



Engraved chart, on three sheets, joined, lighthouses and beacons picked out in yellow and red, backed on blue paper, two large tears to left margin, minor tears to top and right margin, skilfully repaired.

## **GOLD COAST - THE GOLD COAST**

**Coast of Africa Included Between Sierra Leone and Cape Lopez.**

### **Author**

IMRAY, James F[rederick]

### **Publication date**

1905.

### **Publisher**

Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson, Ltd., 156, Minories,

### **Publication place**

London,

### **Physical description**

Engraved chart, on three sheets, joined, lighthouses and beacons picked out in yellow and red, backed on blue paper, two large tears to left margin, minor tears to top and right margin, skilfully repaired.

### **Dimensions**

1080 by 1920mm. (42.5 by 75.5 inches).

### **Notes**

Large chart of the South Africa published by the leading commercial chart maker of his day James

Imray.

The chart marks soundings, hazards of the sea, and the position of lighthouses (highlighted in red and yellow), with principal ports and rivers marked. The chart bears numerous insets: Cape Palmas; Cape Three Points; Axim Bay; Tacorady Bay; Cape Castle; Chana Bay; Elmina; Dix Cove; Gallinas; Santa Isabel; Bangwin River; Sinou Bay; Cestos Bay; George Bay; Edina & Grand Bassa; Tabou River; Monrovia Bay; Shoals of St Ann and the Coast in the vicinity of Sierra Leone To the right of the title Imray has added a plea: "The publisher's respectfully request communications that may tend to the improvement of this or any other of their works". This was a somewhat forlorn attempt to keep up with and compete, with the more accurate Admiralty charts, which by the late nineteenth century, had begun to take more and more of Imray's business.

James Imray (1803-1870), worked originally in the stationery and account book publishing business. In 1836, Imray joined with the chartmaker Michael Blachford. The partnership flourished and soon began to compete with the larger firm of Norie and Wilson. In 1846 Imray bought out Blachford. By the time of James's death in 1870 the business had become the leading commercial chart publisher of its day. The business was carried on by his eldest son, James Frederick Imray (1829-1891). James Frederick had become a partner in the book and instrument sides of the business, in 1854, and the firm had changed its name to James Imray & Son. The 1870s would represent the high-water mark of the firm, with no less than three locations associated with the company: charts were produced at 89 Minories; 102 Minories was a saleroom for charts and books, and the nautical academy; and 1 Postern Row was a shop selling instruments. Alas James Frederick's tenure led to the firm's gradual decline, who lacked both the business acumen and the chart making knowledge of his father, with few new charts being commissioned. James Frederick also faced stiff competition from the Admiralty, whose charts, though more expensive, and less popular with merchant vessels, were being vigorously promoted by the Board of Trade as more accurate and reliable. Upon his death, in 1891, the business (his children being underage) was run by two employees, Alfred Imray (James's cousin), and Henry Jenkins, until the brothers James Cutbill and Herbert Parbury came of age. However, with trading conditions increasingly tricky it was no surprise that when, in 1899, the firm of Norie and Wilson approached the two young men with the proposal for amalgamation that they readily accepted.

The full amalgamation would take some time with Wilson's overtures to the Kettle brothers, who were now running the firm of Laurie, somewhat reluctant to join. However, after the Kettle brother's failure to sell their remaining plate stock to the Admiralty, they succumbed to the inevitable, and the new company of Imray, Laurie, Norie and Wilson, was formed in 1904.

## **Bibliography**

## **Provenance**

**Price:** £600

**Inventory reference:** 24109