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DISCOVERY OF THE NORTH WEST PASSAGE.

NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION UNDER
MESSRS. DEASE AND SIMPSON.

FORT SIMPSON, Oct. 16, 1840.

HONOURABLE SIR,—We have the honour to report the completion of all the primary objects of the expedition, the entire fulfilment of Governor Simpson's original instructions, under which it has been our good fortune to act, and something more, though, as we plainly told your honour last winter, it was quite out of the question to think of reaching the Strait of the Fury and Hecla from the Coppermine River.

On the 23d of June, we descended that impetuous stream of the Bloody Fall, where we remained until the 28th. This interval was employed by Mr. Simpson in exploring Richardson River, discovered in 1838, which discharges itself, as we then supposed, into the bottom of Black's Inlet, in latitude 67. 53. 67 north, longitude 115. 56 west. A party of about thirty Esquimaux were encamped there, all of whom fled precipitately to the hills, except one family, whose tent was placed on an island in this stream. With those last a communication was opened, through our interpreter Ooligluck; but the circle of their little lives being confined to Beren's Isles and the borders of Richardson's River, they had no information to impart of any value.

On the 3d of July, the first slight opening occurred in the ice, of which we took instant advantage; but our first week's journey did not exceed twenty miles, and it was the 18th, after sad work, before we could attain Cape Barrow. From its rocky heights we beheld, with equal surprise and delight, the wide extent of Coronation Gulph, partially open, whereas, long after the same date in 1838, the whole party might have crossed it on foot. At midnight, on the 20th, we landed at Cape Franklin, just one month earlier than Mr. Simpson's arrival there, on his pedestrian journey of the year before. A violent easterly gale arrested our progress for the next four days; and on the 27th we encountered great peril in doubling Cape Alexander, amidst very heavy driving ice.

From Cape Alexander, situated in lat. 63. 56 N. long. 106. 40 W., to another remarkable point in lat. 63. 38 N. long. 98. 10 W., the Arctic coast may be comprised in one spacious bay, stretching as far south as lat. 67. 40, before it turns off abruptly northward to the last mentioned position. This vast sweep, of which but inconsiderable portions were seen by Mr. Simpson last year, is indented by an endless succession of minor bays, separated from one another by long narrow projecting points of land, enclosing an incalculable number of islands.

From this description, it will be evident that our route was an extremely intricate one, and the duties of the survey most harassing, but whilst perplexed beyond measure in finding our way through these labyrinths, we derived great advantage from the protection afforded by the islands from the crushing force of the seaward ice; and the weather was generally clear. In fact, the most serious detention caused by ice, on this part of the voyage, was from the 1st to the 5th of August, on a point that jutted out beyond the insular chain.

White Bear Point, as it was called, lies in 63. 7. 8. 5 N. 103. 28. 45 W.; variation 54. 45 E. These bays have masses of islands present a distinct succession of geological features, which can be best illustrated by our series of specimens of the rocks that compose this wild and barren coast. Vestiges of Esquimaux, and mostly old, were met with wherever we landed.

They appeared to subsist in single families, or very small parties, and to travel inland for the deer hunt, in the month of June, not returning to the sealing islands till the ice sets fast in October. A River twice the size of the Coppermine, which falls into the sea in 63. 2 N. long. 104. 15 W. is much resorted to by reindeer and musk oxen, in the summer season. Finding the coast as already remarked, trending northerly from the bottom of the Great Bay, we expected

