In March 1858, Lady Franklin, the wife of Sir John Franklin, set out to search for her husband and their expedition. The expedition, comprised of Dr. Rae, had been dispatched to explore the region of the Great Bear Lake, northeastern Canada. The goal was to find evidence of a party of about 40 white men who had been seen in the area in 1848. The party was supposed to have been led by Dr. Rae, who had been dispatched by the government to search for the missing expedition led by Sir John Franklin.

The bodies of the expedition members were eventually found on Beechey Island, off the coast of Canada's northwestern coast. The bodies were discovered on September 22, 1846. The expedition had left in 1845. The bodies were in poor condition, indicating that they had been dead for some time. The expedition had been searching for the missing party, which had been last seen in 1845. The bodies were found near the shore of Beechey Island, which is located near the entrance to the Franklin Strait. The strait is named after Sir John Franklin, who led the first British expedition to the Arctic in 1819.
A great number of articles of art, the collection of which was ultimately to be seen in the museum at Greenwich, was partly formed on the ruins of a building in the gardens, and was afterwards sold, forming a part of the property of the East India Company. In April, 1818, they were sold at auction, and were immediately purchased by the British Museum. The articles thus obtained included a number of gold and silver dishes, vases, and other objects of decoration, and a number of Chinese porcelain figures, including a large number of porcelain figures of Chinese emperors and empresses. The collection was afterwards placed in the Museum, and is now in the possession of the British Museum.