

# 10 COMMUNICATIONS IN REFERENCE TO VESSELS OBSERVED

Sub-Enclosure in No. 16.

"Limerick Chronicle," 28 May 1851.

EXTRACT from a Letter of a Passenger who sailed from this Port for *Quebec*, in the "Renovation," on the 6th April last, to a Friend in Limerick.

Quebec, 9 May 1851.

WE arrived here on yesterday, after a passage which for the first 13 days promised to be one of the speediest almost on record, having been two miles to the West of the Bird Island, in the Gulf, at the time we met the ice, and having been for 16 days coasting along it, with a fair wind ever since. It has been very heavy, and a number of ships have suffered severely. Indeed, to attempt to give any description of the ice would be useless; we have sailed for 60 miles of a stretch seeking an opening without being able to effect, which was most vexatious, as had we not met with it we should have the passage in 15½ days. The icebergs we met with were frightful in size, as the basis of some of them would cover three times over the area of Limerick; and I do not at all exaggerate when I say that the steeple of the cathedral would have appeared but a small pinnacle, and a dark one, compared to the lofty and gorgeously-tinted spires that were on some of them; and more to be regretted is that we met, or rather saw at a distance, one with two ships on it, which I am almost sure belonged to Franklin's exploring squadron, as from the latitude and longitude we met them in they were drifting from the direction of Davis's Straits. Was there but a single one, it might have been a deserted whaler, but two so near each other, they must have been consorts; they were to windward of us, and a heavy sea running at the time, with thick weather coming on, we could not board them.

No. 17.

Sir

Coast Guard Office, 12 April 1852.

Encl. in No. 17.

WITH reference to my letter of the 7th instant, I have now the honour to transmit, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copy of the further report of the inspecting commander, Kilrush, forwarding the statement made to him by Mr. Simpson, of the "British Queen," respecting the two ships seen in the spring of 1851, with an iceberg, off the coast of Newfoundland, &c.

Sub-Enclosure in No. 17.  
Vide Sub-Enclosure in No. 16.

I transmit a sketch of the position of the vessels as furnished by Mr. Simpson, and also the copy of the "Limerick Chronicle," alluded to.

The Secretary of the Admiralty,  
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.  
(signed) A. Ellice,  
Comptroller-General.

Enclosure 1, in No. 17.

Limerick, 9 April 1852.

THE instant I received your letter this morning, I proceeded to Limerick, and went on board the "British Queen," where I found Mr. Simpson, late mate of the "Renovation." He states as follows:

"On the 20th of April 1851, at 6 A.M., I saw two full-rigged ships (one about 500 tons, the other 350) on an iceberg, high and dry; the larger one on her beam ends, head to the westward; three ships lower masts only standing, with bowsprit; masts painted white; apparently not housed over; the smaller one was about 350 tons, head to the southward, with lower and topsail yards across, sails unbent, topmast an end, yards very square and black, not housed over, nearly upright, both vessels apparently abandoned."

The "Renovation," was then about 30 miles to the eastward of Cape Race, and the iceberg about five miles north-west. The master was sick in bed, and when Mr. Simpson called him, and stated that two vessels were in sight, on an iceberg, he was too unwell to take any notice, and answered "Very well." Mr. Simpson therefore did not like to take the responsibility of bearing up to examine the vessels. The log on board the "Renovation" was kept by the mate (Mr. Simpson), and these circumstances were entered by him on the log. He thinks it is still in possession of Mr. Emanuel Young (the owner), at North Shields.

Sub-Enclosure in No. 17.

I beg to enclose a sketch made by Mr. Simpson of the position of the two vessels, both of which appeared to be painted black.

I have also examined Thomas Davis, now a seaman on board the "British Queen," and who was at the wheel on board the "Renovation" when the vessels were observed, who entirely corroborates, word for word, the statement made by Mr. Simpson; but with regard to the other questions in your letter, both are unable to answer them.

I close this in great haste, to save this evening's post, with a "Limerick Chronicle," with an extract of Mr. Lynch's letter to Mr. Creilly in it. The original letter, I fear, is lost.

John Jervis Palmer,  
Inspecting Commander.