

No. 1.
Narrative of Pro-
ceedings of Sir
John Richardson.

long. The last season furnishes a strong instance of the early date at which the winter occasionally sets in in these seas.

Having performed this service, or prosecuted it as far as practicable, with a due regard to the safety of your party, you are to return with all speed to Fort Confidence, and embarking without delay the instruments and stores remaining at that post, to proceed forthwith to Fort Simpson. Such of the stores as are useful to the Company are to be valued and handed over to them, and the instruments are to be forwarded to England, addressed to the Secretary of the Admiralty. The men are to be sent to winter at some fishing station sufficiently to the southward to ensure their early arrival at Norway House next spring; and you are to direct them to be furnished with nets, that they may provide for their own sustenance during the winter, with as little expense to the Government as possible.

Immediately on your return from the coast, you are to communicate an account of your proceedings to the Secretary of the Admiralty, for the information of their Lordships; and you are also to transmit to him a chart of any hitherto unexplored coasts or straits you may discover, as soon as you have had leisure to construct it.

Given under my hand, at Fort Confidence, 1st May 1849.

John Rae, Esq.

(signed) *John Richardson,*
Commanding Arctic Searching Expedition.

My Dear Rae,

Lake Winnipeg, August 19, 1849.

As I learn from the newspapers which I have just read, and which I shall forward for your perusal, that Sir James Ross did not reach Barrow's Strait till after the 28th of August, and that it is probable that he may have been arrested short of his intended wintering quarters at Melville Island or Banks's Land, and could not consequently send off his proposed spring party to the Coppermine River this season, I consider it likely that he may determine on sending that party next spring; and if so, by the present arrangements they will, on their arrival at Great Bear Lake, find Fort Confidence deserted.

I therefore think it important that you should engage either the Chief of some party, or two expert hunters, to pass the months of June and July 1850 on the portage between Bear Lake and the Coppermine River, promising them a handsome reward if they render any assistance to the expected white party, and paying them such moderate sums, in addition to a full supply of ammunition, as may content them for spending the summer on such excellent hunting grounds.

You will have no difficulty in engaging either Martin Lake or Bear Lake Indians for this service; and there is abundance of time, after the arrival of the March packet, for them to reach Fort Confidence long before the snow begins to melt.

I will thank you to furnish the Indians with five or six memoranda in water-proof cases, with directions to plant them in conspicuous places at the mouth of the Kendall, Fletis Station, Fort Confidence, and elsewhere.

These precautions may prove to be unnecessary, as Ross's party will most likely, early in their march, discover some of your landmarks, and learn, by the notes you have left, your intention of quitting Fort Confidence this season, and thereupon turn back to the ship. But, at a small expense, if the Indians carry their instructions out fully, they will save the party from having to make the long journey round Bear Lake without assistance.

I remain, &c.

(signed) *John Richardson.*
