



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(California - San Mateo County) Moore & De Pue's Illustrated History of San Mateo County, California 1878

Stock#: 69670
Map Maker: Brown & Co. / DePue / Moore
Date: 1878
Place: San Francisco
Color: Uncolored
Condition: Good
Size: 16 x 13.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Most Celebrated Work by California's Pioneer African American Lithographer

Wonderful Lithograph Views of the Residences, Ranches, Commercial and Government buildings of San Mateo County

This rare California viewbook contains a superb suite of lithographs illustrating the residences, ranches, commercial buildings, scenery, etc. of San Mateo County. Most of the lithographic work for this impressive production was executed by Grafton Tyler Brown, a prolific 19th century African American lithographer who worked primarily in the San Francisco area. Forty-one of the lithograph views are signed G. T. Brown & Co., including the elaborately illustrated title-page which shows Pigeon Point Light House, Alcove Rocks and Patriarch - a famous redwood tree. The fine detailed double-sheet lithograph map and several other plates are by Britton & Rey.

Grafton T. Brown was one of California's earliest African-American artists and this is his most celebrated lithography project.

Elaborate histories of California counties came into their own in the latter half of the 19th-century as erstwhile pioneers matured into prosperous residents who set down roots. Ambitious publishers cavassed wealthy homeowners to subscribe to these expensive illustrated productions, with the lure of including stylized views of their homes, ranches and businesses (always surrounded with flawless fencing and often with fine livestock).

In 1878, publishers Elliott S. Moore and James De Pue saw opportunity in San Mateo County... Brown divided production of sixty-four views with Britton & Rey, and the larger firm produced...



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twenty-two views along the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way, including fourteen in the county seat. While Britton & Rey canvassed the more prestigious areas, Brown sketched forty-one farms, residences, and businesses. Of fourteen views that filled two pages, Brown did eleven. Each lithographer used distinctive corner ornaments. Furthermore, Britton & Rey did the county map, while Brown provided the illustrated title page as his forty-second view.

Brown's views illustrate his more sophisticated sense of contour and color of mountains, as well as the interplay of sky, cloud, and shadow, while Britton & Rey emphasized foreground people, horses, and houses and their shadows. Brown's shading of hills and clouds adds more depth than is normally found in scenes where the artist's view was expected only to inventory the property of the paying customer.

After seven months of production, Moore and DePue praised the "skill and artistic finish" of the plates included in their Illustrated History of San Mateo County, and through the Redwood City newspaper on November 30, 1878, declared that "we are now delivering [them] to our subscribers." For those with second thoughts, the publishers offered, "a limited number can be purchased of our delivering agents while on their route. Price ten dollars." Today, this county history is in great demand. - Robert J. Chander, San Francisco Lithographer: African American Artist Grafton Tyler Brown (2014), pages 146-148.

A selection of the outstanding lithographic views, including all 15 of the double-page views, here follows:

Grand Hotel, Redwood City, John Crowley, Prop.

Front View of Residence of Jacob Downing, San Gregorio.

"Hazlewood Farm" Property of S. L. Jones, near Woodside, San Mateo Co. Cal. This Rancho contains about 1,500 acres.

Kreis's Pioneer Brewery, Redwood City.

American House, Redwood City, W. S. Low, Proprietor.

Residence of Wm. Metzgar, Esq. Spanishtown Half Moon Bay.

San Mateo Publishing Company, Redwood City.



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"Mountain Home Ranch" Property of E. W. Burr, Searsville. Double-page view.

Residence of James W. Bell, San Gregorio. Double-page view.

St. Matthews Hall, Church & Rectory, San Mateo, California, Rev. A. L. Brewer, Rector. Double-page view.

"Ravenswood Rancho" Residence of L. P. Cooley, Menlo Park. Double-page view.

Town of Purissima, Residence, Ranch & Property of Henry Dobbel, Esq. Double-page view.

Residence, Ranch & Dairy of V. Guerrero, Halfmoon Bay. Double-page view.

Gordon's Chute / Ranch of A. Gordon, San Gregorio. Double-page view.

Hanson, Ackerson & Co. Lumber Dealers. Double-page view.

Residence of J. B. Harsha, San Gregorio / Fairview Church. Double-page view.

Menlo Park Hotel, Menlo Park, M. Kuck, Proprietor. Double-page view.

"Willow Glen Rancho" Residence of T. W. Moore, Pescadero. Double-page view.

Town of Pescadero. Bird's-eye view. Swanton's Livery Stable, Pescadero House, Marstons, Garretson, and fenced land of B. Weeks, and home of O. Brown with 1000 acres. Double-page view.

Ocean View Looking South West from the Residence of S. P. Pharis, Pharis District, San Mateo Co., Cal. / Pioneer Mill Purissima Creek / Redwood Mineral Spring and Creek. With insets of Residence of S. P. Pharis and Mountain Park. Double-page view.

Cascade Cheese Factory and Residence of R. E. Steele, Pescadero. Double-page view.

Residence of J. H. Sears, La Honda / La Honda, Property of Sears & Sears. 15 Miles from Redwood on stage road, summer resort for tourists. Good hotel, fine drives, fishing and hunting. Double-page view.

Rarity



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County, California 1878**

While we can locate a dozen copies in institutional confines, this book is quite rare in the market, with only three copies selling at auction in the last twenty years per RBH -- and notably all three were lacking at least one plate.

Rocq locates copies at California State Library, California Historical Society, the Bancroft, Redwood City Public Library, San Mateo Public Library, San Mateo County Library, Wells Fargo Bank Library, and State Historical Society of Wisconsin. And we can add: Stanford University, Los Angeles Public, Society of California Pioneers, and Harvard.

Detailed Condition:

Oblong folio. Early 20th century olive green library buckram. Gilt lettering on spine, all edges stained red (which is somewhat faded in places). Spine ends and corners worn. 44 pages. Elaborate tinted pictorial titlepage, double-page lithograph map plus 63 (of 64) lithograph plates (missing plate No. 45), 15 of the plates are double-page. Tiny unobtrusive ink stamp reading "Office" on front free endpaper. Similar stamp plus ink accession number on blank leaf following titlepage. Upper right margin of titlepage with old outline dampstaining (printed/image not affected). Old two-inch tape repair at lower gutter fold of map (no paper loss). Preface leaf with large vertical tear, edges frayed and chipped, with old scotch tape repairs. Withal, a very nice copy of a rare book, with the plates very clean.