

sweep of rounded granite hills, like those near Melville Sound and Cape Barrow, dipping to the sight in the E. S. E., at the distance of thirty miles. The walk round even this portion of the bay, would have consumed three days; the time allotted for outgoing was already expired, and two or three of my men were severely lame from the fatigue of their burdens, the inequalities of the ground, and the constant immersion in icy cold water. I besides cherished hopes, that by making the best of our way back we might, agreeably to my arrangements with Mr. Dease, meet him bringing one of the boats, in which case, with an open sea before us, we could have still considerably extended our discoveries before the commencement of winter. I may here remark, that we were singularly fortunate in the five days of our outward journey, the weather being so moderate and clear, that I daily obtained astronomical observations; whereas, before our departure from the boats, and during our return to them, we had continual storms, with frost and snow, rain and fogs. Close to our furthest encampment appeared the site of three Esquimaux tents of the preceding year, with a little stone chimney apart. We passed the remains of a larger camp, and the remains of several human skeletons near Cape Franklin, but, throughout the journey, we found no recent traces of that few and scattered people.

The morning of the 25th of August was devoted to the determination of our position, and the erection of a pillar of stones on the most elevated part of the point; after which, I took possession of the country, with the usual ceremony, in the name of the Hon. Company, and for the Queen of Great Britain. In the pillar I deposited a brief sketch of our proceedings, for the information of whoever might find it. The situation is in lat. 68, 43, 39 N., long., reduced by C. T. Smith's watch, from excellent lunars at the boats, 106, 3, 11 W., the magnetic variation being 60, 38, 23 E. The compass grew sluggish and uncertain in its movements as we advanced eastward, and frequently had to be shaken before it would traverse at all. Two miles to the southward of our encampment a rapid river of some magnitude discharges itself into the bay, the shores of which seemed more broken and indented than those along which we had travelled. Independently of Victoria Land, and an archipelago of islands, I have had the satisfaction of fully exploring 100 miles of coast, and of seeing 30 miles further, making in all, after deducting Franklin's half-day's journey, already mentioned, about 120 miles of continental discovery. This is, in itself, important, yet I value it chiefly for having disclosed an open sea to

the eastward, and for suggesting a new route along the southern shore of Victoria Land, by which that open sea may be traversed, while the main land, as was the case this season, is yet environed by an impenetrable barrier of ice. Whether the open sea to the eastward may lead to Ross Pillar, or to the estuary of Brack, Great Fish River, it is hard to conjecture, though the trending of the most distant land in view should rather seem to favour the latter conclusion.

The same evening, on our return, we met the ice at Trap Cape, driving rapidly to the eastward; as we proceeded, the shores continued inaccessible. Several bands of buck reindeer were tracked to the southward, along the hills; two which we shot were in far superior condition to those in Bathurst Inlet, and near the Coppermine; a few musk-oxen were also seen, and numerous flocks of white geese (*Anser Hyperboreus*), in general officered by large grey ones (*Anser Canadensis*), were seen assembling on the marshes, and taking their aerial flight to more genial climates. At dusk, on the 29th of August, our tenth day, we regained the boats, and found them still enclosed in the ice, which the north and westerly gales seemed to have accumulated from far and near towards Point Turnagain.

THOMAS SIMPSON.

Port Confidence, Sep. 15, 1838

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