

ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS.

RETURN to an ADDRESS of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 10 May 1850;—for,

“COPIES of INSTRUCTIONS from the Admiralty to Captain Austin, R. N., C. B.,
and to any other Officers in Her Majesty’s Service engaged in Arctic Expeditions, since the Date of the last Parliamentary Return.”

SCHEDULE OF PAPERS.

- No. 1.—Copy of a Letter from Captain *Hamilton*, Secretary of the Admiralty, to Captain *Penny*, of the Ship “Lady Franklin,” dated 10 April 1850.
- No. 2.—Copy of a Letter from Captain *Hamilton*, Secretary of the Admiralty, to Mr. *James Saunders*, Master, commanding Her Majesty’s Ship “North Star,” dated 10 April 1850.
- No. 3.—Copy of Orders from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Mr. *William Penny*, of the Ship “Lady Franklin,” in charge of an Expedition to the Arctic Seas, dated 11 April 1850.
- No. 4.—Copy of Orders from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Captain *Horatio T. Austin*, C. B., of Her Majesty’s Ship “Resolute,” in charge of an Expedition to the Arctic Seas, dated 2 May 1850.

Admiralty, }
28 May 1850. }

J. H. Hay,
Chief Clerk.

— No. 1. —

COPY of a LETTER from Captain *Hamilton*, Secretary of the Admiralty, to Captain *Penny*, of the Ship “Lady Franklin.”

Sir,

Admiralty, 10 April 1850.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send you herewith the original and duplicate of a letter addressed to Mr. Saunders, master, commanding Her Majesty’s store ship “North Star,” in the Arctic seas, containing instructions for his guidance; one of which my Lords request you will take charge of yourself, for delivery to that officer, should you fall in with him; and the other you are to put in the possession of Mr. Stewart, of the ship “Sophia,” for the same purpose.

I have, &c.

Captain Penny,
Ship “Lady Franklin,” Aberdeen.

(signed) *W. A. B. Hamilton*.

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— No. 2. —

COPY of a LETTER from Captain *Hamilton*, Secretary of the Admiralty, to Mr. *James Saunders*, Master, commanding Her Majesty's Ship "North Star."

Sir,

Admiralty, 10 April 1850.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you,

1. That Sir James Ross having returned to England in the month of November last, without having discovered any traces of the missing expedition under Sir John Franklin's orders, and the necessity for the stores and provisions with which he was charged being deposited as directed being all the more urgent, my Lords can only trust that you have been able to land them accordingly.

2. That as our last Reports from you were dated 19th July 1849, lat. 74° 3', long. 59° 40' W., the anxiety on the part of their Lordships to receive further intelligence of your proceedings is great; and they can therefore only hope, in the event of this despatch reaching you, and of your not having succeeded in affording succour to any of Sir John Franklin's party, that it may find you returning with Her Majesty's ship under your command to England.

3. And that in order that you may be in full possession of all that has occurred, or that has been done since your departure, relative to the relief of Sir John Franklin, you are herewith furnished with a printed Return which will put you in complete possession of the state of the case; and to which my Lords have only to add, that four ships under the command of Captain Austin, two of them being auxiliary steam vessels, are now fitting at Woolwich, in addition to the two vessels under Captain Penny's orders, and by which this despatch is sent, for the purpose of continuing the search after Sir John Franklin's expedition (irrespective of private expeditions from this country and the United States); and that as supplies of stores, especially coals, would be most needful for these vessels, as an auxiliary, you are to land at the Whale Fish Islands, or at Disco, whatever proportion of coals or provisions you consider you can with propriety spare, returning without loss of time to England.

I am, &c.

Mr. James Saunders, (signed) *W. A. B. Hamilton*.
Master Commanding H.M.S. "North Star."

— No. 3. —

COPY of ORDERS from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Mr. *William Penny*, of the Ship "Lady Franklin," in charge of an Expedition to the Arctic Seas, dated 11 April 1850.

