



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
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A General Map of the Middle British Colonies In America, viz. Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, & Rhode Island of Aquanishuonigy the Country of the Confederate Indians . . . Ohio & Thuchoschruntie their Deer Hunting Countries . . .

Stock#: 51032
Map Maker: Evans / Bowles

Date: 1755 (1765)
Place: London
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 25.5 x 19.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Most Influential 18th Century Maps of America

Scarce second state of John Bowle's edition of Lewis Evans' seminal map of the British Colonies in North America.

Along with the maps of Henry Popple and John Mitchell, Lewis Evans' map is considered among the most important and influential American maps of the 18th Century, and is the only one of the three to have been published by an American. Both Evans and Mitchell's maps were intended to spur western expansion into the Trans-Allegheny, Ohio Valley and regions westward, and in response to French encroachments.

Evans' map provided the best early depiction of the Ohio country, while documenting competing British, French and native American claims in a region destined to be the flashpoint of the French and Indian War. In this regard it is of particular note for treating the Iroquois Confederacy as a geopolitical power in its own right, with its own internal political structure, territory (here known as "Aquanishuonigy") and diplomatic interests.

The map is filled with details meriting closer study. It locates hundreds of European and native American settlements, depicts the network of roads and trails, and provides an immense amount of information about the navigability of rivers and important portages. The many other notations include for example,



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Dartmouth College, the location of "elephant bones," "Antique Sculptures," salt and limestone deposits, and petroleum in western Pennsylvania and coal in Ohio.

Evans' map became the standard for nearly 50 years, being re-issued by Jefferys, Bowles, Kitchen and others. The map is a milestone both for its political significance and extension of cartographic knowledge in the region. Governor Pownall re-issued an updated edition of the map taken from the original Evans plate, with an addition of New England and a group of tables, naming townships in the Colonies. Pownall had been a great supporter of Evans and pledged the proceeds from the map to Evans' daughter. The cartographic importance of the map and its place in the history of cartography are substantial.

Pritchard and Taliaferro describe Evans as "the best geographer working in the English colonies in the mid-eighteenth century. A dedicated scientist, he exchanged scholarly information with Peter Collinson, Benjamin Franklin, colonial administrator Thomas Pownall, New York mathematician and mapmaker Cadwallader Colden, and others." (*Degrees of Latitude*, p. 172) His natural talent, his own extensive surveys in western New York and Pennsylvania, and his large network of fellow scholars and mapmakers enabled him to produce what for its time was an extraordinarily accurate and detailed map. Many compared it favorably to the monumental Map of the British and French Dominions in North America, recently completed by Virginia physician John Mitchell. Benjamin Franklin, for example, wrote that "When [Evans' map] is done, Dr. Mitchell's Map may perhaps be something improv'd from it." (*Degrees of Latitude*, p. 174)

The first edition of Evans' map was engraved by James Turner and published in Philadelphia in 1755. It was accompanied by Evans' *Analysis of a General Map of the Middle British Colonies*, an essay describing the map's sources and explaining its geopolitical significance. The map's importance, and the rarity of the Philadelphia edition, soon led to its being copied and reissued in London many times by the end of the 18th century.

The present example was published by John Bowles in London. There are 4 states of the map, which can be identified as follows:

- 1760 ca: No engraved frame around title
- 1765 ca: Title now framed with a decorative cartouche. John Bowles imprint
- 1771: Carrington Bowles imprint, with a date of January 1, 1771.
- 1774 ca: Canada appears in large letters, spanning 16 inches across the map in a diagonal



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orientation.

Detailed Condition:

Minor restoration at top right corner. Color is faded.