



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

**Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst;
Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded
by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross &
Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the
Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in
Search of John Franklin.**

Stock#: 85614
Map Maker: Arrowsmith
Date: 1853
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 31 x 18 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A Cartographic Landmark Announcing The Discovery of The Northwest Passage —The Most Detailed Early Map to Show the Arctic Waterway

Chronicling nearly thirty Arctic explorers, Arrowsmith's fine and very rare map is the first comprehensive map of the Northwest Passage, and one of the first maps to show the route at all.

Published only weeks after news of the discovery reached England in the Autumn of 1853, Arrowsmith's map shows the meeting of Captain Kellett and Captain McClure in 1853, at which time McClure informed Kellett that he and some of his crew had sledged from Banks Island to Melville Island the previous winter. This sledge trip completed the final thirty miles of the Northwest Passage by reaching the westernmost spot reached by Edward Parry on his 1819-1820 voyage.

As described below, Arrowsmith's map is a remarkable chronicle of the search for the Northwest Passage. The map is exceedingly rare, with only one other known example. It is an excellent example of Arrowsmith's advanced information-gathering network which made him the favored mapmaker of the British exploration establishment in this period.

The map is both a declaration of the latest findings and a meticulous history of the British expeditions to the Arctic in the previous three decades. Many of these were intended to not only find the Northwest



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

Passage, but to locate the lost voyage of John Franklin, who departed England in 1845. These voyages and treks are outlined in a detailed key in the upper left and highlighted with color coding and numbering on the map itself.

Arrowsmith ran a well-respected mapmaking firm, with close official and unofficial ties to the British Admiralty, the Royal Geographical Society, the Hudson's Bay Company, and many prominent individuals including, most likely, Lady Franklin, John Franklin's widow. This position gave him privileged access to the latest documents and news about exploration, allowing him to print geographic discoveries before anyone else.

His prominence is stamped into geography itself. On Prince of Wales Land are the Arrowsmith Plains. This toponym was named in honor of John Arrowsmith by William Kennedy on his expedition funded by Lady Franklin in 1851-2. In his report of the voyage (1853), Kennedy wrote, "...when having attained to 100° W. long., and feeling assured that we had got on an extensive tableland—that which I have named **Arrowsmith Plains**, from the eminent geographer to whom Arctic travellers are so much indebted..." (127).

The topic of the Northwest Passage fascinated the public, creating a captive audience for each new map Arrowsmith could produce. In this map, Arrowsmith has extended the coverage westward to Baring Island, adding a further half sheet as compared to his previous maps to accommodate the considerable amount of new geographic knowledge. The key has been shifted to this new westernmost portion of the chart and expanded to include Rae, Kennedy, Inglefield, McClure, Richardson, Pullen, and Belcher.

The map was made in late-1853, most likely in October, soon after dispatches and some men from the Belcher and McClure expeditions returned to England. They reported on Belcher's officers', Pim and Kellett's, contact with McClure and the *Investigator*, who had not been heard of since 1850. Interestingly, Collinson, whose *Enterprise* was supposed to sail with McClure's *Investigator*, is not mentioned on this map. He was sailing back to England via the Cape of Good Hope when this map was published and no update was available for his crew's findings.

The latest date mentioned on the map is August 18, 1853, when Lieutenant Bellot of the French Navy, who was with the Inglefield expedition (see key) trying to contact the Belcher expedition, fell into a crack in the



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

ice and drowned. These details place the publication of this chart in early- to mid-October 1853 and marks this as one of the first maps to show the completed Northwest Passage.

The map widely considered as the first to show the passage was "[C. 6. Chart Shewing the North West Passage Discovered by H.M. Ship Investigator](#)," issued by the Admiralty on October 11, 1853 (example at BL Maps 982.(52.)). It was closely followed by other maps, including [this work](#) by the Johnstons initially published on October 24, 1853.

States of the map

As noted by Kennedy, with respect to Arctic exploration, John Arrowsmith was more than simply a mapmaker, he was "the eminent geographer to whom Arctic travellers are so much indebted." The history of this map demonstrates Arrowsmith's level of commitment to mapping the region.

