



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
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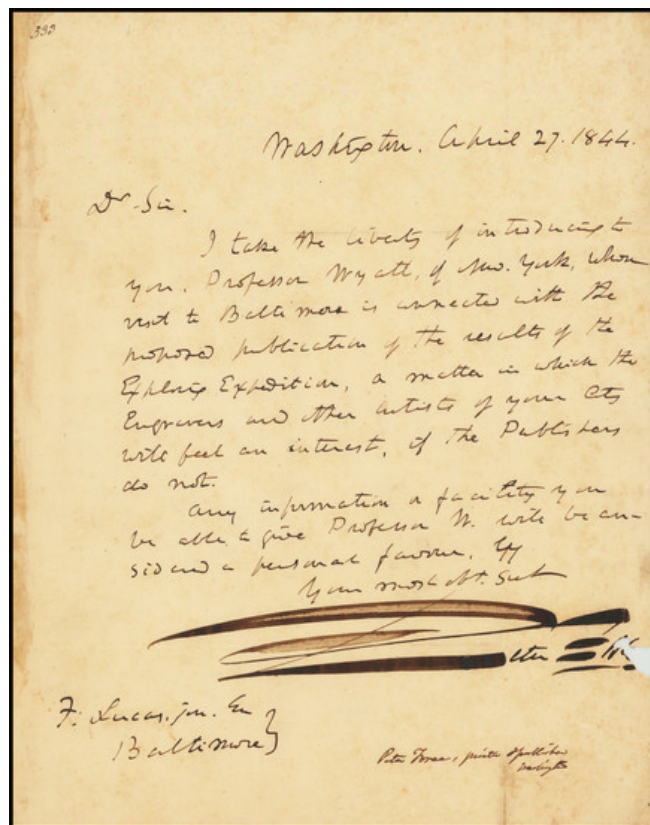
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**Peter Force letter to Fielding Lucas regarding publication of Exploring Expedition**

**Stock#:** 66855  
**Map Maker:** Force

**Date:** 1844 (April 27)  
**Place:** Washington, D.C.  
**Color:** Pen & Ink  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 8 x 10 inches

**Price:** \$ 650.00



**Description:**

Letter of introduction from Peter Force to Fielding Lucas Jr., concerning the prospective publication of the Reports of the United States Exploring Expedition (Wilkes Expedition).

Force had previously published a short summary of Charles Wilkes' 5 year expedition entitled *Synopsis of the cruise of the U.S. Exploring Expedition, during the years 1838, '39, '40, '41 & '42*, in 1842, and had been actively involved in other elements of promoting the expedition since at least 1838.

The letter introduces Lucas to Professor Wyatt, who at the time was apparently involved in seeking a publisher for the U. S. Ex. Ex. report, which would be published for the first time by in Philadelphia by C. Sherman in 1844.

Professor Wyatt would almost certainly be Thomas Wyatt, who at the time was publishing works on Conchology, Natural History and other subjects, between 1838 and 1854. Wyatt is probably best remembered as a friend of Edgar Allan Poe. Poe had re-written Wyatt's first book *Manual of Conchology*,



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and published it under the title *The Conchologist's First Book* (1839, 1840 and 1845), for which Wyatt paid Poe \$50.00. Thomas Wyatt was the inspiration for the character Cornelius Wyatt in Poe's short story, the *Oblong Box*, first published in 1844, about a sea voyage and a mysterious box.

**Letter Transcription**

*Washington April 27, 1844*

*Dear Sir,*

*I take the liberty of introducing to you Professor Wyatt of New York, whose visit to Baltimore is connects with the proposed publication of the results of the Exploring Expedition, a matter in which the Engravers and other artists in your City ??? feel an interest, if the Publishers do not.*

*Any information or facility you be able to give Professor W. will be considered a personal favor. YT.*

*Your most obt. Svt.*

*Peter Force, printer & publisher Washington*

**Peter Force**

Peter Force was an American politician, newspaper editor, printer, archivist, and early American historian. Force served 2 terms as Mayor of Washington D.C.

During his lifetime he amassed an invaluable and vast collection of books, manuscripts, original maps and other archival material from statesmen, and American and British military officers of the American Revolution. Force is best known for editing and publishing a massive collection of historical documents, books and maps in several volumes involving the American colonies and the American Revolution which was ultimately purchased by the Library of Congress.

Force founded a political journal and other publications and was president of the National Institute for Promotion of Science and the Typographical Society which was largely charged with the task of communicating political affairs to the general public. Force served on the committee that approved the Geographical Department for the Library of Congress. During the Civil War, Force was sent to Europe by



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the Lincoln Administration to stabilize diplomatic relations with France and England.

Force was also elected a member of the American Antiquarian Society in 1851.

**Fielding Lucas Jr.**

Fielding Lucas Jr. (1781-1854) was a mapmaker and publisher, artist and a publisher of prominence during the early 19th century. He is known as the earliest successful commercial map-publisher in the city of Baltimore. The first of his atlases was published in 1815-17. His maps also formed the basis for Carey & Lea's Atlases between 1822 and 1829.

**Detailed Condition:**