

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Engravings By Cooke Add To Californiana**

The Seart Press of 101 Farm Hill Way, Los Gatos, just before Christmas 1961 produced "Faithfully at the Sign of the Compass Rose," a folio of etchings by Edward Wm. Cooke, R. A., F. R. S., celebrated British naval artist circa 1827. The printing was limited to 1,000 numbered sets, and we received No. 11 because the art director of the Seart Press happens to be a grand-nephew, Michael Lee.

The engravings were made by E. Scriven from an original picture by Dancel in the gallery of Greenwich's Hospital, from the collection of Henry N. James.

"Fine Prints" published by John Grant Edinburg, 1905, has this to say about Captain Cooke:

"Edward William Cooke, Royal Academy, Fellow, The Royal Society of Painters and Etchers, was seemingly born to illustrate, engraver, etcher, painter, he brought fame to a family already notable for its artistic achievement."

His father, George, and uncle, William, the brothers Cooke, were such noted fine line engravers that the brilliant and perhaps greatest of all engravers, painter J. M. W. Turner trained and employed them, in the preparation of the 70 plates for his monumental "Libre Studiorum." So distinguished was their priceless and admiral work that the eminent authority, Frederick Wedmore, almost a century later, mourned, "With the death of these great artists (Turner and brothers - Cooke), fine line engravings vanished from England for over 50 years."

Edward William Cooke was commissioned by HRH the Duke of Clarence, then lord admiral of England, to preserve through the medium of etching the naval and merchant shipping of England. His collection of works was published in 1829.

The magnificently restrained work of the teenage prodigy had immortalized the sailing ships of England and with his etchings he had also gained immortality, for the world hailed him as one of the greatest naval artists. The popularity of the work continues at this date and is widely sought by collectors of maritime prints. He died at the age of 69.

The folio of etchings by Edward Wm. Cooke is "dedicated to Sir Winston Churchill, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, whose blood, sweat and tears kept England free a second time." Jno. McGean was the Master Printer of the series published by the Seart Press.

In the collection of five etchings is "The Victory (first-rate) 104 guns, with the Collier along-side, in Portsmouth Harbor, 1828,"; First Class, West Indiaman (Thetis, Capt. Burton.); a fishing smack, schooner and sloop-rigged barge; and as the fourth, a Brig of War's 12 Pr. Carronade; all etchings by Captain Cooke, whose portrait, engraved by E. Scriven, from an original etching by Dancel, is last.

The Talisman Press, also of Los Gatos, announces the publication of a major new contribution to the bibliography of the history of California, "California Imprints, 1833-1862," edited by Robert Greenwood and compiled by Seiko June Suzuki and Marjorie Pulliam and the Historical Records Survey.

This edition appears to be the most comprehensive published work on California; imprints from the beginning of printing in Mexican California through the year 1862, and a major contribution to the bibliography of California. Here recorded for the first time are numerous titles, hitherto obscurely known, relating to a variety of subjects: the Mexican press; the territorial government of California Legislature in 1850; the San Francisco vigilance committees of 1851 and 1856; the outbreak of the Civil War and the preservation of the Union; gold strikes in the Pacific Northwest; the formation of Nevada Territory and the silver strike in Washoe; and numerous land claim litigations, early medical items, religious sermons, town and county directories, almanacs, etc.

The edition is limited to 750 copies.

Of special interest among the Imprints is Alexander Taylor's Discovery of California and Northwest America; the first voyage to the coasts of California made in the years 1542 and 1643 by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and his pilot, Bartolome Ferrelo. By Alex S. Taylor of Monterey. "San Francisco": Published by LeCount and Strong, 1853

Bancroft regards this work of considerable importance. Cabrillo reached San Diego in September 1540, discovered the entire outer coast of the peninsula there and continued northward to explore the channel islands, Monterey Bay and Point Reyes. This is the first true work of California history to be printed in California?!