The present example of the map is the fourth known state, each of which added significant new information as it became available. The [first iteration](#), with a publication date of October 21, 1851, only extends westward to the unfinished coast of Banks Land. A proof state, without the title, imprint, and key, survives in a single example in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company. We locate finished examples of the first state at the British Library, the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich), the Newberry Library, and the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

In a [second state](#), dated April 6, 1852, the map has had detail added in Victoria Land and adds significant details to Victoria Strait, Boothia Felix, Bathurst Land, Prince of Wales Land, and the Wellington Channel. For this state, we locate examples in Charles University (Prague), the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and Collections Canada.

Arrowsmith's [third state](#), also dated April 6, 1852, contains updates from the Inglefield expedition that would have reached England later in 1852. The areas with improved geography are in the northeast of the map. An example of this state is at the Huntington Library.

This is the fourth state, with a publication date of November 16, 1852 but with additions to August 1853. It has an expanded title and an additional panel added to the west to encompass McClure's significant



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

findings. This example survives in a single recorded state in the collection of the British Admiralty.

We surmise that at least one interim state between the third and fourth states may have been published, but we were unable to locate proof of its existence.

Rarity

All states of Arrowsmith's map are exceedingly rare.

As noted above, the only known example of this fourth and final state is in the holdings of the British Admiralty.

We have been unable to locate a published record of the map at auction (RBH) or in a dealer catalog (AMPR).

Provenance: Cheffins, April 28, 2022

The Franklin expedition

The chart was created to inform people of the ongoing search for the lost ships of Sir John Franklin, the HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror*. They also hoped to find the Northwest Passage, as all voyages to the area had for centuries.

The nineteenth century marked a high point in the interest in finding an Arctic route to China. Earlier expeditions 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; this is the first voyage mentioned in the key of this map. 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 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.

Franklin himself had already sought the elusive feature. He led overland expeditions in 1819-1822 and



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

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) (mentioned at the south of this map).

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. Then, he led the two aforementioned overland expeditions.

In 1845, Franklin set out in command of *Terror* and *Erebus*, as explained here in the key. He had been involved in the planning of the voyage in search of the Northwest Passage and the government fit out the ships with state-of-the-art technology and instruments. They left Greenhithe on May 19, 1845 and were sighted by a whaler off of Baffin Island in late July. After that, the ships were never seen afloat again, nor were the men seen alive, by Euro-descended people.

By late 1847, it was clear that the expedition was in trouble or even lost. No less than 39 missions set out to find his men and ships over several decades; they hailed from Britain, the United States, France, and other countries. Many were spurred on by the advocacy of Lady Jane Franklin, who worked tirelessly to raise funds and interest in finding her husband.

Later voyages pieced together a rough approximation of what happened to *Terror* and *Erebus*. The ships sailed up the Wellington Channel and then headed south toward Beechey Island (the inset here), where they wintered. In spring 1846, the ships reached the northernmost point of King William Island, but then were trapped in the ice in the McClintock Channel.

By the spring of 1847, a small party reached Point Victory by traveling over the ice. There, they left a notice of their progress. John Franklin died in June of that year. The ships, still in the ice, were pulled south. The new commander of the expedition, Captain Crozier, decided to abandon the vessels. He updated the Point Victory note before the 105 survivors set out for the Great Fish River; most died on the march, near the west coast of King William Island. After that, all trace of them vanished.



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

The search for the Franklin expedition

Arctic voyages typically lasted multiple years, so initially there was no alarm when Franklin and his ships did not return. By 1847, however, Lady Jane began to worry at the expedition's absence and lobbied the Admiralty to plan rescue voyages to search for the *Terror* and *Erebus*. Charles Dickens, the famous author, was one of Lady Jane's supporters.

Sir James Clark Ross, the nephew of Arctic explorer John Ross, had previously commanded the *Erebus* and the *Terror* on an Antarctic voyage to take magnetic observations. In 1848, he set off north to find Franklin (voyage 1A in the key). Ross only reached the northeast tip of Somerset Island and decided that Franklin could not have gone through Peel Sound; in fact, Franklin had gone through the sound in 1846.

Another early effort was led by Sir John Richardson and John Rae (mentioned in the key). An overland expedition, they probed the areas near the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers, where Franklin had proposed to explore. Richardson had previously been in the area on an earlier expedition that coincided with Franklin's overland expeditions.