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, &c. &c.

1. Her Majesty's Government having determined that further endeavours shall be made to trace the progress of Her Majesty's ships "Erebus" and "Terror," under the command of Sir John Franklin, and to resume the search after that expedition; and having resolved to employ you in the command of the two vessels, the "Lady Franklin" and "Sophia," which have been equipped for that service; you are hereby required and directed, so soon as the said vessels shall be in all respects ready for sea, to proceed with them with all due dispatch to Davis's Strait.

2. In entrusting you with the above command, we do not deem it advisable to furnish you with minute instructions as to the course you are to pursue. In accepting your offer of service, regard has been had to your long experience in arctic navigation, and to the attention you had evidently paid to the subject of the missing ships. We deem it expedient rather that you should be instructed
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in all the circumstances of the case, and that you should be left to the exercise of your own judgment and discretion, in combining the most active and energetic search after Her Majesty's ships "Erebus" and "Terror," with a strict and careful regard to the safety of the ships and their crews under your charge; and with a fixed attention to that part of your orders which relate to your returning with those ships to this country.

3. For this purpose you will be furnished with copies of the original instructions given to Sir John Franklin, and which instructions will indicate the course he was directed to pursue, together with our orders and directions to Sir James Ross, when he was dispatched on a search after Sir John Franklin, in the spring of 1848.

4. You will be aware that the case virtually stands now as it did then. Sir James Ross, from adverse circumstances, failed in discovering traces of the missing expedition.

5. Our orders of the 9th May 1848, to Sir James Ross, will still serve as the indication of our views of the general course you will have to pursue; but it being our desire that a certain strait, known as Alderman Jones's Sound, and which would not appear to have been as yet examined, should be searched; you are hereby required and directed to proceed in the first instance to that sound, closely examining the shores for any traces of Sir John Franklin's course, and proceeding, should it offer the means of your doing so, in the direction of Wellington Strait, and on to the Parry Islands and Melville Island.

6. On your proceeding in the above direction, too much vigilance cannot be observed in your search along the various shores, for traces of the missing expedition; at the same time, you will bear in mind that Sir John Franklin's orders were "to push on through Lancaster Sound, without stopping to examine any openings north or south of that sound, till he had reached Cape Walker." And although it may be possible that the obstructions incident to navigation in those seas, may have forced Sir John Franklin north or south of his prescribed course, yet that his principal object would be, the gaining the latitude and longitude of Cape Walker.

7. To that point, therefore, failing your discovering traces of the Expedition in your course by Jones's Sound and the Parry Islands, your efforts will be directed, and beyond this, your own judgment must be your principal guide.

8. The circumstance of Sir James Ross having partially searched the shores of Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, as far west as Cape Rennell, without discovering traces of Sir John Franklin's ships, has led, in some quarters, to the supposition of an extreme case, viz., that failing to get into Lancaster Sound, Sir John Franklin had proceeded in the direction of Smith's Sound, at the head of Baffin's Bay.

9. We do not deem it expedient to direct your attention specially to this sound (or supposed sound); but should your passage by Jones's Sound, to which you are specially directed, be early and absolutely impeded, and there should appear to you to be the time (without hazarding the only remaining chance of proceeding to Wellington Strait, the Parry Islands, and Cape Walker by Lancaster Sound) for examining Smith's Sound, you are at liberty to do so; but this is a contingency scarcely to be contemplated; as, in the event of your being frustrated in the attempt to get to the westward, and towards Wellington Strait by Jones's Sound, the late period of the year when Smith's Sound is said to be open would render it difficult, if not impossible, to combine a search in that quarter with the securing a passage into Lancaster Sound before the season closed.

10. Much of the painful anxiety that now exists respecting the missing ships might possibly have been avoided, if greater care had been taken to leave traces of their progress. You will consider it rigidly your duty, and a matter of the utmost importance, that every means should be adopted for marking your own track.