nothing less than to be carried round Cape Felix of Captain James Ross, contrary to the conjectures hazarded by Mr. Simpson; in his narrative of last year's journey. On the evening of the 10th of August however, (at the point already given) we suddenly opened a strait running into the southward of east, where the rapid rush of the tide scarcely left a doubt of the existence of an open sea leading to the mouth of Back's Great Fish River. This strait is ten miles wide at either extremity, but contracts to three in the centre. Even that narrow channel is much encroached upon by high shingle islands, but there is deep water in the middle throughout. The 12th of August we signalized by the most terrific thunder storm we have ever witnessed in these regions. Next day it blew roughly from the westward, with a very dense cold fog, but we ran rapidly south east, past Point Richards and Point Ogle of Sir George Back, and continued on till the darkness of night and increasing gale drove us ashore beyond Point Pechell. The storm shifted to north east, and lasted till the 16th, when we directed our course, with the flag flying, to the Montreal Island. On its northern side, our people, directed by Mackay, soon found a deposit made among the rocks, by some of Sir George Back's party, but, as Mackay seemed to think, without that officer's knowledge. It contained two bags of pemican, and a quantity of cocoa or chocolate, all perfectly rotten, besides an old japanned tin vasculum, and two or three other trivial articles, of which we took possession, as a memorial of our having breakfasted on the identical spot where the tent of our gallant, though less successful, precursor stood, on his return from Point Ogle to the great Fish River that very day five years before. The arduous duty we had, in 1836, undertaken to perform, was thus fully accomplished; and the length and difficulty of the route back to the Coppermine would have amply justified our immediate return. We had all suffered more or less from the want of fuel and the deprivation of warm food, and the prospect grew more cheerful as the cold fall weather stole on apace. But having already ascertained the separation of Boothia from the American continent, on the western side of the Great Fish River, we determined not to desist till we had settled its relation thereto on the eastern side also. A fog which had come on dispersed towards evening, and afforded a full view of the picturesque view of the estuary. Far to the south Victoria Headland stood forth so clearly defined, that we instantly recognized it by Sir George Back's exquisite drawing. Cape Beaufort we almost seemed to touch, and with the telescope we were able to discover a continuous line of high land as far round as north east, about two points more northerly than Cape Hay, the extreme eastern point seen by Sir George Back.

The traverse to the farther visible land occupied six hours unremitting labour at the oar, and the sun rising on the 47th, when we scaled the bluff and singularly shaped rocky cape to which our course had been directed. It stands in lat. 63. 3. 56 North long. 94. 35 W. The azimuth compass by Jones settled exactly in the meridian, agreed with two others by the same maker, placed on the ground.

From the proximity to the magnetic pole, the compass has lately been of little or no use; but was of the less consequence as the astronomical observations were very frequent. The dip of the needle which at Thunder Cove (12th August) was 39. 29, 25, had here decreased to 39. 16. 40. North. This bold promontory, where we lay wind bound till the 19th, was named Cape Britannia, in remembrance of our glorious country. On the beetling rock that sheltered our encampment from the sea, and formed the most conspicuous object on all this part of the coast, we erected a conical pile of ponderous stones, fourteen feet high, that, if not pulled down by the natives, may defy the rage of a thousand storms. In it was placed a sealed bottle containing a sketch of our proceedings, and possession was taken of our extensive discoveries in the name of Victoria the first, amidst the firing of guns, and enthusiastic cheers of the whole party.

On the 19th, the gale shifted from N. E. to E. S. E. and after crossing a fine bay, due east, with no small toil and danger, the coast bent away northerly, which enabled us to effect a run of forty miles. Next day the wind resumed its former direction, and after pulling against it all the morning, among shoals and breakers, and gaining only three miles, we were obliged to take refuge in the mouth of a small river. From a limestone ridge, about a league inland, we obtained a view of some very remote blue land, in the N. E. quarter, in all probability one of the Southern promontories of Boothia.

Two considerable islands lay far in the offing, and others high and distant stretched from E. to E. N. E. Our view of the low main shore, was confined to five miles, in an easterly direction, after which it appeared to turn off greatly to the right. We could, therefore, scarcely doubt our having arrived at that large gulph formerly described by the Esquimaux as containing many islands and with numerous indentations stretching down to the southward, till it approached within forty miles of Repulse and Wager Bays. The exploration of such a gulph which was the main object of the Terror's ill starved voyage, would necessarily demand the whole time and energies of another expedition having a starting or retreating point much nearer to the scene of operation than Great Bear Lake, and it was quite evident to us that any further fool hardy perseverance could only lead to the loss of the great object already attained, together with that of the whole party. We must here be allowed to express our admiration of Sir John Ross's extraordinary escape from the neighbourhood, after the protracted endurance of hardships unparalleled in Arctic story. The mouth of the stream which bounded the last career of our admirable little boats, and received their name, lies in lat. 68. 25. 27 N., long. 93. 7. W., variation of compass, 16. 20. W.

