



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

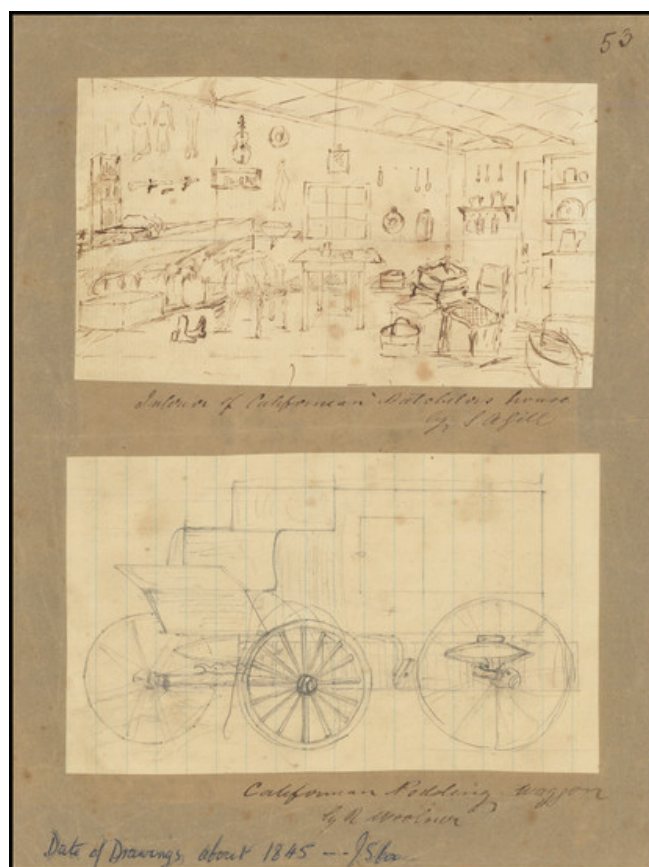
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(California Gold Rush) [Two Original Drawings: Interior of Californian Batchelors House by S. A. Gill [and] Californian Pedaling Waggon by R. Woolner

Stock#: 86576
Map Maker: Woolner / Gill
Date: 1845 circa 1850s
Place:
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 8.5 x 11 inches Sheet Size
Price: SOLD



Description:

A 19th Century Californian Bachelor Pad and a Californian Peddler's Wagon

A pair of interesting original drawings relating to mid-19th century California.

The first, a pen and ink drawing, is captioned in an early manuscript hand, *Interior of a Californian Batchelors House*, and is attributed to S. A. Gill. The drawing depicts the well-appointed interior of a cabin home somewhere in California, circa 1840s-1850s. Kitchen utensils hang on the wall, and a rifle and a pistol are also there at the ready. A small table is in the center, with chairs, baskets, and a pair of boots. The unnamed bachelor was apparently musically inclined as there is a violin hanging on the wall as well. By 1896 a Mr. S. A. Gill was reported as the President of the Hidalgo Mining Company, but we are not sure if the artist of our drawing is the same person.



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Californian Pedaling Waggon, attributed to R. Woolner, depicts a compact boxy wagon on leaf springs, with a side door, apparently designed especially for early traveling salesman to peddle their wares.

A later ink note on the mount, signed by J.S. Cox, states that these two drawings date from about 1845, which seems plausible, if a bit early without further corroborating evidence. It would seem more likely the drawings date from the California Gold Rush period of the early 1850s.

The image mounted on the back side of the sheet, a view of Lillooet on the Fraser River in British Columbia, clipped from the *London Illustrated News*, December 21, 1864, suggests yet another possibility. Gold was discovered in the Fraser River in 1857, igniting a gold rush in British California on the heels of California's own gold fever. By late spring of 1858, prospectors from California and the rest of the world descended on Victoria with hopes of striking it rich in the Fraser Canyon Gold Rush. Within two months the population of Victoria exploded from 500 to over 20,000. It is possible the "Californian Batchelor," whose home is depicted in the first drawing, was a transplanted gold seeker who had set up house in British Columbia. The accompanying "Californian Pedaling Waggon" could either be a depiction of such a wagon in Gold Rush-era California, or a curiosity imported into British Columbia.

Such original California-focused visual material, whether dating from 1845 or the 1850s, is quite rare on the market. If the drawings are actually from the Fraser River Gold Rush, they would be even rarer.

Detailed Condition:

Two original drawings, one pen and ink, the other a pencil drawing, both mounted on a single sheet which was likely excised from an album or scrapbook. The other side of the sheet has a wood engraving clipped from an unknown publication that shows the British outpost of Lillooet, British Columbia, on the Fraser River. Condition of the sketches is excellent.