

14 COMMUNICATIONS IN REFERENCE TO VESSELS OBSERVED

Had they any topgallant forecastle?

No; the ship on her beam ends was flush, her decks were clear.

Could you see whether the ships were coppered?

I could not see any of the bottom of the ship on her beam ends, owing to her position, and was apparently much embedded in the ice; could see a large portion of the other ship's bottom, which, I think, was not coppered.

Could you perceive whether the ships had any anchors in the bows or elsewhere?

None to be seen.

Can you state how the masts were painted?

I think the largest ship's were white.

Did any one go aloft to obtain a better view of the ships?

No one went aloft; it was not requisite; we could see them plainly.

Could you see any figure-head or cut-water?

I think there was no cut-water.

Could you distinguish the difference of the dimensions between the two ships?

The lower one appeared to be larger than the upper one; but this might arise from the different position in which they lay, the upper one having her bows towards us, and the other with the whole of her deck exposed to our view. They were large ships.

Were the hatchways open?

Could not see; it was too distant.

What do you consider large ships?

Ships about 400 or 500 tons.

From all your experience as a seaman, when looking at these ships, was there anything unusual in their general appearance?

They were too far off to notice particulars: our spy-glass was old, and a very indifferent one.

Could you perceive any aperture in the run for working a screw-propeller?

No: could not see the after-part of the upper ship; and the lower one being on her beam ends, and embedded in the ice, could not obtain any view of her.

Had you any piece of ordnance or signal-gun on board?

We had one, a 2 or 3-pounder.

Did you fire it, or make any signal to attract attention?

No; I doubt whether we had any powder on board.

Was the circumstance of seeing these two ships entered in the log?

It is entered in the log-book of the "Renovation."

How far do you suppose the ships were apart?

20 or 30 yards, apparently; they were very close.

What distance from the water's edge?

The ship on her beam ends, only a few yards; her masts nearly over the water.

What was the height of the ice?

The highest part about 30 feet.

Give a description of the surface and area of the ice on which the ships lay.

I think the ice on which the ships lay was five miles long.

Can you give the position of the "Renovation" when passing the ships?

We must have been out of our reckoning, much further to the northward and westward. I suppose we were to the southward of Cape Race.

How far were you from the nearest land?

When we sighted St. John's light, at 10 P.M., we must have made about a W. by N. course for 14 hours, from the ship's running 6 or 7 knots per hour.

Were you in soundings when the ships were passed?

Yes; we had tried on two occasions the previous day, with 60 fathoms of line, but no bottom. We were 80 miles to the northward and westward of our reckoning. We had no chronometer.

After you lost sight of the vessels, did any conversation arise between yourselves as to what they were?

Mr. Lynch spoke a great deal about the ships, and said it was a great pity we ran past them; and he told the pilot of them when he came on board off Cape Garp. On arrival at Quebec, Mr. Lynch wished to set off again in search of them. He spoke a great deal on the subject to the master, who was frequently much vexed with him for it, also because he had not examined them.

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