The strong wind that had forbidden our advance gave wings to our retreat. The same night (August, 20th) we landed once more at Cape Britannia, and next morning recrossed the inlet directed to Point Pechell, with a heavy sea. On the 22d we explored a long narrow bay, on the west side of Point Ogle, which extends to the parallel of latitude. The north wind blew roughly, with sharp frost, and next day we got no farther than Point Richardson. From thence we crossed over, on the 24th, to what had from the continent, appeared like two islands, which we rightly conjectured to form part of the southern shore of Boothia, or to speak with greater precision, of that land on which stands Cape Felix of Capt. James Ross. About sixty miles, till the satisfaction of tracing for about sixty miles, till it turned up to the north, in lat. 65. 41. 16. N. long. 93. 22 W., only 57 miles from Ross's Pil-

lar; the dip of the needle was 89. 25. 45. N. the magnetic pole bearing N. N. E. distant ninety miles. The variation shown by both the azimuth compass and the horizontal bar needle, was 45 degrees east. The objects seen on this coast are easily enumerated. A low, uninteresting limestone tract, abounding nevertheless in reindeer, musk oxen, and old native encampments. To the westward a good deal of ice appeared, and vast numbers of snow geese passed high overhead, in long triangular flight, bound for milder skies.

Whilst engaged in taking observations, our men constructed another durable memorial of our discoveries, which was saluted in the usual manner. Then recrossing the strait on the 25th, we returned for sometime our outward route, only keeping more along the seaward verge of the islands, so as to shape a straiter course.

The weather, from being threatening and unsettled, soon became unequivocally severe. On the 29th August a severe snow storm began, that lasted for seven days, during four of which we were fixed in a single spot by the violence of the northwest gales, while the frost was so keen that the pools among the rocks on which we lay, became solid enough to bear up a man. A more moderate interval succeeded this fierce outbreak. Quitting the continent again, at the large river already mentioned, we struck N. N. W. for an extensive island 22 miles off, which we coasted (N. W.) for 20 miles; and shortly before sunset on the 6th of September, stood out from thence due north, for the nearest point of Victoria Land, which proved equally distant.

We have never seen anything more brilliant than the phosphoric gleaming of the waves when darkness sets in. The boats seemed to cleave a flood of molten silver, and the spray dashed from their bows, before the fresh breeze fell back, like showers of diamonds into the deep. It was a cold night, and when we at last made the land, cliffs, faced with eternal ice, obliged us to run on a couple of leagues before we could take the shore with safety. The coast of Victoria Land, which we explored for upwards of one hundred and fifty miles, is incomparably the boldest we have met in those seas. Often near the shore no bottom could be found with 35 fathoms line, and the Cornelian blue colour of the water everywhere indicated its profound depth. There are several noble bays, the largest of which northwest of Cape Alexander, is twenty miles wide, and equally deep, backed by snow clad mountains. It attains to 69. 40 min. north, the highest latitude of this voyage. At length we reached the extreme point seen by Mr. Simpson from Cape Franklin in 1838, where the coast of this large country begins again to bend northward of west, Cape Barrow being, by computation S. S. W. distant fifty miles. On the 10th of September we crossed this magnificent strait, with strong E. S. E. or side wind, and a rough sea, in which our gallant boats, old and worn out as they were, acquitted themselves beyond our most sanguine hopes.

Our return from Cape Barron was miserably retarded by furious north west winds and severe stress of weather. Winter permanently set in on the fifteenth of September, and next day, to the undisguised joy of the whole party, we reentered the Coppermine River, after by far the longest voyage ever performed by the boats on the Polar Sea. Leaving one of our little craft, together with the remains of the pemican (which through age and long exposure, was become quite mouldy,) and various other articles, as a prize for the first Esquimaux who may visit the Bloody Fall, we ascended the river with our double crew in four days, abandoned our tents, and every thing but absolute necessities; crossed the barren ground, up to the knees in snow, having unluckily left our snow shoes on the coast, and safely reached St. Confidence at dusk on the 24th. The fisheries had failed worse than ever, and we had good reason to congratulate ourselves on not being doomed to pass a third winter within the arctic circle.

