



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
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**[Popple Key Sheet] A Map of the British Empire in America with the French and Spanish Settlements adjacent thereto by Hen. Popple.**

**Stock#:** 92501  
**Map Maker:** Popple  
**Date:** 1733 circa  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 19.5 x 20 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***Key Sheet To Popple Landmark 20-Sheet Map of North America***

Fine example of Henry Popple's Key Sheet, which was sold separately and bound in with his 20 sheet map of North America, one of two most important general maps of North America issued during the 18th Century.

Henry Popple worked with the Board of Trade & Plantations in 1727, during a period when boundary disputes in the colonies began to accelerate the need for detailed maps. In 1730, the Board began requesting detailed maps of the entirety of the provinces and contiguous French and Spanish Dominions. Popple issued an announcement for the map in 1731, but did not complete work until 1733. The map was not a commercial success and did not sell well until after William Henry Toms and Samuel Harding took over publication in 1739. With the outbreak of the War of Jenkin's Ear, the map saw its commercial successes soar. In 1746, the rights to the map passed to Wildey and Austen, who published it until Austen's death in 1750.

As noted by Barbara McCorckle in *America Emergent*,



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*Little is known of Henry Popple except that he came from a family whose members had served the Board of Trade and Plantations for three generations, a connection that must have been a factor in his undertaking the map, his only known cartographic work" (McCorkle 21.)*

Popple's 20-sheet map is the first large scale printed map to show the thirteen colonies. Nearly 8 feet square, when joined, the map shows the extent of the British, French, and Spanish colonial possessions. The information on the map was based on Popple's work at the Board of Trade and Plantations in London. Popple's map was widely copied by other cartographers and remained the standard map of North America for several decades. The map was issued both as a wall map and as an Atlas, with the present example including advertising for the various formats in the lower margin of sheet 17, including pricing of the various formats.

Popple produced this map under the auspices of the Lord Commissioners of Trade and Plantations to help settle disputes arising from the rival expansion of English, Spanish and French colonies. At the time of its publication, "France claimed not only Canada, but also territories drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries - in practical terms, an area of half a continent" (Goss *The Mapping Of North America* p.122.) .

Popple's map was also the first English map to name all the original thirteen colonies and one of the first maps to show Georgia. The new Colony of Georgia was chartered in London in July 1732, but developed only in early 1733, with the landing of James Edward Oglethorpe and his small party of 120 colonials. Oglethorpe returned to England in 1734 and met with the King on July 20, 1734, showing him "several charts and Curious Drawings relating to the new Settlement of Georgia". The same charts and maps must have been almost immediately made available to Popple by Oglethorpe, as Popple immediately incorporated this new information into a corrective paste-down mounted on Sheet 10 in State 3 of the map. The new information regarding Georgia was then engraved onto the map in State 4 published in late 1734 [Babinski, note 12, 13]. The new Colony of Georgia was considered by the British as an attempt to create an important protective buffer between the more densely populated English Colonies in the north and the Spanish in Florida.

Popple's map was intended among other things, to provide a large format and up to date map of the region in order to better understand and demarcate the rival claims. It was also an object of material culture in Colonial America. As noted by Bruckner in *The Geographic Revolution in Early America*. . .

*British Americans frequently imported imperial maps during the eighteenth century.  
Decorative wall maps showing British possessions in North America were favorite articles,*



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*purchased primarily by the colonial elite. Strategically displayed in formal settings of the home or provincial office, these maps painted bombastic scenes of territorial conquest and signified the range of the British Empire. For example, maps like Henry Popple's Map of the British Empire in America (1733) reached American audiences upon special orders by the Board of Trade and Plantations, and colonial politicians like Benjamin Franklin eagerly requested Popple's map for public display.*

In short, it is the most important map of the Colonies to date and an essential map for collectors.

#### **States of the Key Map:**

- State 1: No imprint below the neatline
- State 2: Harding imprint added
- State 3: Place-names added
- State 4: Track of Spanish Galleons
- State 5: Austen imprint
- State 6: Dedicated to King State
- 7: Steel imprint State
- 8: Title: NORTH AMERICA State
- 9: Steel imprint removed

#### **Detailed Condition:**