



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
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## A New and Accurat Map of the World Drawne according to ye truest Descriptions lastest Discoveries & best observations yt have beene made by English or Strangers. 1651.

**Stock#:** 45363  
**Map Maker:** Speed  
**Date:** 1651 (1676)  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 20.5 x 15.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### *John Speed's Acclaimed World Map*

Excellent example of Speed's celebrated double hemisphere world map, highly sought after for its rarity, extraordinary early geographic detail, and striking illustrative ornamentation.

It is one of the earliest obtainable world maps printed in England, as well as one of the earliest obtainable world maps printed in English. At the time of its original printing (1627), it was one of the first maps to depict California as an island and to show the settlement of New Plymouth in America.

The map itself is pleasingly embellished throughout with sea creatures and sailing vessels and encircled with a graticule along with climate zone inscriptions. The map is surrounded by smaller celestial hemispheres, figural representations of Water, Earth, Air, and Fire, and a number of celestial phenomena including solar and lunar eclipses. Portraits of the first circumnavigators are included at the corners of the map: Sir Francis Drake, Ferdinand Magellan, Thomas Cavendish and Olivier van Noort.

The influence of the contemporary Dutch cartographic tradition is clear on this map, evidenced by its decorative style combining portraiture and celestial illustration. Source maps used by Speed include Jodocus Hondius' famed 1617 world map and William Grent's rare 1625 world map.

Distributed throughout the map are numerous cartouches and annotations providing additional detail on



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the exploration of North America and the southern latitudes. The map title is included in a simple banner at top.

Along with California and Korea as islands, other fascinating mythical geographic details include a prominent northwestern coast of North America complete with conjectural place names, the vast Southern Continent or *Magellanica*, the Straits of Anian along with mention of the fabled Northwest Passage, the city of Manoa (El Dorado) accompanied by Lake Parime near Guiana, and the phantom island of Frisland off the coast of Greenland.

#### **California as an island**

The popular misconception of California as an island can be found on European maps from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. Although the earliest maps of North America portrayed California correctly as a peninsula, the myth of California as an island was most likely the result of a reading of the travel account of Sebastian Vizcaino, who had been sent north up the shore of California in 1602. A Carmelite friar who accompanied him later described the land as an island, a description first published in Juan Torquemada's *Monarquia Indiana* (1613) with the island details curtailed somewhat. The friar, Fray Antonio de la Ascension, also wrote a *Relacion breve* of his geographic ideas around 1620.

These ideas spread in Spain and New Spain and, eventually, most likely via Dutch mariners and perhaps thanks to stolen charts, to the rest of Europe. Prominent practitioners like Jans Jansson and Nicolas Sanson adopted the new island and the practice became commonplace. John Speed's map is well known for being one of the first to depict California as an island, having been created soon after Fray Antonio de la Ascension's claims spread to England.

Father Eusebio Kino, after extensive travels in what is now California, Arizona, and northern Mexico concluded that the island was actually a peninsula and published a map refuting the claim (Paris, 1705). Despite Kino's work, California as an island remained a fixture on maps until the mid-eighteenth century, mostly due to political reasons.

#### **The unknown southern continent**

Here, lands in the Antarctic are called the "Southerne Unknowne Land" and *Magellanica*, named after Ferdinand Magellan. In antiquity, Greco-Roman scholars and cosmographers such as Ptolemy posited that the Indian Ocean was enclosed by land, and that the continents of the globe should be balanced, in that the amount of land found in the Northern Hemisphere should exist in the Southern Hemisphere.

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Ferdinand Magellan's 1520 discovery of Tierra del Fuego was thought to support claims of a southern continent, and many prominent mapmakers, including Gerardus Mercator, strongly believed in the continent's existence. This belief was eventually disproven by James Cook's first (1768) and second (1772) voyages through the southern Pacific.

The place name Beach can be found at the tip of the southern continent in Southeast Asia, a toponym which first originated with a misreading of Marco Polo's travel accounts. Marco Polo described the land as containing many riches, which explains the map's annotation claiming the area to be abundant in spices. To the east of Beach, *Mare Lantchidol* is similarly an inaccurate transcription of the Malay-Javanese term 'Laut Kidul' (South Sea), which stems from Marco Polo's accounts.

The cartouche placed on the southern continent notes that although the land is unknown, its existence has been proven by sailor's accounts of its coasts. An annotation to the left of this cartouche explains Portuguese sailors have spotted *Psittacorum Regio* ("Country of Parrots") in the area of the southern continent, and comments on the largeness of the birds recounted in the Portuguese sailor's logs. *Psittacorum Regio* notably appeared on Gerard Mercator's 1541 globe and his 1569 world map, leading to it becoming a common toponym on maps containing the southern continent.

On this map's *Magellanica*, in the western hemisphere, a cartouche details English circumnavigation of the globe, discussing Sir Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish. Another inscription credits the discovery of nearby coasts of *Magellanica* to Spanish sailors blown off course, probably a reference to the Loaisa expedition of 1525. The Loaisa expedition, meant to locate a missing ship from the Magellan expedition and also locate and colonize Magellan's Spice Islands, encountered tremendous difficulties attempting to enter the Strait of Magellan. One of the ships in the expedition, the *San Lesmes*, captained by Francisco de Hoces, was blown southward and encountered land, possibly the earliest discovery of Cape Horn.