After settling with the Indians, liberally rewarding the most deserving, and supplying all with ammunition gratuitously, we took our departure on the evening of the 26th, to go into inland batteaux—one belonging to the expedition and the other came from Fort Simpson sixteen days previous to our arrival.

Our passage of Great Bear Lake was most boisterous and inclement. In crossing the body of the lake, and other considerable traverses, our boats, with every thing in them, and even the very clothes on our backs, became converted into shapeless masses and concretions of ice. It was high time for us to escape from Great Bear Lake, for the temperature, which was at four degrees below zero when we landed at the head of the river, on the evening of the 4th October, fell ten degrees below it in the course of the night; and next day we descended the rapid stream in the very midst of the driving ice.—On entering the Mackenzie, we experienced a temporary mitigation of this excessive cold; but we should most assuredly have stuck fast above Fort Norman, had not the northern gales again arisen in their strength, and while they shattered and dispersed the rapidly forming ice, enabled us to stem the current under close reefed sails. At noon, on the 14th of October, after forcing our way with no small risk through the torrent of ice poured out by the river of the mountains, we reached this place, and were cordially welcomed by our valuable friend chief trader McPherson, who had for some time given up all hopes of our arrival.

Most of our people are still afflicted with acute pains and swelling in the limbs, caused by the cold and exposure; and are assured by Mr. McPherson that he has never known or heard of so early and rigorous a commencement of winter in Mackenzie's River. On the other hand, so fine a spring as 1839 seldom visits these frozen regions; and to this favouring circumstance under Providence, ought our signal success to be partially ascribed.

October 30.—The state of the ice at length enables us to despatch carriers to Great Slave Lake. In the meantime, Governor Simpson's highly valuable letter of the 17th June, which unfortunately missed us on our way hither, has cast up overland. We rejoice in having anticipated the Russian expedition, and secured to our country and the Company the indisputable honour of discovering the North West Passage, which has been an object of search to all maritime nations for three centuries. When our expedition was planned at Norway House in 1836, it was confidently expected that Sir George Back would have achieved the survey of the Gulf of Boothia with the Terror's boats, and that our meeting at the mouth of the Great Fish River would have left no blank in the geography of North America. That offi-

cer's failure, the exhaustion of our men and means, and the necessity of a new wintering ground, render a fresh expedition indispensable for the examination of the Gulf of Boothia, the circuit of which, to the strait of the Fury and Hecla, according to the Esquimaux accounts, cannot be less than four or five hundred miles.

It only remains for us to recommend to your honours' approbation the plan proposed by Mr. Simpson to perfect this interesting service, which, as he has no wish to avail himself of the leave of absence granted by Governor Simpson, he is prepared to follow up whenever the limited means required are placed at his disposal.—We have the honour to be, honourable Sirs, your most obedient humble servants,

PETER W. DEASE,
THOMAS SIMPSON.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S SKELETON.

In the kitchen of an inn in Salisbury, while some repairs were lately being made, a skeleton was discovered beneath the floor which is on a level with the ground. These human remains are, with good reason, supposed to have belonged to the Duke of Buckingham, who was a distinguished figure in the time of Richard the Third. History informs us that King Edward the Fourth, dying, left two sons, Edward the Fifth, and a younger brother, the Duke of York. The former being only 13 years old, at his accession to the throne, the kingdom was placed under the protectorship of the Duke of Gloucester, until the young king should arrive at age. The young princes were at first set aside, with a view to Richard's being, as it were elected to the throne. Among others he succeeded in engaging the advice and assistance of the Duke of Buckingham a popular nobleman of the time, and the subject of this memoir. The Duke of Buckingham having undertaken the cause of Richard, with the hope and promise made him of great rewards and favours from the monarch, used a variety of arguments, hollow and deceitful, adapted to catch the fancy of the populace, with a view to make the question of setting aside Edward, not merely proper and desirable, but just and necessary.

