Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Map of the City of Los Angeles. California. Compiled From Surveys Made By The City Surveyor During 1886. And From Records On File In The County Recorders Office. V.J. Rowan and Theo. G. Koeberle, Surveyors. Formerly of the City Surveyor's Office.

Stock#: r02756
Map Maker: Schmidt Label & Litho. Co.

Date: 1887
Place: San Francisco
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG-
Size: 59 x 48 inches

Price: SOLD

Description:

Rowan & Koeberle's map is one of the largest surviving early maps of the City of Los Angeles. Known in only a single example in the California State Library Archives, is the most comprehensive and up to date map of Los Angeles published in the 19th Century and captures in remarkable detail the progress and growth of the City at the zenith of its growth in the 19th Century.

While similar to the 1884 Stevenson Map, this authentic plat map tells Los Angeles history with amazing detail. The map include the identification of land owners, tract names, locations of water, rail lines, township numbers, subdivisions and even the long forgotten Los Angeles and Ostrich farm trolley. The year 1887 was the peak of LA's great real estate boom and the rush to acquire land in the new Eden was reaching a fever pitch. Thousands of newcomers flooded into Los Angeles on the newly connected railroads. Excursion trains left downtown constantly, shuttling possible buyers out to the places named on this map.

In a cutout in the upper left corner is the literature inspired suburb of Ivanhoe where one could buy land with just 20% down. Some of the earliest movie studios, including the Walt Disney studio began in this area. The nearby "LA City Res site" is the Silverlake reservoir which was then bringing precious water from the river in that direction. Elysian Park named just the year before can be seen here for the first time. Reservoir number 4 is the future Echo Park, surrounded by forgotten tract names like Orange Slope, ELA Hills, Nob Hill and Colina Park. Also seen for the first time is Sycamore Grove in the Northeast where locals would enjoy rustic picnics and celebrate Independence Days.The ten year old Evergreen cemetery is visible east of the "official bed of the Los Angeles river" that tells a tale in itself since the city owned the

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rights of that bed which later drew the San Fernando Valley into Los Angeles.

One of the more fascinating locations on the map is the Los Angeles & Ostrich Farm Railroad, extending from Reservoir Site No. 4 to the Southerly Portion of Ivanhoe. In 1885, a Dr. Sketchley built an ostrich farm along the banks of the Los Angeles River near where Griffith Park is now located. On Sunday and holidays, city residents would ride the Temple Street cable cars to the end of the line, and then transfer to horse-drawn coaches which took them to see the farm. In 1886, the Los Angeles Ostrich Farm Railway Company was created to take the place of the slow carriages. Moses L. Wicks, a Los Angeles attorney and real estate speculator, was the primary promoter. The Railway asked the LA City Council to allow the railroad to operate from the neighborhood of Sisters' Hospital to the city limits. In November, 1886, permission was given to build a rail line from "a point in Bellevue avenue where it intersects with the west line of Upper Main street," north to the city limits.

This ordinance specified that the cars were to be "run or propelled from the place of beginning to Elysian Park Avenue by horses and electricity, two horses or two mules to each car;" the remainder of the way the cars were to be run by steam or electricity. The railroad was forbidden to charge more than five cents inside the city limits, and children under eighteen who were going or coming from school were to be charged half fare. Before the Ostrich Farm Railway was completed, it was absorbed by the Los Angeles County Railway Company; the exact date of this merger is not known. It must have been sometime before March 10, 1887, because an agreement recorded on that date mentions a railroad "then known as the Ostrich Farm Street Railway," and now owned by the Los Angeles County Railroad.

Cartographer Valentine James Rowan was the son of a successful pioneer and Mayor Thomas E. Rowan who sent his son off to San Francisco to study engineering as a teenager. V.J. established offices in downtown and commenced a great career as surveyor that included creating this map when he was just 23 years old. It was said that "he surveyed more property and laid out more subdivisions than any man in city history." In his rather spectacular cartographical career he surveyed all of the city's streets and bridges, mapped Catalina Island, much of the San Fernando Valley and created a monumental map of Los Angeles County for which he was paid the whopping sum of ten dollars.

The foregoing essay is taken in part from an essay by Glen Creason, Head of the Map Collection at the Los Angeles Public Library, whose much anticipated book on the history of Los Angeles maps will be available in the coming months.

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Detailed Condition:
Wall map on linen. The map has been cleaned and restored, with areas of loss of image filled in facsimile.