For this purpose you will provide yourself with an ample supply of red and white lead for making paint; and in addition to the usual pole or staff, or cairn of stones, usually looked for on a cape or headland, you will, wherever the colouring of the cliff or shore admits of a mark being made in strong relief, paint a red

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or white cross, as the case may be, depositing as near to its base as possible, and at right angles with the perpendicular part of such cross, a bottle or other vessel, containing a short summary of your proceedings up to the date of the deposit; an account of the state of your supplies and resources, the health of your party, and your further intended course.

11. There remains but to caution you as to your return with your ships to this country.

These ships have been provisioned and stored for three years; but you will bear in mind that this liberal supply is to meet contingencies separate on the one hand from the victualling of your own people, and on the other from a needless, reckless, and hazardous continuance in the arctic regions.

You have been victualled to supply the missing expedition, or any part of it you may providentially discover; here is the one contingency: unforeseen impediments, or a certain prospect of coming up with any part of the missing expedition compelling you to pass a second winter in the ice, is the other; but our directions to you are, first, to use your utmost endeavours (consistent with the safety of the lives of those entrusted to your command) to succour in this summer the party under Sir John Franklin, taking care to secure your winter quarters in good time; and 2d, that the same active endeavours will be used by you in the ensuing summer of 1851, to secure the return of your own ships to this country.

12. We refer you to the instructions contained in par. 21 of Sir John Franklin's orders, for your guidance in the event of one of your ships being disabled, or in case of any accident to yourself; and in par. 22 of the same orders, are full instructions as to transmitting reports of your progress to our Secretary, for our information; to both of which you will strictly attend.

13. In conclusion we have only to repeat the expressions of our confidence in your skill, and in your known ardour in a generous cause; and we commend you and those with you to a good Providence, with our earnest wishes for your success.

Given under our hands this 11th April 1850.

(signed) *F. T. Baring.*
J. W. D. Dundas.

By command of their Lordships,
W. A. B. Hamilton.

Mr. William Penny, Ship "Lady Franklin,"
in charge of an Expedition to the Arctic Seas, at Aberdeen.

— No. 4. —

COPY of ORDERS from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Captain *Horatio T. Austin*, C. B., of Her Majesty's Ship "Resolute," in charge of an Expedition to the Arctic Seas, dated 2 May 1850.

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

1. HAVING appointed you to the command of the expedition which it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to dispatch on a further search for Her Majesty's ships "Erebus" and "Terror," under the command of Sir John Franklin, you are hereby required and directed to take the vessels named in the margin under your command; and so soon as they are in all respects ready, to put to sea, and to make the best of your way to Davis' Straits, for the express purpose of prosecuting a most vigorous search for the missing ships.

"Resolute,"
"Assistance,"
"Intrepid,"
"Pioneer."

2. We have directed you to be furnished with a copy of our orders, which were given to Sir John Franklin, and which will afford you full information how he was directed to proceed. We have likewise ordered you to have a copy of our instructions to Captain Sir James Ross, and to these we have to direct your especial attention.

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3. The various papers which have been laid before the Houses of Parliament have also been sent for your information : by reference to them you will be made aware that we have taken the opinions of the most able and experienced persons connected with Polar navigation relative to the missing expedition ; you will observe that many valuable conjectures have been made, and it has been suggested that Sir John Franklin may have effected his passage to Melville Island, and been detained there with his ships. It has again been suggested as possible that his ships may have been damaged in the ice in the neighbouring sea, and that with his crews he may have abandoned them and made his escape to that island. To these, as well as the other possibilities, you will not fail to give every proper weight.

4. It therefore appears to us to be a main object of the expedition for you to use every exertion to reach Melville Island, detaching a portion of your ships to search the shores of Wellington Channel and the coast about Cape Walker, to which point Sir J. Franklin was ordered to proceed. We trust that a diligent examination of these several places will afford you some certain trace or record of the missing expedition, which will enable you to form an opinion of the best course to adopt for their rescue. As your course of action must clearly depend on such information, we consider it unnecessary to give you any definite or specific instruction, and inexpedient to bind you down to any certain line of proceeding. We confide in your knowledge and experience of the navigation of the Polar Seas ; and, placing just reliance on your energetic character and zeal, we leave you entirely unfettered to do what may seem to you best for attaining the great object of the expedition entrusted to your charge, feeling assured that you, as well as all those under you, will use your utmost exertions to afford relief to our unfortunate countrymen, and to justify the reliance we have placed in you.

5. The officers whom we have consulted have expressed an opinion that no vessel should be allowed to prosecute the search alone ; and it is for this reason that to your own and to Captain Ommanney's ship an auxiliary screw vessel has been attached ; we therefore direct your attention to this important consideration.

6. Your ships have been fully equipped and provisioned for a period of three years, to meet any emergency which may arise from falling in with Sir John Franklin's party. In addition to these supplies there are stores and provisions, &c. left by Sir James Ross at Port Leopold, and a further store was sent out in the "North Star" in the summer of last year. These will be available for you in case of necessity, but you are not to consider them as a part of your own stock, but as a reserve for the aid of any of Sir John Franklin's party who may reach that spot, or as a depôt on which any party may fall back upon should they unfortunately be separated from their ships.

7. In the prosecution of your search you will use your utmost efforts during this summer, taking care not to lose any opportunity which may be open to you of getting to the westward, and of securing your ships in some safe harbour before the winter sets in, from whence you will dispatch such overland parties as the means placed at your disposal will permit. On the return of the open season of 1851 you will again renew your search ; but it is our intention and directions that you shall return to England in the autumn of that year, unless some trace should be found of the missing expedition, which may lead you to believe that a delay may contribute to their rescue, and which may justify a deviation from our orders.

8. You are aware that this is not the only expedition fitting out or being dispatched with the same object ; one such, under the command of Mr. Penny, of Aberdeen, has already sailed for Davis' Straits, provisioned as your own for a period of three years. We furnish you with a copy of the instructions under which he is acting, and we desire that you will render him any aid and assistance in your power, as well as to any other expedition, either from this country, the United States of America, or from any other nation, so far as you may be able to do so, without risk of crippling the resources of the vessels under your command.

9. You will take the utmost care in leaving memorials of your track in the usual manner, and in every prominent place, and enjoin the same precaution upon all the ships and land parties detached from you or them.

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10. You will keep your second in command well informed of the instructions under which you are acting, consulting with him on all points, and stating your own views as to the best means of carrying them out; so that no information may be wanting on his part if accident to yourself should cause him to succeed to the command.

11. As soon as you reach the Whale Fish Islands, to which rendezvous the "Emma Eugenia" transport has already been dispatched, and that you have distributed the supplies taken on board that vessel for the use of the expedition, you will send her to England, and you will also give orders to the master of the "North Star," should you fall in with that vessel, to return home.

12. The several vessels thus placed under your command have been fitted out under your own immediate superintendence, and with every attention to the wants and requirements of the great enterprise you have volunteered to undertake. The officers in command of the vessels composing it, and who are animated with the same ardour as yourself, have been selected by you with our full concurrence, as to their fitness for this particular service; all that could be effected by the generous sympathies of your Queen and your country has been done; and it only remains for us to conclude our instructions with an earnest prayer that success may attend your exertions, and that a good Providence may guide your councils, and be your constant defence.

Given under our hands, this 2d of May 1850.

To Horatio T. Austin, Esq., c. b.,
Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Resolute,"
in charge of an Expedition to the Arctic Seas.

F. T. Baring.
M. F. F. Berkeley.

By command of their Lordships,
J. Parker.

ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS.

COPIES of INSTRUCTIONS from the Admiralty
to Captain Austin, R. N., c. b., and to any other
Officers in Her Majesty's Service engaged in
Arctic Expeditions, since the Date of the last
Parliamentary Return.

(*Sir Robert Harry Inglis.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
31 May 1850.