Richard's earliest care when he had attained the kingly power, was to cause the young princes to be privately put to death. Whether the king did not fulfil the promises to Buckingham which he had made to engage his assistance, coolness and distrust rose up between the sovereign and Buckingham, which proceeded so far that the latter in dread of the former, fled to his feudal domains in Wales, where he assembled his followers, and endeavoured to excite an insurrection against Richard. With the body of men whom he had levied, he passed through the forest of Dean, and advanced by hasty marches towards Gloucester, where he intended to cross the Severn. Just at that time however the river was swollen to such a degree that the country on both sides was deluged with water. This inundation continued for ten days, during which time Buckingham's army could neither pass the river nor find subsistence on their own side; they were therefore obliged to disperse and return home. The king was at this time proceeding towards Salisbury, intending to come round upon Buckingham from the south and was about two days journey from that city, when he heard of Buckingham's disasters and immediately issued a proclamation offering a reward of £1000 for his apprehension.

The duke, after the succession of his followers, resolved to take refuge at the house of a person named Humphrey Bannister, who lived near Shrewsbury, and who had once been his servant, and had received repeated obligations from the family; but this person, being unable to resist the temptation of the reward set upon the Duke's head, went and betrayed him to John Milton, the sheriff of Shropshire, who apprehended the duke while digging in a grave near Bannister's house, disguised as a poor countryman. He was instantly conveyed to Shrewsbury and examined, whence under a strong guard, he was conveyed to Richard, who had by this time reached Salisbury. It is said that Buckingham earnestly desired to be admitted to the presence of the King, and he purposed to stab him with a knife which he had secreted about his person, while in the act of kneeling before him. But he had no soon arrived at Salisbury than, without seeing the king, he was condemned and exercised in a summary way, without form of trial, on a new scaffold erected in the market place of Salisbury. Tradition assigns the court yard of the Blue Bear inn as the scene of this bloody tragedy; but great uncertainty seems already to have prevailed as to the spot where the mutilated remains of this unfortunate nobleman were finally deposited. It is supposed that the head and right arm, after having been submitted to the personal inspection of the king, then resident at "the king's house" in the Close, were sent to London to be affixed to Temple Bar, or exposed on Tower-hill, as was commonly used to be done in those times.

A tomb in the north chantry of St. Thomas's Church, Salisbury, was once supposed to contain the remains of Buckingham, and another in Britford Church, near Salisbury, obtained a reputation; but sufficient evidence has been found to show that these were only monuments to his memory, and no indication leading to probability, however, have ever appeared to point out the place of sepulture of the Duke of Buckingham, till the discovery of the skeleton took place at the above inn. The Saracen's Head Inn (owing to the peculiar contiguity of the two places) is supposed to have once formed part of the premises attached to those of the Blue Bear. The grave therefore, of the duke was probably made only a few yards, possibly feet, from the spot where he suffered decapitation. The skeleton was found about eight inches below the surface of the soil. The spinal column appeared embedded in the clay, and, on taking up some of the detached vertebrae, they crumbled to dust in the hands. All the remains were in a like friable condition. In fact, the condition of these remnants of mortality

forcibly reminds us of the pulverized and loosely adhering state, in which the remains of King Charles the First were found in the year 1813. Till that time, it had never been known where the body of this unfortunate king was deposited; and the coffin, containing his remains, was only discovered by some workmen at Windsor Castle, while engaged in making repairs. By permission of the Prince Regent, and in his presence, Sir Henry Hallford opened the coffin, and examined the body, which as far as examined, not only dispelled all doubt as the identity of it with Charles the First, but appeared in the same friable condition as the bones found in the clay beneath the floor of the Saracen's Head Inn, at Salisbury. The memorials of antiquity furnish a useful lesson to the contemplative mind, whether they come down to us in pomp and grandeur, or in sadness and humility. The Duke of Buckingham was both the tool and the victim of his sovereign, and, as both proceeded in wickedness, so the end of both was in disgrace and sorrow.

FROM THE NOVASCOTIAN.