Horatio Austin, who had also previously been on Arctic expeditions, was put in command of the HMS *Resolute* and ordered to search for Franklin (voyage 1-9A). He traveled through Baffin Bay and Lancaster Sound. One of his crew, Erasmus Ommaney, found evidence that Franklin's men had indeed reached the Arctic (voyage 3).

William Penny, a Scottish shipmaster and whaler, also joined the hunt. He searched for Franklin on whaling ships in 1847 and 1849, but was thwarted by ice. In 1850, backed by Lady Franklin, he again led a search in Jones Sound and the Wellington Channel (voyages 9-12). In the HMS *Lady Franklin* and HMS *Sophia*, Penny combined his efforts with Austin's at Beechey Island. There, they found three graves of Franklin's men. Eventually he and Austin quarreled and he returned to Scotland.

John Rae was a physician who served as the surgeon at Hudson's Bay Company's post Moose Factory, on James Bay. His first Arctic exploration expedition was in 1846-7, when Franklin was still presumed alive. In 1848, he was made second-in-command on Richardson's expedition, mentioned above. In 1849, he went back into the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Mackenzie District. In 1851, Rae led another



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

search for Franklin during which he traveled 5,300 miles and mapped 700 miles of the southern coast of Victoria Island (voyage 14). On his fourth expedition (1853-4), he surveyed the Boothia Peninsula, proved King William Land to be an island, and interviewed Inuit peoples who gave him news of the tragic end of Franklin's expedition.

Not only the Admiralty sent ships. Lady Jane Franklin continued to advocate on her husband's behalf, even if he was now presumed dead. She sponsored her own expedition in 1851, led by William Kennedy (voyage 15). Kennedy, the son a Hudson's Bay Company factor and an English/Cree woman, and a fur trader himself, was well acquainted with the Arctic. While he did not find Franklin, he did gather more information on the flora and fauna of the Arctic than any previous expedition, as well as surveyed new areas.

Edward Augustus Inglefield was a naval officer who led two Arctic expeditions in search of Franklin. The first, in the *Isabel*, Lady Franklin's ship, charted much of Baffin Bay, Lancaster Sound, and Smith Sound (voyage 16). The second voyage, in HMS *Phoenix*, mentioned above, was meant to resupply Edward Belcher's troubled expedition. It was on this expedition that Lieutenant Bellot was lost.

The McClure expedition

In 1850, the Admiralty planned a Pacific voyage to find Franklin and the passage via the Bering Strait. In January, Captain Richard Collinson, in HMS *Enterprise*, and Commander Robert McClure, in HMS *Investigator*, sailed from England and made for Cape Horn. McClure had been in the Arctic before, with George Back in the *Terror* in 1836-7 and with James Clark Ross in 1848-9. Collinson, however, was new to the Arctic, having previously visited the Antarctic as a midshipman and then serving primarily in Asian waters.

The ships became separated off the Chilean coast and did not meet again. McClure decided to risk a dangerous route through the Aleutian Islands, while Collinson went around the chain. Rather than waiting for Collinson as ordered, McClure hurried north. McClure's *Investigator* quickly passed the mouth of the Mackenzie River and then turned northeast into a never-before charted waterway, Prince of Wales Strait, between Banks Island and Victoria Island.



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

The ship reached 73°10' before it was frozen in the ice and pushed south. They wintered in the strait, which was frustrating for the ship was only thirty miles from Viscount Melville Sound. That was the farthest west that Parry had reached on his 1819 expedition. Reaching it would mean that they had completed the Northwest Passage. McClure did lead a sledge party to the northeast side of Banks Island that winter. The group could see Melville Island and, by sight at least, could say to have discovered the passage on October 26, 1850.

Despite their best wishes, the strait between Melville Island and Banks Island, now named for McClure, did not clear in the following summer of 1851. Nevertheless, the crew did seek out new information via sledges. By August, they remained unable to sail north, so McClure instead sailed south, around Banks Island. Unfortunately, this gamble, while bold, did not achieve the passage either. The *Investigator* was blocked by ice on the northeast coast of the island, where it wintered for 1851-2.

