



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
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**THE GENERALL HISTORIE OF Virginia, New=England, and the Summer Isles: with the names of the Adventurers, Planters, and Governours from their first beginning. Ano: 1584 to this present 1624. WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THOSE SEVERAL COLONIES and the Accidents that befell them in all their Journyes and Discoveries. Also the Maps and Descriptions of all those Countreyes, their Commodities, people, Government, Customes, and Religion yet knowne. DIVIDED INTO SIXE BOOKES.**

**Stock#:** 61437  
**Map Maker:** Smith  
**Date:** 1624  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:**  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***First Edition, First Issue of Smith's Magnum Opus.***

***This Example with All The Maps, including Smith's New England, Virginia, and Old Virginia, in Very Good Condition. Fresh to Market, Having Descended in the Same Family For Over 100 Years.***

***"The foundation of England's knowledge of America during the early period of colonization" (Printing and the Mind of Man 124)***

Captain John Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia* ranks among the most desirable works in the realm of printed Americana. *The Generall Historie* includes Smith's eye-witness observations of the founding of the English Colony at Jamestown, his capture by the King of the Pamaunkee and rescue through the intercession of Pocahontas, Smith's accounts made during his time spent in Virginia (1606-1609), and his exploration of New England (1610-1617). *The Generall Historie* is a major American primary source, incorporating much of his early writing as well as contemporary narratives by others.



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Smith's *Generall Historie* includes three of the most important maps in American history (his Virginia, Ould Virginia, and New England), and is almost never encountered in the 1624 first edition. The last copy of the first edition on the market, the Christie-Miller / Huntington Copy, made \$162,500 at Christie's in 2017, with the maps and plates in much poorer condition.

**Maps and Plates**

Smith's *Generall Historie* varies widely in its complement of plates and the states thereof. The following is an assessment of the plates and maps within the book and their states.

**Title Page:** Burden's 1st State (of 6)

"The date 1624 appears twice in the title, and Charles as Prince is uncrowned. Appears in the 1624 and 1625 editions of the book." (Burden 213)

**Portrait of Princess Frances Duchess of Richmond and Lenox:** British Museum P,1.276

As many as three completely different copperplate portraits of Princess Frances appear in *The Generall Historie*:

1. [Francisco Delaram, The portraiture of the illustreous Princesse Frances... \(1623\)](#)
2. [Willem van de Passe, The portraiture of the illustreous Princesse Frances... \(1623, but likely 1624\) BM P,1.276](#)
3. [Copy after Willem van de Passe, The portraiture of the illustreous Princesse Frances... \(1623, but likely circa 1809\)](#)

This copy of *The Generall Historie* includes the copy of the portrait most commonly associated with the book in bibliographies, BM P,1.276.

There is some disagreement over the necessity of the portraits of Princess Frances and Pocahontas for the completeness of the book (especially for the 1624 first edition) Arber, writing in 1884, said of the first edition: "The engravings of the Duchess of RICHMOND and MATOAKA (*p.* cxxxvi) did *not* form parts of this original [1624] edition." (Arber 1884, page cxxxix)



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The Publisher's Note to the 1907 facsimile of the *Generall Historie* recounted the following conclusions (pages xix-xx):

*From a copy of the prospectus of the work in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of London we learn that Smith intended to insert only three maps instead of the six which subsequently appeared, and that these three maps would cost nearly 'an hundred pounds, which summe I cannot disburse.' From the dedication it is clear that but for the help of the Duchess of Richmond and Lennox the book would not have been published, at all events in its original shape, and it is probable that her liberality enabled Smith to increase the number of maps and add the portraits of the Duchess herself and Pocahontas.*

**Portrait of Pocahontas:** 19th century engraved copy after Hollstein 106.

1. [Simon van den Passe, MATOAKA ALS REBECCA FILIA POTENTISS: PRINC: POWHATANI IMP: VIRGINIÆ, \(1616\) Hollstein 106](#)
2. [Copy after Simon van den Passe, MATOAKA ALS REBECCA FILIA POTENTISS: PRINC: POWHATANI IMP: VIRGINIÆ, \(1616, but 19th century\) Copy after Hollstein 106](#)

This copy of *The Generall Historie* includes the 19th century engraved copy after Hollstein 106, which was often inserted in copies of the book (see the Yale example linked above.) As Arber suggests in the aforementioned quote, the portrait was probably issued in no copies of the first edition, but book collecting fads in the late-19th and early-20th centuries demanded the insertion of the plate - a task which some American and English dealers took to with relish.

