



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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### **The Coast, Rivers and Inlets of the Province of Georgia, Surveyed by Joseph Avery and others. Published by Command of Government by J.F.W. Des Barres 1st Feby. 1780.**

**Stock#:** 64355mp2  
**Map Maker:** Des Barres  
**Date:** 1780  
**Place:** London  
**Color:**  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 29.4 x 23.2 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



#### **Description:**

#### ***Revolutionary War Era Survey of the Georgia Coast Distributed To British Naval Officers***

Finely executed sea chart of the Southern Coast of North America centered on the Savannah River, based in part on the work of Georgia Colonial surveyor James Avery, covering the area from Hilton Head and Port Royal, South Carolina to St. Catherine's Island Georgia.

This is one of a group of sea charts which was specifically distributed to British Naval Officers in connection with the American Revolutionary War. The map provides an exceptional view of the coastline, along with a remarkably detailed treatment of the interior regions shown, including a number of early roads and small settlements on the creeks and tributaries south of Savannah. The soundings around the Savannah River are shown, employing a technique of topographical relief making it useful for military purposes.

The chart was published shortly after the Siege of Savannah, in 1779. The year before, the city of Savannah, Georgia, had been captured by a British expeditionary corps under Lieutenant-Colonel Archibald Campbell. The siege itself consisted of a joint Franco-American attempt to retake Savannah, from September 16 to October 18, 1779. With the failure of the joint attack, the siege was abandoned, and the British remained in control of Savannah until July 1782, near the end of the war.

#### **Joseph Avery**



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Joseph Avery was a public surveyor active in Georgia from 1742 to 1744. In 1741, while resident in South Carolina, he was retained by the Trustees of the newly formed Georgia Colony to create "a new Map of the North Part of Georgia," which he completed by early 1742, covering the area from Port Royal to St. Catherine's Inlet, the same region covered by Des Barres chart. Avery travelled to England to present the map to the Trustees, who were favorably impressed, commissioning him as public surveyor of the province of Georgia, with instructions to conduct a general survey of the rest of the province, work that he pursued until his death in 1744. Avery's maps were not published until the Revolution, when they were finally utilized by Des Barres for this chart.

#### **Joseph Frederick Wallet Des Barres**

Joseph Frederick Wallet Des Barres was born in Switzerland, where his Huguenot ancestors had fled following the repeal of the Edict of Nantes. He studied under the great mathematician Daniel Bernoulli at the University of Basel, before immigrating to Britain where he trained at the Royal Military College, Woolwich. Upon the outbreak of hostilities with France in 1756, he joined the British Royal American Regiment as a military engineer. He came to the attention of General James Wolfe, who appointed him to join his personal detail. During this period he also worked with the legendary future explorer James Cook on a monumental chart of the St. Lawrence River.

Upon the conclusion of the Seven Years War, Britain's empire in North America was greatly expanded, and this required the creation of a master atlas featuring new and accurate sea charts for use by the Royal Navy. Des Barres was enlisted to survey the coastlines of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. With these extremely accurate surveys in hand, Des Barres returned to London in 1774, where the Royal Navy charged him with the Herculean task of producing the atlas. He was gradually forwarded the manuscripts of numerous advanced surveys conducted by British cartographers in the American Colonies, Jamaica and Cuba, of which the present map is based on the work of Samuel Holland, conducted in the 1760s. The result was *The Atlantic Neptune*, which became the most celebrated sea atlas of its era, containing the first systematic survey of the east coast of North America. Des Barres's synergy of great empirical accuracy with the peerless artistic virtue of his aquatint views, created a work that "has been described as the most splendid collection of charts, plates and views ever published" (National Maritime Museum Catalogue).

The *Neptune* eventually consisted of four volumes and Des Barres's dedication to the project was so strong that often at his own expense he continually updated and added new charts and views to various editions up until 1784, producing over 250 charts and views, many appearing in several variations. All of these charts were immensely detailed, featuring both hydrographical and topographical information, such that



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in many cases they remained the most authoritative maps of the regions covered for several decades. Following the completion of The Neptune, Des Barres returned to Canada, where he remained for a further forty years, becoming a senior political figure and a wealthy land owner, living to the advanced age of 103.

**Rarity**

The map is rare on the market. We note 2 examples offered at auction since 2000 and no appearances in dealer catalogs listed by AMPR in the past 30 years.

**Detailed Condition:**

Strong modern color. Restored at lower right and left corners, just touching the neatlines.