



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

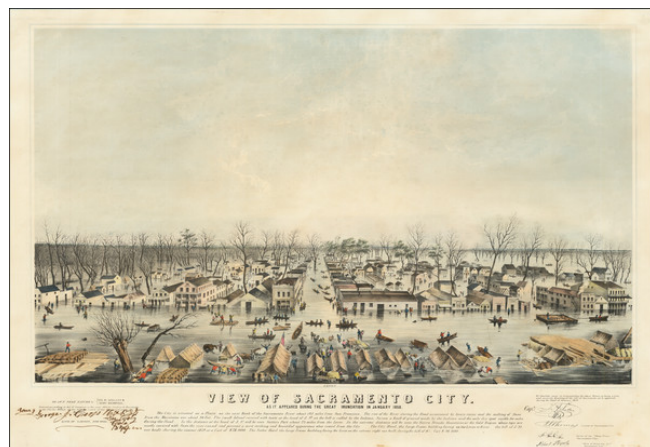
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View of Sacramento City as it appeared during the great inundation in January 1850

Stock#: 73052
Map Maker: Sarony & Co. / Casilear /
Bainbridge
Date: 1850 circa
Place: New York
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 37 x 24.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Large tinted-lithograph of Sacramento during the infamous flood of January 1850, lithographed after drawings made on the spot by George W. Casilear and Henry Bainbridge.

This is one of the great California bird's-eye views from the Gold Rush era.

John Sutter had apparently been warned by Indians that area could turn into an "inland sea" and he was advised to locate Sutter's Fort on a mound above the plain. However, the explosive Gold Rush-era growth of the city led to much building next to the river. On January 10, 1850, shortly after the founding of the city, a major flood struck. According to a witness report in the *Daily Alta*: "Far as the eye could reach, the scene had now become one of wild and fearful import—floating lumber, bales and cases of goods, boxes and barrels, tents and small houses were floating in every direction."

The city was almost destroyed in the flood, but the fervent economic activity of the Gold Rush made sure that it was not abandoned. Herculean efforts to construct levees around the city began shortly after the waters had subsided and the hydroengineering continued, with some setbacks, to the construction of Folsom Dam in the 1950s.

The view includes the following description below the title:

The City is situated on a Plain on the east Bank of the Sacramento River about 143 miles from San Francisco The rise of the River during the flood occasioned by heavy rains and the melting of Snow from the Mountains was about 20 feet. The small Island covered with tents at the head of J. St on the left is called to the Indians, Sa'cum a Knoll of ground made to the Indians and the only dry spot visible for miles during the flood. In the distance at the head of J. St. will be seen Sutters Fort about



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2½ miles from the Levee. In the extreme distance will be seen the Sierra Nevada Mountains or the Gold Region whose tops are mostly covered with Snow the year round and present a most striking and beautiful appearance when viewed from the City. The City Hotel, the large frame building facing on the Levee or River the left of J. St. was built during the summer of 1849 at a Cost of \$78,000 The Sutter Hotel the large frame building facing the Levee on the extreme right was built during the fall of 18[?] Cost \$50,000.

Another 1850 view of the city, Sacramento City Ca. From the Foot of J. Street, Showing I. J. & K. Sts. With the Sierra Nevada in the Distance, provides an interesting comparison to the present view: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/pgs.04015/>

Rarity

We locate examples at the Library of Congress, Amon Carter Museum, California State Library, Penn State, Cornell, UC Davis, and UC Berkeley. Reps, Views and Viewmakers, 202, provides the following locations: MM-NN; SCP; ACMW-FW; UCBL-B; CHS-SF; CHS-C; CSL-S; LC-P.

Only one example appearing in RBH, at Anderson Galleries in 1930.

Provenance

Contemporary ink inscription: "Yours George J. Cross 16 J. St. Sac City Cala 1849."

Detailed Condition:

Two-stone lithograph finished by hand. Some expert restoration of edge years. VG to VG+