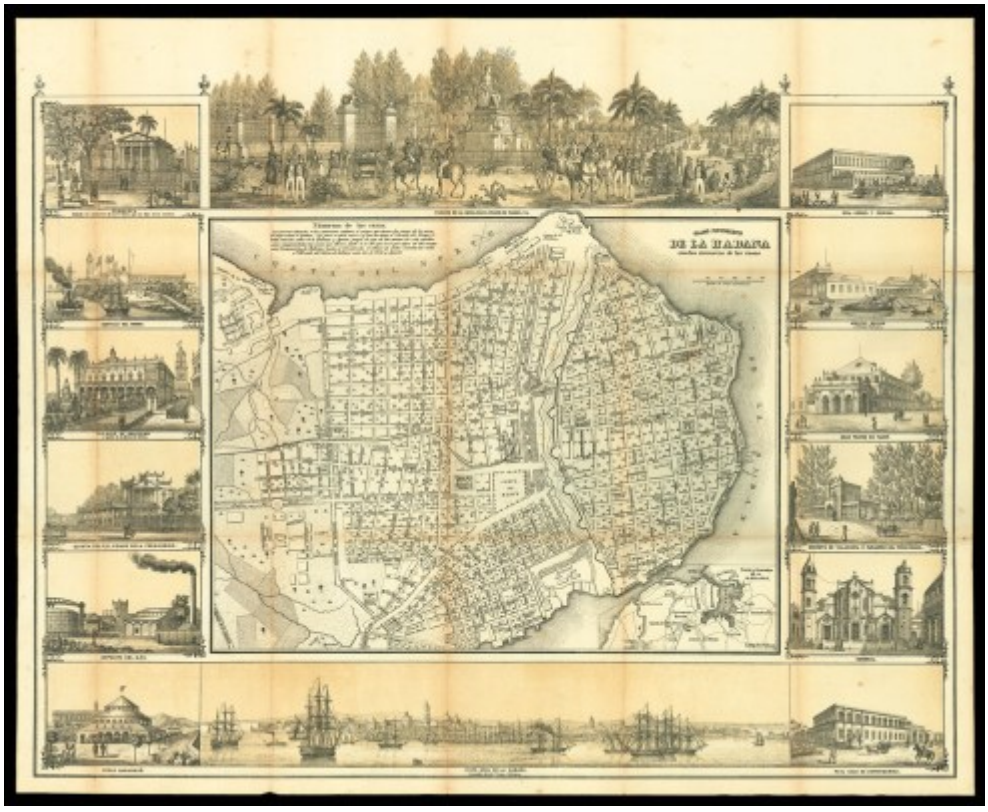


Two chromolithographed maps (each 445 by 555 mm), folding into original brown cloth covers with gold lettering.

MAY’S PLAN OF HAVANA

Plano Pintoresco de la Habana con los numeros de las casas; Mapa Historico Pintoresco Moderno de la Isla de Cuba

Author
MAY, Bernardo

Publication date
1853.

Publisher
Storch und Kramer,

Publication place
Berlin,

Physical description
Two chromolithographed maps (each 445 by 555 mm), folding into original brown cloth covers with gold lettering.

Dimensions
445 by 555mm. (17.5 by 21.75 inches).

Notes
Two maps of Cuba bound together, both with charming vignette borders. One map is of Havana, surrounded by a border with five vignettes of landmarks on each side, including the Castillo del

Morro which guarded the entrance to the bay and the great Cathedral, mainly built from coral rock cut from the ocean floor. There is a view of the harbour at the bottom, an inset map of the coast, and a scene showing a visit to the island by Isabella II.

The other map is a detailed plan of Cuba, with a table at the lower left showing the co-ordinates of and distances between locations on the island. It is framed by a border of vignettes, showing important events in Cuban history. On the right is the capture of Havana by the English in 1762, and the great Havana hurricane of 1846, the worst tropical storm in a century. At the bottom is a scene of a ceremony in the Plaza de Armas, commemorating the first Catholic Mass in Cuba which was held there in 1519. The border also carries scenes of everyday life: a sugar factory, a tobacco plantation and a cockfight. The map was drawn during a crucial stage in Cuba's development, as shown by the network of roads and railways sprouting over the island. The railway in Cuba was the first in Latin America. At the top is a vignette incorporating elements from the coat of arms granted to Cuba in 1516, which featured the Virgin Mary standing on the globe in a cloud (here changed to the crescent moon to identify her as the Virgin of Guadalupe) above a mounted rider. The two alligators that formed the compartment of the original arms have been changed here to just one, accompanied by native plants; pineapple, prickly pears and pumpkins. The arms were supported by the yoke and bundle and arrows of the Kings of Spain, which have been changed here to a general figure of industry surrounded by farming equipment, and a figure of war surrounded by weapons.

The maps are pirated from the work of Pierre-Toussaint-Frédéric Mialhe (1810-1868), a French painter who lived in Cuba for sixteen years, producing popular views of the country. He published a collection of lithographic views and maps, 'Viaje Pintoresco al Rededor de la Isla de Cuba', in 1847-8. Bernardo May sent some of the views to Hamburg to be re-lithographed, and then reissued them at a lower price, once in 1853 and again in 1855. Mialhe was furious, but failed to win a lawsuit against May because he had not observed copyright laws. The pirated lithographs appear around the two maps, identifying it as 1853 edition: the 1855 edition does not have the border of views.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £4000

Inventory reference: 11944

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