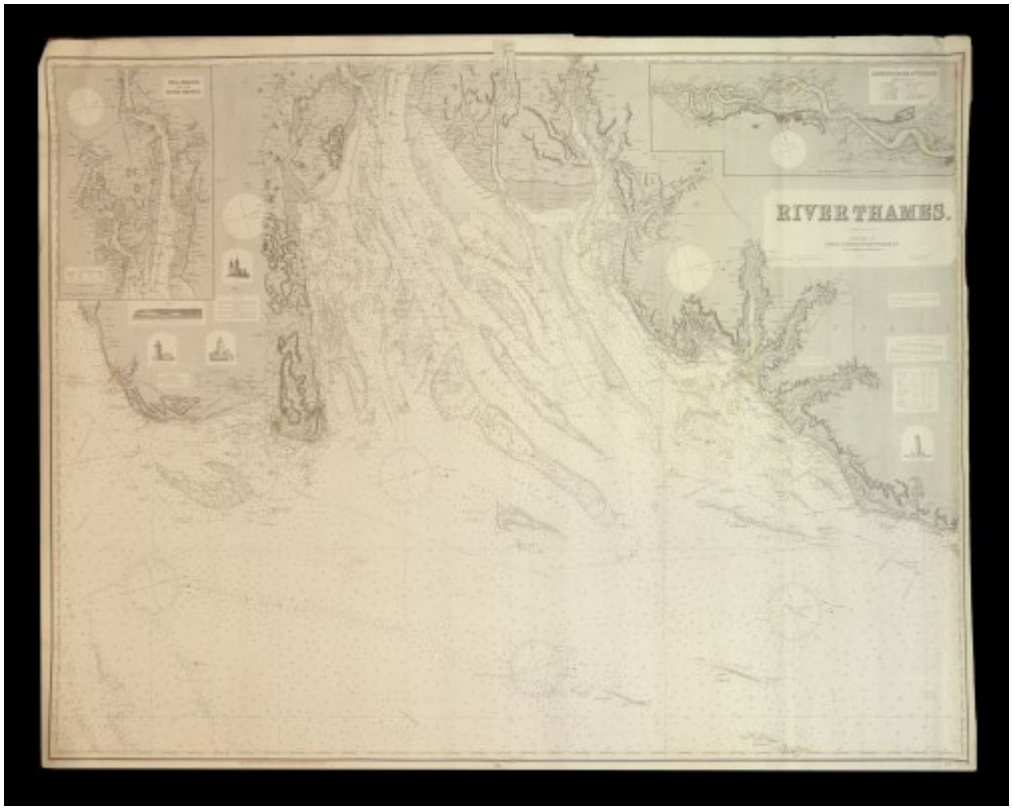


Engraved chart, on two sheets, joined, lighthouses and beacons picked out in yellow and red, backed on blue paper, small tears to margins, small hole top-right.

THE RIVER THAMES

River Thames.

Author
IMRAY, LAURIE, NORIE, AND WILSON;APPLETON, J[ames] W[illiam]

Publication date
1907.

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

Publication place
London,

Physical description
Engraved chart, on two sheets, joined, lighthouses and beacons picked out in yellow and red, backed on blue paper, small tears to margins, small hole top-right.

Dimensions
1070 by 1450mm. (42.25 by 57 inches).

Notes
Large chart of the coast of the Rio de la Plata, and the River Uruguay, published published three years after the merger of Imray, Laurie, and Norie.

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 two insets: the River Thames to London; and Sea Reach and River Medway.

The chart was drawn and compiled by John William Appleton the principal hydrographer working for the Norie and Wilson firm during the middle of the nineteenth century. The chart is engraved by Henry Stephenson Homewood, son of Thomas Homewood, who had been apprenticed to John Stephenson – John Norie's principal engraver – in 1820, and had married his daughter Louisa Martha, in 1829. As well as an engraver for the Norie firm, Homewood was also a publican, running the Princess Alice in Forest Gate in 1896 and the Willesden Junction Hotel in 1899-1900. He was also a keen amateur singer.

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, where 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, their succumbed to the inevitable, and the new company of Imray, Laurie, Norie and Wilson, was formed in 1904.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £300

Inventory reference: 24106

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