



"A MAP OF THE ISLE OF CUBA ... WINDWARD PASSAGE," 1762, 19 X 13.25 IN. ENGRAVING.

## CUBA · IN · OLD · MAPS

In most narratives, the plot is usually played out by several characters around the protagonist. The story of Cuban colonial maps is no different. The principal character is, of course, the island itself, one of Florida's closest neighbors at the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico. The supporting cast includes: a persuasive visionary from Italy, a Valencian Pope, a centralizing and secretive Spanish Crown, ambitious nations facing the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf Stream, assorted pirates and buccaners, Mars and Mercury, and a long and distinguished roster of explorers, surveyors, draftsmen, printmakers and publishers. They all will come to life in these pages.

This catalog, mirroring the exhibition which it accompanies, is divided into three main sections (Cuba as a whole, Havana and the rest of the island) and follows the development of relevant maps in each of those groups from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. A small fourth section illustrates some "thematic" maps. Throughout this work, special emphasis is paid to the so-called "interior" of Cuba, which is often unfairly neglected in many studies and publications.