

Lithographed map, with contemporary full colour wash, laid down on linen in sixteen sections, edged in blue silk; housed in two yellow cloth slipcases, the outer gilt tooled in five compartments, black morocco labels, gilt lettering and tooling, inked call number with sticker, red and white cloth ties, slightly wrinkled.

IRAN BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH THE POTATO

Map of the countries lying between the Euphrates and Indus on the East and West, and the Oxus and Terek and Indian Ocean on the North and South. Inscribed to Brigadier General Sir John Malcolm Knight of the Royal Persian Order of the Lion and Sun By John Macdonald Kinneir

Author
KINNEIR, John Macdonald

Publication date
1813, but November 1856.

Publisher
A. Arrowsmith, No. 10 Soho Square, Hydrographer to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales; Lithographed by order of the Supreme Government of India at the Surveyor General’s Office,

Publication place
London & Calcutta,

Physical description
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Dimensions
980 by 1310mm (38.5 by 51.5 inches).

Notes
Large and detailed map of Iran and its environs.

The map is inscribed by John Macdonald Kinneir to Brigadier General Sir John Malcolm. Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833) spent the majority of his career in India in the employ of the East India Company. Whilst in India he gained a keen interest in the Persian Empire that would lead him to undertake several envoys to Persia under the auspices of the East India Company. In Persia, Malcolm not only successfully introduced the potato, but also took with him several men to conduct research into the country. One such was Kinneir, who in 1813, produced a 'Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire', which described in detail the routes between the major towns. The present map was intended to accompany that work.

The major reason for his research was Britain's increasing concern over Russia gaining power within the region, and whom they feared might invade India. This battle for influence in the area would continue throughout the nineteenth century and become known as 'The Great Game'.

Aaron Arrowsmith (1750-1823), "easily the foremost cartographer of his time" (R.V. Tooley), was the founder of the Arrowsmith dynasty of cartographers. Born in County Durham, he was in London by 1777 when he witnessed the will of Andrew Dury, a mapseller and publisher, and was probably training with him; he may have trained with William Faden, Geographer to the King, but was certainly employed by John Cary in 1782, as he is credited with the survey work for 'Cary's Actual Survey, of the Great Post Roads between London and Falmouth', published in 1784; he is frequently credited with some of the survey work for Cary's county atlas, 'Cary's New and Correct English Atlas: being a set of county maps from actual surveys' (1787), but the sources are silent on this and by this time Arrowsmith had established his own business.

Arrowmsith's maps set a new standard; he was assiduous in analysing and verifying his sources, discarding not only the fictional but also the uncertain, going to printed and manuscript sources for his information, and engraved in a clear and highly legible style. Arrowsmith was also diligent in revising and improving his maps to keep them current, and served as an inspiration for the next generation of (particularly American) surveyors.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £8000

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