First issue. Lithographed view (image size 557 by 1040 mm), (small tear lower right-hand corner).

## VIEW OF SAN FRANCISCO

**City of San Francisco from Rincon Point Tinted lithographed by C. Parsons N.Y., Deld by F.N. Otis M.D. Surgeon In USM Steamship COS Service, Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1855, by F.N. Otis in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New York,**

**Author**
PARSONS, Charles after OTIS, Flessenden Nott

**Publication date**
1855

**Publisher**
Printed by Endicott & Co. N.Y.,

**Publication place**
New York,

**Physical description**
First issue. Lithographed view (image size 557 by 1040 mm), (small tear lower right-hand corner).

**Dimensions**
690 by 1160mm. (27.25 by 45.75 inches).

**Notes**
A fine early view of San Francisco, created after the Gold Rush, by Otis while he was a physician and ship's surgeon in the service of the United States Mail Steamship Company on the Panama to

California route between 1853 and 1859.

A sweeping panoramic view of the city, taken from the corner of Fremont and Harrison streets on Rincon Hill, and showing clearly Nob Hill, Russian Hill, Telegraph Hill, Angel Island, Yerba Buena Island, and Mount Tamalpais in the distance. The city is booming and has expanded into the Bay; buildings built on landfill which was Yerba Buena Cove. The harbor itself is alive with ships. In the foreground can be identified the gardens of William F. Babcock, whose home was at 11 Essex Street, on Rincon Hill, in once one of the most fashionable residential areas. Babcock, his wife, John Forbes of New York, and three children, one of whom is pictured rolling a large hoop, can be seen strolling in the gardens.

“Babcock had arrived in San Francisco in 1852 as the agent of the New York counting house of Davis, Brooks & Company, and in 1854 had assumed control of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, one of the most powerful and influential corporations on the West Coast. Otis, who later wrote a book about Babcock’s company, the Illustrated History of the Panama Railroad (1861), was probably a personal friend of the businessman, and would certainly have been known to his fellow New Yorker through his highly popular Easy Lectures in Landscape, which had been published in five editions by 1856. It is possible that the original sketch for the lithograph was done while Otis was visiting the Babcocks during one of his frequent stops in San Francisco” (Howell).

Lithographed by Charles Parsons (1821-1910), who was one of the most successful and important lithographers of the nineteenth century, and also published the 1878 Currier & Ives “City of San Francisco”.

**Bibliography**

Baird, Historic Lithographs of San Francisco, 33; Howell Anniversary Catalogue, 1982, item 93; Peters, America on Stone, p. 308 (Parsons); California on Stone, p. 119 (Endicott & Company). Van Nostrand & Coulter, California Pictorial, pp. 154–155.

**Provenance**

**Price:**

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