



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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### **A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark; with the Contiguous Buildings; From an actual Survey, taken by John Rocque, Land-Surveyor, and Engraved by John Pine, \_ Bluemantle Pursuivant at Arms, and Chief Engraver of Seals, &c. To His Majesty.**

**Stock#:** 94372  
**Map Maker:** Rocque / Pine  
  
**Date:** 1746 (circa 1749)  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 150 x 80 inches (if joined)  
  
**Price:** SOLD



#### **Description:**

#### ***The Grandest of All London Maps***

John Rocque's 1746 *Map of London, Westminster, and Southwark*, commonly referred to as the 24-sheet map, represents a monumental achievement in the field of cartography. This mammoth plan, officially titled *A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, and Borough of Southwark*, is an intricately detailed depiction of Georgian London. It was conceived as a response to the city's rapid expansion since the last significant map by John Ogilby and William Morgan, published in 1676, following the Great Fire of London. The map was surveyed by Rocque himself and engraved by John Pine, measuring a substantial 12.6 by 6.6 feet. The creation of this masterpiece took almost a decade and is lauded as "a magnificent example of cartography" and "one of the greatest and most handsome plans of any city."

The coverage of Rocque's map is both expansive and meticulous, extending from Knightsbridge and the Serpentine in the west to just shy of Canary Wharf in the east. This range encapsulates the very heart of London, taking in the bustle of the City and the elegance of the West End. In the south, the map reaches down to Elephant and Castle, including what are today the vibrant, multicultural communities of South London. To the north, the map stretches up to the districts of Marylebone and Clerkenwell, taking in the grand townhouses, tranquil garden squares, and the burgeoning commercial and industrial establishments of the time. This geographical span underscores the map's value as a comprehensive representation of mid-eighteenth-century London, showcasing both the wealth and breadth of the city's urban landscape.

#### **Surveying the Map**



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Rocque's method of surveying for this map combined two techniques: ground-level surveying with a compass and metal chain for measuring lengths, and triangulation via readings from prominent high points, such as church towers, using a telescopic-sighted theodolite made by Jonathan Sisson. This approach required careful reconciliation between the two techniques, as there were discrepancies between the more accurate triangulation and the initial ground surveys.

The map is not only notable for its impressive scale but also for its attention to detail. In certain areas, it even includes internal details for some buildings, such as St Paul's Cathedral, and in less populated areas, gardens are evocatively depicted. However, this detail varies across different parts of London - in the inner city, there was insufficient space to include minor roadways. Churches, grand buildings, and streets receive the most attention, while industrial buildings are less thoroughly represented.

#### **Publication of the Map**

The publication of this map was a significant undertaking, supported through a subscription model, with each subscriber paying an initial deposit of one guinea and a further two guineas upon receiving the map. The project faced considerable challenges, including the need to repeat much of the initial surveying work due to discrepancies between Rocque's ground-level surveys and his larger-scale triangulation data. Nonetheless, the endeavor was salvaged through the financial backing of the City of London's Court of Aldermen and the patronage of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who would later appoint Rocque as the royal cartographer. Pine's social connections played a vital role in securing the endorsement of the Corporation of London in 1739 for their project. The finished map bore a dedication to the then Lord Mayor, Sir Richard Hoare, and listed the Aldermen by name.

Interestingly, despite Rocque's significant contribution to the project, his name does not feature prominently on the map. Instead, the names of John Pine, the engraver, and John Tinney, the publisher, occupy the most noticeable space. It has been suggested that this might be due to Rocque's strained financial resources, which necessitated Tinney's backing to ensure publication. Despite this, the map is fittingly recognized as Rocque's work, attesting to his instrumental role in its creation.

The map was sometimes accompanied by an 'Alphabetical Index of the Streets, Squares, Lanes, Alleys etc contained in the Plan... with references for the easy finding of the said places,' underscoring its functional intent. The full 24-sheet version was available for three guineas, while an 8-sheet edition cost one guinea, and a single-sheet copy was priced at 5 shillings.



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The map, available to the general public by 1747, presented a detailed survey of London and its neighboring villages on a scale of 26 inches to the mile. It was a practical tool, indeed, but also a sociocultural document, capturing a vivid picture of the capital in the mid-18th century. It is hailed as 'a magnificent source for London social history' for providing invaluable insight into the life and geography of London during Rocque's time.

#### **Conclusion**

Rocque's map holds historical significance not only because it filled an immediate need for an updated tool to navigate a rapidly expanding city but also because it offers a timeless snapshot of a moment in London's history. Although modern mapping techniques have since evolved, Rocque's work maintains its charm, continuing to inform and fascinate those interested in London's past.

Ultimately, Rocque's 24-sheet map of London stands as a defining piece of his career. It showcases his masterful abilities as a surveyor and his dedication to his craft, while providing a crucial understanding of London during the 18th century. Today, this map continues to be an invaluable resource for historians, urban planners, and anyone with an interest in the evolution of one of the world's greatest cities.

For an exceptionally detailed treatment of the Rocque map, neighborhood by neighborhood, see Andrew Davies's work cited below.

#### **States**

Howgego 96 indicates 4 states of the map, however, private research has found 7 or more.

This is the true 2nd state of 7: "sheet A2 (the western part of Mayfair) has been re-engraved, inserting 'Chesterfield | House' [4c], but Hill Street and John Street are not yet present. This sheet may represent an intermediate proof."

Howgego records a single institutional example this state.

#### **Detailed Condition:**

Engraving on 24 sheets of 18th-century laid paper, joined as four large vertical columns (i.e., six sheets to a column). Each sheet cut to the image on all sides (as almost always the case) with margins extended on



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the outside. Likewise, margins extended on the interior such that the whole could be joined as one mammoth sheet. Small reinstated loss near the Burying and Tenter Grounds in Southwark. Small repair to the right side of the title.