



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## (Arctic) Septentrionalium Terrarum descriptio

**Stock#:** 86020  
**Map Maker:** Cloppenburg  
**Date:** 1632  
**Place:** Amsterdam  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 10 x 7.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### *With The Mythical Island of Friesland*

Striking example of Cloppenburg's reduced size edition of Mercator's map of the North Polar regions, the first separate map of the North Polar Regions.

Gerard Mercator was the first cartographer to create a polar projection of the earth. This map, the first separate map devoted to the Arctic regions, is drawn from an inset on Mercator's world map of 1569. The map is extended to 60 degrees, to incorporate the recent explorations in search of the North West and North East Passages by Frobisher and Davis.

El Streto de Anian is clearly shown. The pole itself is made up of four surrounding islands, which myth had it were separated by four strong flowing rivers. These carried the oceans of the world towards a giant whirlpool at the pole where there stood a large rock. An account of this myth in Mercator's own hand still exists.

The map is framed by four medallions and a handsome floral border. Three of the medallions contain inset maps of the Faeroe Isles, the Shetland Isles, and the mythical island of Frisland.

### Frisland

Frisland, also called Frischlant, Friesland, Frislanda, Frislandia, or Fixland, is a phantom island that appeared on virtually all of the maps of the North Atlantic from the 1560s through the 1660s.



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Frisland appears to have been born out of confusion between an imaginary island and the actual southern part of Greenland. Frisland originally may also have been an cartographic approximation of Iceland, but in 1558 the influential Zeno map charted the landmass as an entirely separate island south (or occasionally south-west) of Iceland. After this incorrect charting, the phantom island appeared that way on maps for the next 100 years.

Frisland's existence was given currency in manuscript maps of the 1560s by the Maggiolo family of Genoa, and the island was accepted and reproduced by cartographers Gerard Mercator and Jodocus Hondius. Some early maps by Willem Blaeu, such as his 1617 map of Europe, omit it, but it reappeared on his 1630 world map as one of many islands shown off the eastern coast of Labrador, which was then believed to extend to within a few hundred miles of Scotland. It also appeared on a 1652 world map by Visscher, largely copied from that of Blaeu. The 1693 Vincenzo Coronelli map places it close to Greenland.[1] Frederick J.

Pohl identified Frisland with an island he referred to as "Fer Island", modern English Fair Isle, an island lying between mainland Shetland and the Orkney islands in his book arguing the case that Henry I Sinclair, Earl of Orkney visited North America. Even in the mid-18th century, explorers' maps clearly depicted Frisland as separated from Greenland by a wide strait.

The myth of Frisland was gradually dispensed with as explorers, chiefly from England and France, charted and mapped the waters of the North Atlantic.

### **Detailed Condition:**