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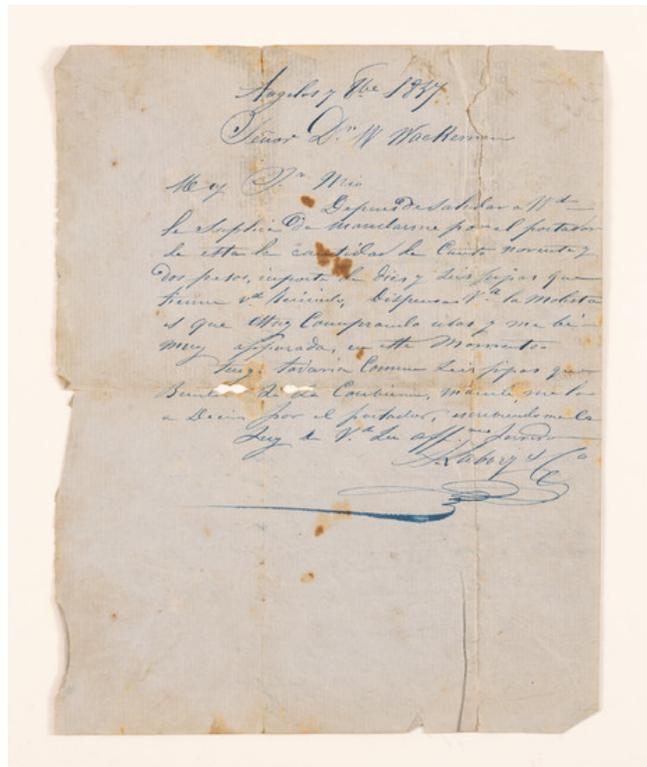
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(Los Angeles Winemaking) [Original manuscript letter to William Workman by French-born Californio winemaker Antonio Labory, aka Antoine Laborie, about wine pipas or wine casks and buying grapes in Los Angeles]

Stock#: 92939
Map Maker: Temple - Workman Families / Labory
Date: 1857
Place: Los Angeles
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: Good
Size: 7.75 x 9.75 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Very Early Wine Related Letter from Pueblo de Los Angeles

To William Workman of Workman-Rowland Overland Party Fame

"Don Julian" Workman Orders Wine Pipas from Don Antontio Labory

A remarkable artifact of early Los Angeles winemaking.

This hastily written letter, penned in Spanish and delivered by horse-mounted courier, was written by French-born Californio winemaker Antoine Labory to William Workman. The letter concerns the latter's order for 16 large wine casks or *pipas*. Each of these large barrels or casks likely held over 100 gallons of wine. (see Edgar Allen Poe's classic tale, *The Cask of Amontillado*, for a literary reference to this type of wine barrel: "a pipe of what passes for Amontillado.")



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The present letter stands as evidence of the fascinating cross-cultural melieu of early Los Angeles, as the two correspondents, a French-born winemaker, and the English-born pioneer known as "Don Julian," had by the time of this letter both transformed themselves into Spanish-speaking Californios.

Don Antonio Labory - A French-born Californio Winemaker

Antoine Labory, born Antoine Labrorie on April 21, 1819 in Arbis, France, arrived in Los Angeles in 1844 with a group of artisans and aspiring winemakers from Gironde-Bordeaux that included Pierre-Esliens Vignes (a relative of pioneer Los Angeles winemaker Jean-Louis Vignes - AKA Don Luis del Aliso, the father of California winemaking), Pierre Domec, a cooper and the brothers André and Jean Mano, tile makers - all early French pioneers of Southern California. By the 1860s Labory is listed in numerous real estate documents, including one indicating his ownership of a vineyard property near the Los Angeles River. Fellow Frenchman Henri Penelon reportedly painted a portrait of Don Antonio Labory.

Wine in L.A.

Winemaking has a long history in Los Angeles, with the first vineyards planted by Spanish missionaries in the 18th century. According to some accounts, Los Angeles boasted over 100 vineyards in 1850. Indeed, one of the city's first official seals styled Los Angeles as the "city of vines" - which incidentally serves as the title of a recent book by Thomas Pinney, on the history of L.A. wine. By the 1870s, industrial wine production had begun in the city, yet Pinney has cited the paucity of source material for the early history of wine in L.A.:

The most striking fact about the history of winemaking in Los Angeles, city and county, is the completeness with which it has been forgotten. The trade has left hardly any material traces... No one writes about the tradition of Los Angeles winemaking, few local histories make anything of the subject, and most people have no idea that the region was once the main source of California wine...Yet Los Angeles was where it all began... California wine meant Los Angeles wine.

The text of the letter here follows:

Angeles 7 Obe. [1857?]

Señor Dn. W. Workman

Muy Sr Mio



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Depues [i.e. despues] de saludar a Vd. le suplico de mandarme por el portador de esta la cantidad de ciento noventa y dos pesos, importa de diez y seis pipas que tiene Vd. recibido, despensa a Vd. la molesta es que estoy comprando ubas y me ba muy appurado, en este Momento tengo todavia [como?] seis pipas que bender si le combiene manda me lo a decir por el portador, escribiendomelo.

Muy de Vd. su Aff. Servidor

A. Labory & Cia.

English translation:

Angeles 7 October 1857

Señor Don W. Workman

My Dear Sir,

After greeting you, I beg you to send me by the bearer of this the amount of one hundred and ninety-two pesos, for the sixteen pipas that you have received. Excuse the nuisance as I am buying grapes and am presently in a hurry. I still have six pipas to sell if it suits you, reply through the carrier, in writing.

Your affectionate servant,

A. Labory & Co.

Temple-Workman Family and Early Los Angeles

William Workman, the recipient of the present letter, was one of the patriarchs of the Temple-Workman family. This family played a significant role in the early history of Los Angeles and Southern California, primarily through their involvement in land development and through familial connections with Spanish-speaking pioneers of Alta California.

William Workman, a native of England, arrived in Los Angeles in 1841 as part of the Workman-Rowland Party, considered the first overland party of Americans to settle in Los Angeles. This group of migrants left Santa Fe via the Old Spanish Trail route. Through hard work and business acumen, Workman became one of the city's most successful entrepreneurs. He co-owned a store, served as a judge, and invested in real



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estate. His son-in-law, Francis Pliny Fisk Temple, also made a name for himself as a businessman, becoming one of the largest landowners in the area.

In addition to their land holdings, the Temple-Workman family was notable for having important familial connections with Spanish-speaking pioneers of Alta California. William Workman married Nicolasa Urioste (1802-1892), a woman of Native American heritage from Taos, New Mexico. Their daughter, Antonia Margarita Workman, married Francis P. F. Temple. Another family member, Gregorio de Ajuria, was a Basque immigrant who became a prominent merchant and landowner in Los Angeles.

The Temple-Workman family played a vital part in the development of Los Angeles and Southern California. Their business ventures and land holdings helped shape the city's growth. The family's connections with other prominent settlers in Southern California gave them a unique position in the region's history and culture.

Rarity

Original documents or letters relating to wine production in Los Angeles from the 1850s are extremely rare. Indeed such source documents are virtually non-existent in the market. Thomas Pinney, in his 2017 history of L.A. wine, has emphasized the lack of source material for the early history of Los Angeles winemaking.

Detailed Condition:

Single sheet of blue laid paper. Old fold marks. Some paper losses at tears along folds. Stains and old paper repairs (including tape repairs on verso). Overall good.