**Virginia:** 9th State (of 12)

"[O]ne of the most important printed maps of America ever published and certainly one of the greatest influence. It became the prototype for the area for half a century... States 8 to 10 were used for both the Purchas and various Generall Historie editions. Both 9 and 10 appear to have had the largest production as almost two thirds of those surveyed by Verner are these states." (Burden 164)

**Ould Virginia:** Burden's 3rd State (of 4)



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The map covers the region first settled by Walter Raleigh at Roanoke Island, in present-day North Carolina, between Cape Henry and Cape Fear. The map is surrounded by engravings of his adventures, capture by the King of the Pamunkey and rescue by Pocahontas.

"The third can be found in editions of 1624, 1625 and 1626." (Burden 212)

**Bermuda:** Sabin's 3rd State (of 3)

With both "Penistons Redoute" and "Printed by James Reeve"

**New England:** Sabin-Church-Burden's 6th State (of 9)

"[T]he foundation map of New England cartography, the one that gave [New England] its name and the first devoted to the region..." (Burden 187)

According to Burden, the 1624 *Generall Historie* should include states 3 and 4, some of 2. The 1627 *Generall Historie* should include states 5 and 6. Therefore we may conclude that the present map was inserted from another copy.

**Text:**

**Collation:** [14, including title], 1-96, 105-248 pages.

**Signatures:** pi1, )(2, A-N4, P-2I4

*All copies seemingly lack pp. 97--104 (signature O), which Henry Stevens, with his usual acuteness in bibliographical matters, proves never was printed. The manuscript, it appears from his explanation, was given out to two different printing-houses to be put into type, as is shown by the apparent variations of the initial letters and by the style of the headings on and after page 105. The gap in the volume was due to a miscalculation in the number of pages that the first portion would take up; supplementary verses were inserted to fill what would otherwise have been a blank leaf.* (Church 402)

*In the original editions pages 97 to 104 are invariably missing, and it was for long thought that they*



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*had been suppressed. The late Mr. Henry Stevens, F.S.A., however, shod from comparison of the types and ornaments that the book had been handed to two printers to be set up simultaneously, and that the hiatus was caused by the first portion of the work not occupying in print the number of pages assigned to it, the second portion meanwhile having been partly printed off. This theory is corroborated on the title page, which bears the imprint, 'Printed by I. D. and I. H. for Michael Sparkes.' (1907 Facsimile)*

**Variant:** An early issue of the text, with "thir" for "their" in the last line of page 90, and "degression" for "digression" in the shoulder note on page 119.

**Composition:** *The Generall Historie* is composed of six books: the first book describes the first settlement of Virginia, and the subsequent voyages there to 1605; the second is Smith's description of the country and its Indian inhabitants; the third book relates the occurrences of Smith's voyage and the settlement of Jamestown, from December 1606 to 1609; the fourth book continues the Virginia history from the planting of Point Comfort in 1609 to 1623; the fifth book comprises the history of the Bermudas (or Summer Isles) from 1593 to 1624; and the sixth book contains the history of New England from 1614 to 1624.

**Provenance:**

Lowell Mason Palmer (1845-1915) with his bookplate on front pastedown, and thence by descent through the family, from whom we purchased the book in June 2019.

Lowell M. Palmer was a successful American executive in the late 19th-century and early 20th century. He was the president of the Brooklyn Cooperage Company and Squibb (now Bristol-Myers Squibb) before his death in 1915.

**Detailed Condition:**

Small folio. Late 19th century full crushed maroon morocco by Riviere & Son, spine in six richly gilt compartments divided by raised bands, lettered in the second: "GENERAL | HISTORIE | OF | VIRGINIA | - | SMITH" and in the third: "LONDON | 1624", covers edged with three gilt bands, gilt-tooled dentelles (offsetting to first and last blanks only), all edges gilt. Front pastedown with bookplate of the industrialist



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Lowell Mason Palmer (1845-1915).