings by Nahl.