



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

The Discoveries of the Expedition under the Command of Capt. Franklin R.N. near the Mouth of the Mackenzie River, and on the Sea Coast East & West A.D. 1825-6

Stock#: 72681
Map Maker: Franklin
Date: 1828
Place: London
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 50.5 x 27.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Franklin's Second Overland Expedition, Before he Disappeared in the Arctic—The First Detailed Map of the Arctic Coastline

Fine chart showing the discoveries of Sir John Franklin from his *Narrative of a Second Expedition to the Shores of the Polar Sea, 1825, 1826, and 1827*. This was Franklin's second overland expedition and his last visit to the Arctic until his infamous lost expedition of 1845.

This was the first map to show this area in any significant detail. It was published by John Murray, who specialized in voyage narratives and accounts, especially those of the Royal Navy's Arctic expeditions.

The map extends from Wollaston Land and Dolphin and Union Strait in the east to just beyond Camden Bay in the west. It tracks the route of the Mackenzie River from Great Bear Lake to the Arctic Sea.

The map is full of rich detail about ice flows, mountains, and shorelines. The survey information that underlies this map was the result of the work of many of the crew members who traveled with Franklin, most notably Dr. John Richardson, Lieutenant George Back, and Edward Nicholas Kendall. In addition, there is significant input from Indigenous informants and guides, such as those mentioned in a note at Esquimaux Lake.

Previous voyages also provided important information for this map. Franklin mentions near the Coppermine River that, "The unshaded parts have been taken from the Map of the former Expedition." This is a reference to Franklin's first overland expedition of 1819-22.

Additionally, an important source for this map is the account written by Alexander Mackenzie, published



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in 1801. Mackenzie is best known for having completed the first east-to-west crossing of North America north of Mexico in 1793. Prior to this, however, Mackenzie led an exploratory expedition to the Arctic Ocean on behalf of the North West Company. In 1789, he set out from Lake Athabasca and eventually traced the route of the waterway that First Nations peoples called Dehcho. Today it is known as the Mackenzie River and is the second longest river in North America.

Franklin's first overland expedition

Franklin was a career naval officer who participated in the Battle of Trafalgar at the age of 21. Most of his career was spent in Arctic exploration, however; Franklin participated in three Arctic expeditions before his fateful final foray. First, he served in the *Dorothea*, under Captain Buchan, and then was put in command of the *Trent* while they tried to reach the North Pole.

In 1819, Second Secretary of the Admiralty John Barrow organized two Arctic forays. The first, commanded by William Edward Parry, sought the entrance to the Northwest Passage in Lancaster Sound. The second, under John Franklin, sought the elusive northern coast of Canada, which had only been sighted twice before, by Samuel Hearne (1771) and Alexander Mackenzie (1789). The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and the North West Company (NWC) were supposed to ferry Franklin and his men to Hudson's Bay and to fit him out for an overland expedition.

Franklin arrived in the bay on the HBC supply ship *Prince of Wales*. In his company were George Back, midshipman, and John Richardson, naturalist. During the winter, they journeyed up the HBC's trading routes to Fort Chipewyan, in what is now Alberta. However, there they realized that the companies could not outfit them adequately, and that their route would take them far from the companies' usual supply routes. The group made it to Fort Providence on the Great Slave Lake and then, with Akaitcho, a Copper chief, they set out along the Yellowknife River before wintering at Fort Enterprise.

This second winter proved difficult and they were saved when Back snowshoed to Fort Chipewyan for supplies. In June 1821, the men traveled north, down the Coppermine River, and reached the sea on July 18. Franklin's party then explored the coast east of the river in canoes. Difficult conditions and the short exploration season left the men undersupplied and far from help. After one of the canoes was damaged irreparably, the men had to set out overland for Fort Enterprise. En route, the men starved and suffered extreme exposure. Nine men perished and one of the survivors, Michel, was accused of cannibalism. Michel then shot Robert Hood, the surgeon; in retaliation, Richardson executed Michel.

When they staggered into Fort Enterprise, it was to find a fortification devoid of supplies. Three weeks later, a group of First Nations peoples arrived and conveyed them to Fort Providence. In total, eleven of



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the twenty men had died. The group spent one more winter in the frozen northlands before returning to England.

Somewhat surprisingly, Franklin was celebrated as a hero. He described their terrible experiences, while downplaying the cannibalism, in his popular account, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea, in the Years 1819, 20, 21, and 22* (1823). While revered publicly, company officials with whom he interacted complained about his conduct. Regardless, the Royal Navy was pleased with his reports and observations; they promoted him to commander in his absence and made post captain upon his return. He was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Most significantly, he was ordered to prepare for another Arctic overland expedition.

Franklin's second overland expedition

Franklin certainly learned from the privation and provisioning issues of the first expedition. This second mission was to be supplied by the Royal Navy. An advance party was sent with foodstuffs and materials, followed by Franklin and his crew, which again included Richardson and Back.

In June of 1825 the men arrived at Cumberland House and set up Fort Franklin as winter headquarters on the shores of the Great Bear Lake. The next June, they set off in four boats on the Mackenzie River. At Point Separation, the expedition split. Franklin and Back went west and, when faced with winter, turned back to winter again at Fort Franklin. He just missed a rendezvous with the HMS *Blossom*. Meanwhile, Richardson and Edward Nicholas Kendall set out east. They surveyed to the Coppermine River and also returned to Fort Franklin to winter, arriving three weeks before Franklin.

After a second comfortable wintering, the entire expedition returned to Liverpool. This voyage was much more successful in terms of geographic knowledge, having charted a significant portion of the Arctic coastline. Franklin lay out the geological, meteorological, and geographical findings in his second book, *Narrative of a Second Expedition to the Shores of the Polar Sea, 1825, 1826, and 1827* (1828).

In the wake of the two overland expeditions, Franklin was knighted in 1829. The *Société de Géographie de Paris* awarded him a gold medal and Oxford granted him an honorary DCL. He commanded the HMS *Rainbow* in the Mediterranean during the Greek War of Independence and later served as the Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land. In 1844 he returned to England to plan what would be his final, and most famous, Arctic expedition.

Detailed Condition: