



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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### General Chart shewing the track of H.M. Ships Fury and Hecla, on a Voyage for the Discovery of a North West Passage, A.D. 1821-22-23.

**Stock#:** 76595  
**Map Maker:** Parry  
**Date:** 1824  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 23.5 x 10 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



#### Description:

#### *Parry's Search for the Northwest Passage*

Fine general chart illustrating the discoveries made during William Edward Parry's first two voyages in search of a Northwest Passage.

Parry was the first commander to lead an expedition into the Arctic Archipelago and to deliberately winter above the Arctic Circle. His findings in the Barrow Strait and the North Georgia Islands would eventually contribute greatly to the discovery of the Northwest Passage in the mid-nineteenth century.

The map shows Parry's route from the north of Scotland across the Atlantic and into Hudson's Bay (second expedition, 1821-23), with further explorations in the Arctic as far west as Melville Peninsula (first expedition, 1819-20).

The map itself extends all the way across Canada and Alaska to include the Bering Strait, but detail is confined only to those areas actually known with vast areas and coastlines left with tentative coastlines or blank.

Other areas of detail come from other expeditions. The Back River, Yellowknife River, and Coppermine River areas benefited from information from John Franklin's first overland expedition, which happened contiguously with Parry's first Arctic voyage.

Less-recent expeditions also contributed to the map's geography. Samuel Hearne was the first European to encounter the Arctic Ocean and to walk from Hudson's Bay to the Arctic Ocean. From 1770 to 1772, Hearne, with his guide, the Chipewyan leader Mantonabee, surveyed the Coppermine River. While he did not find much of economic use for his employer, the Hudson's Bay Company, he did prove that a



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Northwest Passage would have to lie farther to the north or west to be viable.

Another important contribution came from Alexander Mackenzie. Mackenzie is the first known person to cross North America from east to west north of Mexico; he accomplished this in 1792-3, a dozen years before the more famous Lewis and Clark. However, his presence is noted most clearly on this map with the Mackenzie River, which leads to the Arctic Ocean. In 1788, while working for the North West Company, Mackenzie co-founded Fort Chipewyan and then traveled northwest, eventually reaching the Arctic Ocean in July 1789.

#### **John Franklin's first overland expedition**

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 Hearne (1771) and Mackenzie (1789).

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 an Arctic expedition before this latest journey; he had served in the *Dorothea*, under Captain Buchan, and then was put in command of the *Trent* while they tried to reach the North Pole.

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.



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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 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 him 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, which he conducted from 1825-7 (not shown on this map). His later voyage, which set off in 1845, was lost and became the focal point for a huge search that eventually led to the discovery of the Northwest Passage.

#### **William Edward Parry's Arctic voyages**

##### ***First expedition***

The other expedition that set off in 1819 was commanded by William Edward Parry. Parry entered the Navy as a twelve-year-old in 1803; he was made lieutenant at nineteen. Parry served in the English Channel, the Baltic, Spitsbergen, and at the North American station during the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812. He had considerable skill in hydrography and navigation; he made charts of the Shetland Islands and wrote a nautical astronomy manual that circulated in manuscript and later in print.

In 1817, Parry asked for and was granted a position with the two Arctic expeditions then departing. Franklin served with Buchan, while Parry commanded the *Alexander*, which was to accompany John Ross on his attempt at the Passage through the Davis Strait and Baffin Bay. While on this voyage, Parry became convinced that there was a passage via Lancaster Sound.

The Admiralty quickly organized a voyage for Parry to follow his hunch. They placed him in command of the *Hecla* and the *Griper*, which sailed on May 4, 1819. They sailed to Lancaster Sound and pushed into the Barrow Strait to what Parry called the North Georgia Islands (now the Parry Islands). On September 4, Parry crossed 110°W, near Melville Island, which qualified for the £5,000 prize offered by the Admiralty.

He and his crews wintered on Melville Island, proving it was possible to do so deliberately above the Arctic Circle. They tried to continue westward in the summer of 1820, but had to turn back after sighting



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Banks Island. Upon returning to London, Parry was celebrated as a skilled explorer, promoted to the rank of Commander, and unanimously elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

#### ***Second expedition***

Eager to strike while the iron was hot (or, in this case, very, very cold), the Admiralty ordered Parry on another expedition almost immediately. He would again command the *Hecla*, which would sail with the *Fury*. This time, Parry was to sail for Hudson's Strait and seek a passage between Baffin Island and the Ungava Peninsula. He was repulsed by Repulse Bay and then headed north, up the Melville Peninsula.

They wintered near Winter Island, where they were trapped in the ice for nine months. In an effort to keep busy, the crews staged plays as the Royal Arctic Theatre, taught each other to read and write, and set up an observatory.

In July 1822, the ships sought open water to the west via the *Hecla* and *Fury* Strait. It was still iced in, so they had to explore on foot. They passed another Arctic winter near Igloolik Island. In the spring of 1823, the ships had to turn back, arriving in the Thames in October 1823.

#### ***Third voyage and later service***

Parry was again praised, gaining the appointment of acting hydrographer to the Admiralty and ordered on another Arctic voyage. This one was to probe Lancaster Sound and sail down the Prince Regent Inlet, but they met with only ice. The following season, the *Fury* was damaged while attempting to enter the inlet. Parry decided to abandon the ship and return to England.

Parry would lead one further expedition, this one an attempt on the North Pole, with James Clark Ross. Although they fell short of their goal, the *Hecla* did reach the farthest north to date, 82.45°N.

Parry served as the Royal Navy's hydrographer until 1829, when he took up a position with the Australian Agricultural Company. After a four-year term, he returned to England to find no position in the Royal Navy for him. He took up the post of poor-law commissioner for Norfolk instead. In 1836, the Royal Navy asked him back to reorganize the Home Packet Service, which he delivered in only three months. He was then placed in charge of the Royal Navy's adoption of steam machinery. In failing health, he then took the post of captain superintendent of the Royal Clarence Victualling Yard and Haslar Hospital in Gosport.

In 1852, Parry was promoted rear-admiral and retired, but came out of retirement to serve as lieutenant governor of Greenwich Hospital. However, he was already ill and traveled to Ems, Germany for treatment.



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He died there in July 1809 and was later interred at Greenwich Hospital.

**Detailed Condition:**