The Papers brought by the Unicorn, are from London to the 14th, and Liverpool to the 16th. The news amounts to almost nothing. The topic which seems to engross the English papers, is the examination into the circumstances attending the murder of Lord William Russell, uncle to Lord John, a nobleman aged 72, who was found in his bed on the morning of the 6th of May, with his throat cut from ear to ear, a napkin over his face, and in such a situation as left no doubt of his assassination. His Valet, a Frenchman, named Courvoisier, has been arrested, and there appear to be good grounds of suspicion against him. He had lived with his Lordship 5 weeks, and from the fact of money, jewels, and other valuables, having been found secreted in various parts of the premises, to which the servants only, and Courvoisier in particular, had access, coupled with his behaviour on the morning of the discovery, the impression on the public mind is evidently against him.

Lord Stanley's Irish Registration Bill, the effect of which would seem to be to very considerably contract the franchise, has aroused a storm in Ireland, that is not likely soon to be allayed. O'Connell is as busy as ever—and seems determined, if Lord Stanley will not let Ireland alone, that there shall be questions of some importance to contend about.—Lord Stanley thinks that the present mode of returning members to Parliament gives Ireland too much power. O'Connell shows, that if it does she still has less than her share.

He says:—"The Irish are, in point of law, inferior in religious liberty to the English and Scotch; because we are compelled to support, from the state revenues, the church of the minority; a grievance which neither of the other two nations sustains. The Irish are inferior, in point of law, in civil liberty, to the Scotch and English, because the Scotch and English have both obtained corporate reform; whilst the Irish remain totally unreformed. The Irish are inferior, in point of law, in civil liberty, to the Scotch and English; because Scotland and England have many and valuable parliamentary franchises, of which the Irish are totally deprived. The Irish are inferior, in point of law, in civil liberty, to the Scotch and English; because the Scotch and English are adequately represented in point of numbers, in the House of Commons; whereas the Irish have not within one-third the number of Representatives they ought to have, if the Union were a just and equitable treaty and arrangement. The Irish are inferior, in point of law, in civil liberty, to the Scotch and English; because every county of England, having 100,000 inhabitants has four members in the House of Commons; whereas all the Counties in Ireland (except one) range from 150,000 to 700,000 inhabitants; and not one single county has more than two members! I have thus recapitulated enough to show that every wise and prudent politician, and that especially every generous and noble minded statesman, who desires the continuance of the legislative union between the countries, would exert all the resources of his understanding to efface every trace of those grievances, and of that inferiority whereof Ireland justly complains; and would endeavour to abolish all distinctions, and to place the inhabitants of Ireland upon the same footing of civil and religious rights and equality of political franchises with the inhabitants of England and Scotland."

A National Association has been formed in Dublin, to continue the agitation for what the Irish consider fair play:

As to the Church establishment, the proposal of Mr. O'Connell, in the plan for the National Association, is this—
"That inasmuch as the state ecclesiastical revenues of England are not applied to the sustentation of the church of the minority of the British people, and as the state ecclesiastical revenues of Scotland are not applied to the sustentation of the church of the minority of the Scotch—so the state ecclesiastical revenues of Ireland shall not be applied to the sustentation of the church of the minority of the Irish people."

"Upon this subject, we desire to be distinctly understood.
"Our object is, not to obtain for the church of the majority of the Irish people the state ecclesiastical revenues—we are thoroughly convinced that such an appropriation would injure and degrade the church of that majority."
"Let it be understood, we again repeat, that our object in this respect is, that such state ecclesiastical revenues should (after respect being had to vested interests) be applied in Ireland to the relief of the poor, to the extension of education, and for such other public charitable purposes."

The Irish Provincial papers are crowded with reports of the meeting to petition against the Bill. Kilkenny, Limerick, Newry, Connaught, Kildare, Clonmel, Kerry, &c. have protested against it. Meetings had been held at Liverpool for and against the measure.

Ireland appears to have sustained a great loss by the death of Mr. Under Secretary Drummond. The examiner thus speaks of this gentleman:

We have never recorded the death of a public man with deeper regret than the untimely fate of Mr. Drummond, the Under-Secretary of Ireland. The public service could ill afford a loss like this; but it will most poignantly be felt in that part of the empire with the government of which he was connected, and over whose affairs he exercised an influence so powerful and