

Proceedings of Captain Collinson, C.B., Her Majesty's Discovery Ship
Enterprize, Behring Strait Division of Arctic Search.

Captain COLLINSON, C.B. to the SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

Sir,

Her Majesty's Ship Enterprize, Port Clarence,
August 22d, 1854.

I have the honour to report the return of Her Majesty's Ship under my command from the Arctic Regions, without, I regret to say, having accomplished their Lordships' instructions. Enclosed is a condensed narrative of my proceedings since leaving the port on the 10th of July 1851, together with track charts, by which their Lordships will perceive, that our progress to the northward and eastward the first season was effectually stopped by a barrier of ice, at the northern end of the Prince of Wales Strait, in latitude $73^{\circ} 30' N.$ and longitude $114^{\circ} 35' W.$ on the 31st of August; that I then returned to the southward, and traced the west face of Baring Land, as far as $72^{\circ} 52' N.$ and $125^{\circ} 24' W.$ without finding a place sufficiently sheltered for winter quarters, and eventually was frozen in, in a bay in Prince Albert Land, near the entrance of the Prince of Wales Strait, in latitude $71^{\circ} 35'$ and longitude $117^{\circ} 39'$. In the ensuing spring travelling parties passed through the Prince of Wales Strait, and then separating, one succeeded (after undergoing much hardship) in reaching Melville Island, but were not able to get as far as Winter Harbour. The other pursued the north face of Prince Albert Land, and found the coast trend to the southward, reaching an inlet in $72^{\circ} 45' N.$ and $113^{\circ} 40' W.$ A third party traced the coast of Prince Albert Land to the southward, where a broad inlet separating it from Wollaston Land was discovered. The ice broke up, and permitted us to move out of our winter quarters the first week in August, but kept us embayed in its vicinity until the first week in September; when I followed up the track of the Southern expedition, thinking it would lead me into the centre of this Archipelago; but finding Prince Albert and Wollaston Land joined to Victoria, forming one large island, I availed myself of the short remnant of the season, pushed through the Dolphin and Union Strait, and succeeded in reaching Cambridge Bay, where I thought I could best carry out the tenor of their Lordships' orders, before we were overtaken by the winter.

A travelling party traced the eastern coast of Victoria Island in the ensuing spring, but owing to the hummocky nature of the ice, did not succeed in reaching further than latitude $70^{\circ} 26'$ and longitude $100^{\circ} 45'$. Having previously fallen in with a cairn erected by Chief Factor Rae, which gave me the first intimation that the ground we were now upon had already been examined. Leaving Cambridge Bay on the 9th of August, we experienced some detention from the ice opposite to the Coppermine River, and again at Cape Bathurst, which was passed on the 31st, from whence until to the west of Herschel Island we found a comparatively open sea, but here our progress was stopped, nor could we succeed in getting further than the west end of Camden Bay, where in $70^{\circ} 7' N.$ and $145^{\circ} 29' W.$ we passed the third winter. An attempt was made to explore to the northward in the spring, but failed, owing to the impracticable state of the ice. On the 2d of July, a party of Barter Island natives came to us, bringing with them a notice printed on board the Plover, at Point Barrow, and dated July 4th, 1853, by which I learnt that the Investigator had not been seen since 1850. As it therefore appeared probable she was still shut up on the west face of Baring's Land, and that instead of returning to Point Barrow after depositing the last information we had picked up respecting her movements, Captain McClure had passed the winter of 1852 to the north of the farthest point visited by us, whence the close seasons of 1852 and 1853 prevented his escape, I determined upon opening a communication with the Plover at Point Barrow, immediately the coast water would admit of a boat's proceeding, so as to enable Captain Maguire to return to the south, and procure all the provisions in his power, so as to equip me to return to the eastward this season. Lieutenant Jago was accordingly despatched in a whale boat on the 10th, and succeeded in reaching Point Barrow on the 24th, whence by the native account