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**[ London ] An Exact Survey of the City's of London Westminster ye Borough of Southwark and the Country Near Ten Miles Round Begun In 1741 & Ended in 1745 By John Rocque Land Surveyor & Engrau'd By Richard Parr / A New and Accurate Survey Of the Cities of London and Westminster The Borough of Southwark with The Country about it for nineteen Miles in Length and thirteen in Depth . . .**

**Stock#:** 96431  
**Map Maker:** Rocque  
  
**Date:** 1748  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 102 x 75 inches (if 16 sheets are joined)  
  
**Price:** \$ 29,500.00



**Description:**

***The First of Two Monumental Maps of London and Environs by John Rocque***

John Rocque's 16-sheet map of the area around London, Westminster and the Borough of Southwark represents a triumphant accomplishment in the history of cartography, reflecting an intricate amalgamation of techniques and a wealth of detail that brought the city of London to life in an unparalleled way.

Rocque's 16-sheet map perhaps the finest maps of what is now Greater London published in the 18th Century. Beginning in March of 1737, Rocque would work for nine years to produce the present map of the country ten miles round London on a scale of 5 1/2 inches to the mile covering what is today's Greater London. Rocque would also publish a 24-sheet map of what is today's central London on a even larger scale. However, the area covered by the 24 sheet map, capturing urban London in the 1740s, would quickly be outgrown. As such, the 16-sheet map captures many neighborhoods such Chelsea, Hyde Park, West Brompton, Kensington, Earls Court, Islington, Highbury, Notting Hill, Canary Wharf / Isle of Dogs, Clapham, Fulham, Hammersmith, Sheppard's Bush, Holland Park, Battersea, Putney, Richmond, Brentford, Chiswick, Wimbledon, Hampton Court, etc. appear only on the 16-sheet map.

The 16-sheet map vividly demonstrates vividly the development of London's environs with villages and market gardens outside the nucleus of the cities of London and Westminster, their rural locations and a



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network of roads and tracks - much is part of today's Greater London.

### **Surveying Techniques: A Blend of Innovation and Precision**

Rocque's method of surveying for this map was groundbreaking, employing a fusion of ground-level surveying and triangulation. On the ground, Rocque used a compass and a metal chain to measure lengths meticulously. This method was coupled with a more advanced technique of triangulation from high points like church towers. For this, he utilized a telescopic-sighted theodolite made by Jonathan Sisson, a leading instrument maker of the time.

The marriage of these two techniques was no small feat, requiring careful reconciliation between the highly accurate triangulation and the initial ground surveys. The discrepancies that arose needed to be resolved to produce a coherent and precise map. This combination of innovative methods enabled Rocque to create a representation of London that was both expansive and accurate.

### **The 16-Sheet Map: Details and Significance**

Rocque's 16-sheet map stands as a remarkable achievement in 18th-century cartography. Covering not only the central parts of London but extending for nineteen miles in length and thirteen in depth, the map provides an intricate overview of the city. This comprehensive survey showcases London's grandeur and complexity, capturing everything from the magnificent palaces of St. James's, Kensington, Richmond, and Hampton Court to the winding lanes, rivers, bridges, woods, churches, gardens, and more. The accuracy and depth of detail in the map are remarkable, making it an invaluable resource for historians and enthusiasts alike.

The publication of the map was an event in itself. The depiction of the city and its surroundings were groundbreaking, representing London in a way that had never been done before.

### **London in the Mid-18th Century: A City in Flux**

The map provides a window into London at a transformative period in its history. A growing metropolis, London in the mid-18th century was a city of contrasts, with opulence and poverty existing side by side. Its landscape was marked by both historical grandeur and the bustling activity of commerce and daily life.



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Rocque's map captures this duality, presenting a vivid image of London's streets, buildings, and natural features. It is more than a geographical record; it is a social and cultural document, reflecting the city's character, growth, and dynamism.

#### **Legacy of John Rocque**

John Rocque, a figure of considerable importance in the history of cartography, left an indelible mark on the mapping of London in the mid-18th century. Born to French Huguenot parents, Rocque's family emigrated to London around 1709, and his life became intertwined with the rapidly evolving urban landscape of England's capital.

Rocque's early life is shrouded in mystery, with little concrete information about his upbringing and education. Despite this, his French background and family connections to engraving laid the foundation for his later career. Rocque was a multifaceted figure, involved in surveying, engraving, mapmaking, and publishing. He began his career with garden designs, working in collaboration with his brother Bartholomew, a landscape gardener, before expanding into the wider field of mapping.

Rocque embarked on the ambitious task of surveying London in 1737, collaborating with John Pine. This colossal undertaking presented numerous challenges, from the financial to the technical. London, with its complex network of roads, lanes, and intricate urban layout, was a challenging subject to capture accurately. The project became strained as the years dragged on, and Rocque found himself in financial difficulties.

However, his perseverance paid off, and the final work was an impressive 16-sheet map, capturing London and the surrounding area with extraordinary detail. Bound as an atlas, the map presented a comprehensive view of the metropolis, including depictions of palaces, roads, rivers, bridges, hills, valleys, woods, churches, gardens, and more. This work and his 24-sheet plan of London solidified his status in the pantheon of London mapmakers.

#### **Conclusion**

John Rocque's 16-sheet map is not just a historical artifact but a work of art that tells the story of London and environs in the mid-18th century. It reflects an extraordinary blend of innovative surveying techniques, careful craftsmanship, and artistic vision. From the precise measurements achieved through



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triangulation and ground-level surveying to the evocative depiction of gardens and grand edifices, the map encapsulates the essence of London in its time.

Its publication marked a new era in cartography and offers an enduring legacy. For anyone seeking to understand the city's landscape, architecture, and spirit during a pivotal era, these maps stand as a testament to the blend of science and art that defines map-making at its best. The map remains a fascinating and valuable resource, a tribute to a city's complexity and the timeless pursuit of capturing it in all its nuance and grandeur.

**Detailed Condition:**