#### **Exploration and conjecture in North America**

The Straits of Anian refer to a mythical passage separating China and North America. The name Anian derives from Ania, a Chinese province on a large gulf mentioned in *The Travels of Marco Polo*. The gulf Polo described was actually the Gulf of Tonkin, but due to misreading the province's description was transposed from Vietnam to areas much farther north. On this world map, a province named Anian can be seen at the far eastern edge of Asia, as well as in the passage between the continents. The first map to depict the Straits of Anian was Giacomo Gastaldi's world map of 1562, followed by maps by Bolognino Zaltieri and Gerardus Mercator; thereafter it entered into widespread cartographic use.



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The Straits of Anian was for many years considered to be the Pacific Ocean's connection to the fabled Northwest Passage across North America. The Northwest Passage was long sought after by Europeans as an alternative route to the Far East. The first recorded exploration attempt was undertaken by John Cabot in 1497, but the general idea of a Northwest Passage originated in antiquity and was reprised by the fifteenth century revival of Ptolemaic maps.

Speculations about the passage appeared on maps until the nineteenth century, and numerous explorations were undertaken in search of a navigable sailing route. On this map, a substantial annotation in Canada details how English navigator John Davis found the Davis Strait separating North America and Greenland in pursuit of the Northwest Passage but was forced to turn back by ice.

In addition to John Davis, the voyages of Henry Hudson are prominent on this map. Next to the Davis Strait, Greenland can be seen vaguely connected to continental North America. Hudson's Strait, Buttons Bay, and Hudson's Bay are all clearly labeled. The annotation next to Hudson's Bay refers to it as the "West Mediterranean Sea" found by Hudson.

The colonization of North America is also well documented on this map. It is one of the first to show the New Plymouth settlement and has New France, New England and Virginia clearly labeled. A cartouche in North America discusses Christopher Columbus and the naming of America after subsequent explorer Amerigo Vespucci.

#### **The mythical Frisland**

Near Greenland, the phantom island of Frisland is depicted. Perhaps originally a misrepresentation of Iceland or a confusion about the southern extent of Greenland, Frisland appeared on most prominent maps throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This island was first charted on a map created by Nicolo Zeno in 1558. Zeno claimed Frisland had been discovered by his ancestors, the Zeno Brothers, using travel letters he claimed to have found in his attic. The Zeno map was widely popular, and Frisland was subsequently copied by Gerardus Mercator, Jodocus Hondius, Willem Blaeu, and, as seen here, John Speed.

#### **El Dorado**

In South America, the fabled Lake Parime and city of Manoa (El Dorado) are shown near Guiana. Manoa and Lake Parime (also known as Parima) were first identified by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1595 after he

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observed indigenous traders from the Manoa nation carrying gold and assumed they came from the mythical city of gold, El Dorado.

Lake Parime is thought to be a misunderstanding of indigenous accounts of annual flooding that caused the Amazon and Orinoco river systems to connect, forming a large body of water. This annual river flooding was used as a trading route by the Manoa nation and could have led to the misunderstanding that a city called Manoa existed on a large lake.

**Early cartographic depictions of the western Pacific: Korea, Japan, and New Guinea**

Korea is depicted as an island on this map. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to gain firsthand knowledge of East Asia in the sixteenth century, and Portuguese mapmaker Luis Teixeira's map of Japan with Korea as an island was a popular source of information on the geography of the region in the early seventeenth century. It is assumed that early European navigators in the region encountered the Yalu River, separating Korea from China, and thought it to be a strait between the Yellow Sea and Sea of Japan.

Japan appears as a large round island, further evidence of Luis Teixeira's influence. The islands of Southeast Asia are arrayed with relative accuracy for the time.

A spare sketch of New Guinea is included on this map, with "W. Schoutenland" labeled to the north. Willem Schouten completed a voyage to explore trading routes sailing west from the Netherlands to Asia in 1616 along with Jacob Le Maire. He is well known for naming the Le Maire Straits and Cape Horn and for discovering islands along the northern coast of New Guinea.

**States of this map and rarity**

The first state of this map is dated 1626, but it as published in 1627 as part of Speed's atlas, *A Prospect of the most Famous Parts of the World*. The map is known to have four distinct states. The present example is a fourth state and was part of the final edition of Speed's atlas, published in 1676.

The second state is dated 1651 and George Humble's name has been replaced by his son's, William Humble's.

The third state, issued by the Rea Brothers, bore their imprint and kept the date of 1651. Most of the Rea impressions perished in the Great Fire of London (1666).



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The plates for Speed's atlas were subsequently sold to Thomas Bassett and Richard Chiswell, who erased the Rea's imprint and added their own for fourth state in 1676. No further changes were made, so the date 1651 was preserved, visible at top right.

The present map is relatively scarce on the market. According to Rodney Shirley, the scarcity of the map can be explained by the fact that Speed's atlas did not enjoy the same level of popularity as its contemporary Dutch rivals. Most of the examples stayed within Great Britain.

The map is highly sought after by collectors' today, making them relatively scarce on the market.

**Detailed Condition:**

Wide margins. Minor repaired tear near lower centerfold, just entering printed image.