During that winter, McClure led a sledge party, to Melville Island's Winter Harbour. This physically completed the previously theoretical discovery of the Northwest Passage, and by a different route (around the north of Banks Island, as opposed to via Prince of Wales Strait). McClure left a message at the harbor and found one from the *Resolute*, which had been there the previous spring.

The *Investigator* remained stuck in Mercy Bay, on Banks Island, in the winter of 1852-3. The expedition to this point is chronicled on this map, as the first news of McClure's fate reached England in 1853. Facing short supplies and a sick crew, McClure decided to split the crew, with the healthy men staying in case the ice broke up and the sicker men walking across the ice to either Prince Regent Inlet or the mouth of the Mackenzie River.

McClure had left a note at Parry's Rock, Winter Harbour, that they had discovered the passage, but that, if not heard from, they had likely been swept by the ice into the Polar Sea. He said that no ships should be sent to find them, so as to mitigate further loss of life. However, help was already at hand. His notes were found at Melville Island in October 1852 by a sledge party from *Resolute* and HMS *Intrepid*. In March 1853, Lieutenant Pim of the *Resolute* set out 170 miles over the ice to reach the *Investigator*.

While McClure and his first lieutenant were on shore discussing how to bury the first man who had died on the expedition, they saw a figure walking toward them. They initially thought it was one of their men



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst; Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross & Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in Search of John Franklin.

being chased by a polar bear, then they thought it might be an Inuit. Only when he drew closer did they realize it was Pim.

McClure returned with Pim to the *Resolute*, which was in the ice near Dealy Island. This is the point to which this map is updated. Although McClure asked to be able to continue the voyage—he wanted the *Investigator* to make it through the passage—Captain Henry Kellett of the *Resolute* said that could only happen if twenty of the crew volunteered to stay with the ship. Only four did so—McClure prepared to abandon ship.

In search of McClure and Franklin: The Belcher expedition

The crew of the *Investigator* joined an expedition that was already in trouble by mid-1853. Sir Edward Belcher was an accomplished naval surveyor and, in 1852, he was appointed commander of the largest Franklin search mission. In addition, he was to look for McClure, who had not been contacted since 1850.

Belcher was given a squadron of five ships—HMS *Assistance*, HMS *Resolute*, HMS *North Star*, *Pioneer*, and *Intrepid*. He went to Wellington Channel to seek news of Franklin, while Kellett in the *Resolute* sought McClure. Some of the *Resolute's* men, on sledges, found McClure and his crew as outlined above.

The crew of the *Investigator* spent a fourth winter in the ice (1853-4), this time in crowded quarters with the crews of the *Intrepid* and *Resolute*. By that spring of 1854, Belcher was nervous about his men and ships. He ordered four of the five ships abandoned (all but the *North Star*) and returned to England in October 1854 with *Phoenix* and the *Breadalbane*, who had come to assist them. Upon his return, Belcher was court martialed for the loss of the ships and never received another command.

McClure was not punished, nor was he investigated for the failure to recover the journals from the *Investigator*. In his absence, McClure had also been made captain. A parliamentary select committee then decided to award his crew with the £10,000 prize for discovery of the Northwest Passage.

Surprisingly, *Resolute* was freed from the ice and drifted, unmanned, to the Davis Strait. The ship was intercepted by an American whaler who towed it back south. The American government returned the ship to the British. To show their gratitude, when the ship was broken up, timbers from the ship were used to



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

**Discoveries in the Arctic Sea, between Baffin Bay, Melville Island and Cape Bathurst;
Shewing the Coasts Explored, by the Officers of the Various Expeditions, Commanded
by Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, Captns Austin & Ommaney, Sir John Ross &
Commr. Phillips, Wm. Penny of the Lady Franklin, Dr. John Rae, Wm Kennedy of the
Isabel, Sir Edward Belcher & Captn. Kellett, Capt. Inglefield, & Capt. Maclure, in
Search of John Franklin.**

make a desk that Queen Victoria gave to President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1880. The *Resolute* desk has been used by many US Presidents, including Presidents Obama and Trump.

Detailed Condition:

2-sheets, joined. Old repair at lower left. Minor soiling.