



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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[The English Channel] Dedicated to the Honorable the Commissioners for Inspecting Charts for the use of the Royal Navy, By their much obliged & very Grateful Servt. Robt. Blachford & Co.

Stock#: 71310
Map Maker: Blachford & Co.
Date: 1821 circa
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 75.5 x 45.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Unrecorded Early State of Blachford's Chart of the English Channel

Detailed chart of the English Channel, published by Robert Blachford & Co. in London ca. 1821. This is the earliest known state of this chart, and it is possibly unrecorded.

The chart extends west off the coast of southern Ireland and east to Ostend in Belgium. To the north, it extends as far as Limerick and Yarmouth, and to the south, to Bac du Ras.

The waters are thickly blanketed with sounding depths, variation measurements, rhumb lines, compass roses, reefs, banks, obstructions, current indicators, and notes about the quality of the bottom. The extent of the sounding depths, as ascertained by chronometers and astronomical observations, is marked with an open dot-and-dashed line. There are also notes helpful to the sailor, such as "A Good Fishery for Cod" on the Nymph Bank.

A closed dot-and-dashed line show the fairest way to navigate into the Downs. A note explains:

The Water ripples at the commencement of Soundings when the weather is moderate, but in Stormy weather it becomes much discoloured.

Other notes caution mariners not rely solely on their dead reckoning, as well as instruct them on the admeasure of distances between two points. An especially large note is just under the title. It reads:

Messrs. Blachford &co. beg leave to assure their Nautical Friends, that the most implicit confidence may be placed in the present Chart, this assurance is founded on their knowledge that it has been



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compiled with extraordinary assiduity and attention from Authorities undoubtedly correct, the principal of which are the Grand Trigonometrical Surveys of England and France, conducted under the direction of the respective Governments; the Valuable Surveys of Mackenzie, Spence, and other distinguished Officers of both Nations, whose Works have been held in just estimation, and independent of this mass of Official matter very considerable benefit has been derived from the many obliging communications made by several experienced Ship Masters and Pilots; Upon the whole the Chart contains such a body of Authentic Information and determined positions as can but very rarely be met with in one publication and therefore justly entitles it to the flattering distinction it has been honoured with.

Mackenzie is Murdoch Mackenzie, known for his exacting survey work, especially of the Orkney Islands, and the invention of the station pointer. Spence is Graeme Spence, who is best known for his survey of the Scilly Islands.

In addition to the general chart, the map includes many detailed inset charts: Cork Harbour, Scilly Islands, Plymouth Harbor, "Principally from the Surveys of Mackenzie and Spence;" Falmouth Harbor, Havre de Grace, Harbor of Cherbourg, and St. Vincent's or Ushant Channel. The largest inset is a "Plan of the Downs & Margate Roads," the entrance to the Thames and the route to the docks of Chatham, Gravesend, Woolwich, Greenwich, and, of course, London.

The chart also includes a number of attractively-engraved coastal profiles and views of lighthouses. These include the Eddystone Lighthouse. While the light referred to here would have been the third light constructed, the first, erected in 1699, was the world's first open-ocean lighthouse.

A final detail is a table with a series of important coordinates, taken from the national trigonometrical surveys. This table is complete with corrections to the coordinates as printed in the *Philosophical Transactions*. The *Transactions* are the publication of the Royal Society of London, and were the first scientific periodical.

Dating the map

The map is "Drawn by Willm. Lane, Hydrographer & Teacher of Navigation, No. 79 Leadenhall Street." Similarly, Blachford's address is given as Navigation Warehouse, 79 Leadenhall Street.

Lane and Blachford were known to be operating from the Leadenhall address in 1821. The Library of Congress collection includes a copy of the map dated 1824, with the address listed as "Navigation



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Warehouse No. 116 Minorities."

The map was revised and Lane's name removed in later years. We note an edition dated 1839, and another with corrections to 1841, 1842 and 1843.

Rarity

This edition of the map may be a unique survival. We are unable to locate another example of the map which predates 1824.

Detailed Condition:

Dissected in 24 sections and laid on original linen. Some minor edge wear and light foxing.