



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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A Description of the Island of Jamaica; With the other Isles and Territories in America, to which the English are Related. . .

Stock#: 47129
Map Maker: Blome
Date: 1672
Place: London
Color:
Condition:
Size: 8vo
Price: SOLD



Description:

An Important Promotional Tract Describing the English Colonies in North America, especially Carolina and Virginia -- Includes the Earliest English map of the Middle and Northeastern colonies, and the second map the English Colony of Carolina.

While the title of the book begins as a description of Jamaica, Blome's rare work is perhaps most important for its early promotional tracts and maps focusing on the English colonies of Virginia, Carolina, Maryland, New York and New England.

Blome's book was intended as an overview of the English colonial efforts in North America. It was prepared with extensive help from Sir Thomas Lynch, Governor of Jamaica, and Colonel Thomas Modyford, owner of extensive lands on that island. Their involvement explains the special attention paid to Jamaica and the West Indies in the book and title.

In spite of that specific approach, the book proves an impressive promotional tract for the North American colonies, dedicating specific sections to Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New York and New England.

In the dedication to Charles II, Blome refers to the book as a "small treatise, or description, of Your Majesties Dominions and Territories in America." However, Blome still managed to cover quite a bit; the



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territories described are (in Blome's spelling): Barbadoes, St. Christophers, Nevis, Antego, St. Vincent, Dominica, Montserrat, Anguilla, Barbada, Bermudes, Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New-York, New England, New-Found-Land.

Maps

The book includes three important folding maps:

"A New & Exact Mapp of y. Isle of Jamaica" : {{ inventory_detail_link('47129') }}

The map provides a good view of Jamaica and a large inset of the Caribbean generally. It is known to have been engraved by Wenceslaus Hollar. He and Blome worked together frequently, and Hollar was the engraver of Blome's great atlas of 1670.

"A Generall Mapp of Carolina, Describing Its Sea, Coast and Rivers" : {{ inventory_detail_link('47129a') }}

First issued in 1672, Blome's map is the second printed map of the English Colony of Carolina, pre-dated only by the rare Robert Horne map of 1666. **{{ inventory_detail_link('11867') }}**

As noted by Burden:

The map created confusion between the old and new settlements of Charles Town. The earlier short-lived settlement of Charles Town was founded in 1664 by a number of planters from Barbados and abandoned three years later. It illustrates Charles Town correctly near Cape Fear but applies the Ashley Riv relating to the later 1670 settlement of Charles Town, which is further south. The latter was not officially called Charleston until incorporated in 1783 and should be placed just to the south of C. Romano. The author was clearly aware of some other sources as he applies C. Cateret to the correct location; the relative location of Charleston should have been identified in the same source. We have to assume, therefore, that either he did not wish to drastically alter his plate, or he did not have the full details available. He clearly did not have to hand the . . . John Ogilby map of CAROLINA published at about the same time. We should bear in mind that Blome's promised publication ate had already passed.

There are other minor differences. At the same time as the addition of the Ashly Riv. the Charles River was removed from the same region. The southerly extension of Cape Fear has been correctly shortened. No example of the map before its correction is known. Similarly



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before publication there is an alteration to the title. All of the flora and fauna depicted in the Horne map is here omitted. The arms of the eight Lords Proprietors in an elaborate cartouche are illustrated lower left.

"A Draught of the Sea Coast and Rivers, of Virginia, Maryland, and New England" : {{ inventory_detail_link('47129b') }}

Rare first edition of Blome's highly important map, which Burden notes as "the first English map to illustrate the middle and north-eastern colonies." The map provides a foundation for understanding the dramatic expansion within the British Colonies over the next several decades and the remarkable evolution of printed maps of the region over the next decade.

First issued in 1672, Blome's map provides one of the earliest looks at the new British Colonies in America. Burden states "it is important as it illustrates the region just prior to the great expansion of cartographic knowledge which would commence with the Augustine Herman VIRGINIA AND MARYLAND map of 1673[74] and the John Seller map of New England in 1676." Among other noteworthy features is that the map shows the Chesapeake running in a northerly direction, without the usual English depiction of a "hook" at its head.

The map provides a number of early place names along the coastline from the Chesapeake to the Port Royal and St. John's Harbor, centered on the region between New York City and Cape Cod. This first edition of the map can be distinguished from the equally rare 1678 edition by the new more northerly border between Virginia and New England, the re-engraved latitude numbers on the left side of the map, the original placement of the James River (which was moved to the south in the second edition of the map) and the short river extension above the Chesapeake Bay, which was lengthened significantly in the second state.

Carolina

Blome drew on the most recent information about Carolina to inform his description. This is historically important because the colony had only just been established in 1663, so this represents one of the first good English descriptions of the area.

Blome makes use of John Lederer's discoveries, saying in his description of the natives of Carolina: "The Natives of Caroliona, according to the observation of Mr. John Ledener [sic.] (who made three several journeys from Virginia, to Carolina, about the year 1670. on purpose for a discovery of those parts, and the better understanding the nature and disposition of the inhabitants) are said by him to be a people of ready



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witt, and though Illiterate, of good understanding."

Virginia

This is a highly important promotional tract for Virginia, to which Blome pays particular attention. He dedicates sections to the more pressing qualities of the colony and lavishes it with simple but effusive praise: "The Soyl" ("The Soyl very Rich"); "Their Fruits" ("Excellent Fruits"); "Their Roots and Herbs" ("Plenty of Roots, & Herbs"); "Abundance of Fowle"; "Virginia well stored with Beasts & Tame Cattle"; etc.

Blome describes Jamestown: "James-Town, or rather James City, commodiously seated on James-River; the Town is beautified with many fair and well built Brick Houses, and it is the chief town of the Countrey; here is kept the Courts of Judicature and Offices of publique concern; not far from which, at Green-Spring, resideth the Governour Sir William Berkley."

He goes on to comment on the English government in Virginia and the state of the Native American tribes in the area.

Publication Details

According to ESTC there were three issues of the 1672 first edition, with the following varying imprints:

London : printed by T. Milbourn, and sold by the book-sellers of London, and Westminster, 1672.

London : printed by T[homas]. Milbourn, and sold by Robert Clavel in Cross-Keys-Court, in Little-Britain, 1672.

London : printed by T. Milbourn, and sold by J. Williams-Junior, in Cross-Keys-Court, in Little-Brittain, 1672.

The present book is an example of the "book-sellers" imprint issue of the first edition.

Burden suggests that the book was not actually issued until 1673, despite an advertisement in London Gazette 8-11 July 1672 issue. An advertisement in March 1673 announced that it would not be available until Easter of that year.

Richard Blome (1635-1705) was a prominent mapmaker in the latter half of the 17th century. He worked extensively with Wenceslas Hollar, the famous engraver, as well as Richard Palmer, and Francis Lamb.



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The present example is offered in a contemporary or near-contemporary calf binding. **{{
inventory_detail_link('47129d') }}**

Rarity

Blome's book did not appear in the Streeter Sale in the 1960s nor in the Frank T. Siebert Sale in 1999. The only auction records we could locate in the past 60 years for the 1672 edition of the book was the example which appeared in the 1991 Pierre S. duPont III Sale, and at Swann Galleries in 2014, where it sold for \$16,250 in a late 19th century binding. A.S. Rosenbach described the book as "rare" in 1905.

Detailed Condition: