

ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

INSTRUCTIONS from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

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

HAVING appointed you to the command of Her Majesty's Steam Vessel "Phoenix," for the purpose of proceeding to Beechey Island in Barrow Straits, you are hereby required and directed to take under your charge Her Majesty's Ship "Talbot," and the Transport "Diligence," and so soon as the former vessel and the "Phoenix," are loaded with provisions, stores, coal and warm clothing for the ships now in the Polar Seas, and the "Diligence" with coal, you will proceed to sea, and make the best of your way to Davis Straits, putting into Disco, or such other harbour as you may deem expedient, for the purpose of transferring the coal from the "Diligence," which transport you are then to direct to return to England; and you are to proceed with the other vessels to Beechey Island.

You are now so well acquainted with the navigation of those seas, and have so successfully performed your previous service, that we do not consider it necessary to bind you with any specific directions, but leave you to carry out the great object of your voyage with the least possible delay, and to the best of your judgment.

We enclose you instructions for Captain Sir Edward Belcher, which you will deliver to him, if at Beechey Island, or, if absent, you are to send them to him, and we also send you herewith a copy of those Orders for your own information and guidance, that in case you should find yourself senior officer on your arrival at that place, you may take the necessary steps to carry out the said orders.

Although this country is now at war with Russia, you are clearly to understand, that you are not to commit any hostile act whatever, the ships under your command having been fitted out for the sole purpose of aiding those engaged in scientific discoveries; and it being the established practice of all civilized nations to consider vessels so employed as exempt from the operations of war.

Given under our hands, this 28th day of April 1854.

(signed) *R. S. Dundas.*
Alex. Milne.

To Edward A. Inglefield, Esq.,
Captain of Her Majesty's Steam Vessel "Phoenix."

By Command of their Lordships,

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

INSTRUCTIONS to Captain Sir *Edward Belcher*, C.B., or the Senior Officer of Her Majesty's Ships at Beechey Island.

Sir,

Admiralty, 28 April 1854.

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have directed Her Majesty's ships "Phoenix" and "Talbot," under the orders of Captain Inglefield, to proceed with provisions and stores to Beechey Island, for the purpose of replenishing the ships and depôts under your orders; and I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, that on the return of the "Phoenix" from Beechey Island last year, they had the satisfaction of hearing of the safe arrival of Her Majesty's ship "Investigator," under the command of Captain M'Clure, at Banks Land, having completed the discovery of the North-West Passage, though unhappily without discovering traces of Sir John Franklin; and that part of the crew had been enabled to reach Captain Kellett's station at Melville Island. By despatches which they received from Behring Straits, they have information, that in August 1851, Captain Collinson, in Her Majesty's ship "Enterprize," passed the entrance of the Colville River; and their Lordships trust, by the reports he may have obtained from the natives of Prince Albert's Land, as well as from the records deposited by Captain M'Clure on his passage along that shore, that he may also have been enabled to reach some harbour on Banks Land, from whence he has made known his position either to Captain M'Clure or Captain Kellett.

Their Lordships have desired me to direct your special attention to the measures they now require to be adopted for at once withdrawing, if possible, the whole of the force now employed in the search of Sir J. Franklin from the Polar Seas. For effecting this object, they refrain from issuing any positive instructions how you are to act, or what steps you are to take, as they are aware you must be entirely guided by the position of the ships, and those varying circumstances which in that region must influence your operations; but their Lordships' views may be stated generally as follows:

1. If the crews of the "Enterprize" and "Investigator" are at Banks Land, they must abandon their ships; and every endeavour should be made to get them to Beechey Island, that they may return to England. If this has already been effected, and Captain Kellett, with his ships, has returned from Melville Island, you are immediately to proceed to England with the whole of the ships and their crews, abandoning all further search for the missing expedition, unless any circumstances (on consultation with the senior officers of Her Majesty's ships) should induce you to believe that your remaining out another year would tend to clear up the fate of our missing countrymen. But if Captain Kellett has been unable to move from his position at Melville Island, it may be necessary to give orders to him to abandon the "Resolute" and "Intrepid," and secure his retreat to Beechey Island; but as this cannot be accomplished this year, you need not detain any officers or men who may have already reached Beechey Island, but send them to England forthwith.

2. Should no tidings have been heard of Captain Collinson, in Her Majesty's ship "Enterprize," it becomes absolutely necessary to provide for his safety. For this purpose, the Melville Island Depôt must be replenished with provisions and stores; and it will be necessary for a ship and steam tender to remain there, also the "North Star," or "Talbot," with a tender, at Beechey Island, and at those stations everything which can add to the health and comfort of the crews should be deposited; and having done this, it does not appear to their Lordships to be necessary that any of the other ships should remain another year in the Polar Sea, unless, as before stated, you consider further search to be prudent and necessary.

Assistance.
Pioneer.
Resolute.
Intrepid.
Enterprize.
Investigator.
North Star.
Phoenix.
Talbot.

These are the views of their Lordships; their great object being to recall, with the least possible delay, the whole of the ships or crews named in the margin, if it can be done. If not possible to do so, they leave it to your judgment and discretion to send home such of them as may not be required, and to adopt those measures which you consider most necessary to ensure the safety of Captain Collinson and his crew, and their speedy return to England. This, their Lordships are aware, must depend on the information you have received from Melville Island,

Island, the position of the respective ships under your orders, the state of the depôts, &c. All their Lordships can do is to confide in your judgment; and they authorize you to take such steps, and give such orders, and to make such exchanges of officers and men, as you may deem necessary for carrying their wishes into effect.

They trust, however, Captain Collinson is safe; and if so, it will be a source of much satisfaction to them if, during the approaching autumn, the whole of your ships and crews shall arrive in England.

On the return of any of the ships to England from Beechey Island, it is desirable that the coast to the southward of Ponds Bay, namely, from the river Clyde towards Cape Walsingham, should be examined; and you are therefore to endeavour, in your instruction to the ships proceeding to England, to meet this contingency.

In the event of your health rendering it necessary for you to return to England, and the necessity of a part of the squadron remaining out another winter, you are to make known to the officer whom you may appoint to succeed you in command all your views and arrangements, respecting further proceedings.

Although this country is now at war with Russia, you are clearly to understand that you are not to commit any hostile act whatever, the ships under your command having been fitted out for the sole purpose of aiding those engaged in scientific discoveries, and it being the established practice of all civilized nations to consider vessels so employed as exempt from the operations of war.

I am, &c.
(signed) *R. Osborne.*

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(Presented to Parliament by Her Majesty's Command.)

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