



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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North America British Possessions

Stock#: 48554
Map Maker: Lizars
Date: 1842
Place: Edinburgh
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 21.5 x 17 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Far North of North America

Fine example of Lizars's map of Canada, Alaska and the Polar Regions, made in a period of intense Arctic exploration.

The map includes the Pacific Northwest of the United States, the Rocky Mountains, Russian Alaska, and all of Canada. Greenland is shown connected to Canada via Baffin Bay. Coastlines in the far north are unfinished, as those areas remained little or unexplored by Europeans.

The emphasis of the map is on the search for the Northwest Passage, either overland via river or in the open ocean via an Arctic seagoing route. The forts of the Hudson's Bay Company dot James and Hudson's Bays, and the area to the west is filled with rivers and lakes explored by Company employees, scouted by fur traders, or reported upon by Native informants. The names of various First Nations groups are included.

One of the expeditions chronicled here is that of 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.



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To the north, recent open-ocean voyages and overland missions led by the Royal Navy have added to the place names and geography. These included that of John Ross, who made it to Baffin Bay and Lancaster Sound. Ross thought the Sound only an inlet, and went no further. He was followed by a voyage led by Edward Parry, who had been with Ross, in 1819. Parry wintered at Melville Island, gaining him an Admiralty prize for passing the 110th meridian west. On his second voyage, 1821-23, he probed the far north reaches of Hudson's Bay. On his third voyage, of 1824-25, he searched for the Northwest Passage in the Prince Regent Inlet. Ross also returned to the Arctic, but neither man located the passage.

John Franklin led overland expeditions in 1819-1822 and 1825-27. While the first voyage was marked by privation, the second saw Franklin and his men chart over 1,000 miles of Arctic coastline. Other overland expeditions also made contributions, such as those of George Back (1833-35) and Peter Dease and Thomas Simpson (1837-9). Just after this map was published, in 1845, Franklin would set out on his largest, and last, Arctic mission. His ships would be lost, sailing into infamy and inspiring many search parties who eventually mapped the Northwest Passage.

The treatment of Western Territory (Oregon Territory) is quite nice topographically. It correctly places the Fraser River and the Columbia, and shows a credible course of the Missouri River and tributaries. However, a supposed river from San Francisco to the Great Salt Lake remains. Interestingly, it shows the "54-40 or Fight" border.

This is an excellent regional map with rich detail for the period.

Detailed Condition: