



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

**To His Royal Highness George August Frederick, Prince of Wales &c. &c. &c. This Chart
of the West Indies, Is humbly Inscribed by His Royal Highness's Faithful & Obedient
Servant Joseph Smith Speer**

Stock#: 92357
Map Maker: Speer

Date: 1774
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 45.5 x 28 inches

Price: Not Available



Description:

Rare 1774 edition of Speer's *General Chart of the West Indies*, published in London.

This large-scale, separately issued chart of the West Indies is an exceptional example of English cartography for 18th century America. It provides a detailed picture of this highly contested region just prior to the American Revolution.

In his *Atlas of the American Revolution*, Nebenzahl writes, "it is surprising how little has been written about the role of the West Indies during the Revolutionary War. The rich island colonies were of great significance to the British, French, Spanish, Dutch, and even the Danes."

Speer offers a rich tapestry of information throughout the map, including the American Southeast, present-day Texas, Mexico, Central America, and upper South America in addition to the entire Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean basin. The chart is highly detailed and contains a great deal of practical information. Speer pays careful attention to the routes and hazards of navigation including extensive soundings (particularly along the western coast of Florida), channels, trade winds, the course of the Gulf Stream, and the route of the Spanish Gold Fleet. Inland, the chart shows boundaries, Indian tribal territories, rivers, forts, and trails.

The Spanish possessions west of the Mississippi are left largely blank, with Ticas (Texas), Wandering Indians, and A Vast Tract of Unknown Land noted. Political boundaries, cities, forts, Indian tribal territories, and topographical details are well depicted. The waters are filled with soundings, navigational hazards, arrows identifying the direction of trade winds, and the routes of the Spanish gold fleet.



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The chart includes a striking dedication cartouche to George Augustus Frederick, Prince of Wales, who would later become King in 1820. The map includes an endorsement by John Pownall, Secretary to the Plantation Office, certifying that the chart incorporates the "latest and most accurate surveys."

A table at far right lists the colonial possessions of the English, French, Spanish, Dutch and Danish, and gives direction as to how they should be colored on the chart.

States of The Map

The map was first published in 1774, with a second state by Robert Wilkinson in 1796.

There first state includes the Supposed Lake Mujaco and a far more primitive treatment of the St. Mary's River.

The second state shows The United States boundaries reflect the 1796 Pinckney's Treaty, extending to the Mississippi River in the west and south to northern Florida, the Mississippi River, and established intentions of friendship between the United States and Spain. The second state also adds a number of new place names and Indian names.

Captain Joseph Smith Speer

Captain Joseph Smith Speer was an officer in the Royal Navy. His most famous work, the now extremely rare *West-India Pilot*, contained 13 maps of the region, published in 1766, followed by an extended 26-map edition in 1771.

Detailed Condition: