

## 36 COMMUNICATIONS IN REFERENCE TO VESSELS OBSERVED

statement, he, on his passage to Kingston, stopped at Prescott, and examined Mr. Lynch, who no doubt forwarded it at the same time; but, considering a personal examination might throw more light on this important matter, I proceeded at once to Prescott, and examined him very particularly on the two questions their Lordships were anxious about; viz.

1. Was the weather clear at the time of passing?
2. Could any optical delusions have deceived him as to the undoubted fact of the objects seen being ships?

*Enclosure in 49.*

I now have the honour to forward to you his examination; but, considering that the above two questions were of importance, and the mail having left Montreal, I telegraphed them to New York, to go by the packet with the other documents. But the statement of the mate, Mr. Lynch, and John Todd differ so little on the several points, that there cannot, in my opinion, be the least doubt as to the fact that two ships or barks were seen by the brig "Renovation" near Newfoundland on or about the 20th of April 1851.

I have also taken steps that every master of the Quebec and Montreal trade arriving here shall be examined before they sail as to whether any vessels were seen by them on the ice or wrecks floating on their passage out last year; but it is here necessary to state that our Montreal trade was in the Gulf before those vessels were seen, and I think they would have drifted to the southward of the track of our Quebec ships before they reached the stream of the latitude they were seen in.

The collector and comptroller of customs here are also using every exertion to obtain information on this subject. Mr. Bruce, the comptroller, has, at my request, written to the comptroller at St. John's, Newfoundland, to examine the sealers and other spring vessels; and if he gains any information respecting the ships seen on the ice, will forward it immediately to their Lordships.

Not having received, by some mistake, Mr. Barrow's letter, with its enclosures, until I returned from Prescott to Quebec, and there being a difference of opinion of the ship upright on the ice, between the mate and Mr. Lynch, I telegraphed to Mr. Luard, the barrack-master at Prescott, who had assisted me in examining Mr. Lynch, to examine him again particularly as to their position, and received the following answer:—"The stern of the vessel furthest on the iceberg was towards the vessel on her beam ends nearest the water." This appears to me to be the only difference of any consequence. As to the distance from them, from the very short time they took in passing, I think it must be even less than three miles.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *Edward Boxer,*  
Resident Agent of Transports.

The Secretary of the Admiralty.

### Enclosure in No. 49.

*John S. Lynch, Esq. further Examined by Captain Boxer, R.N., at Prescott, on the 17th May 1852.*

STATE if the weather was clear, and if there was any swell upon the ice in passing the vessels?

The weather was clear, and there was a swell breaking on the ice.

When you first saw the vessels, in what direction were they from the "Renovation," and distance, as near as you can judge?

On the starboard bow, and the distance about three miles, and when abreast of them the distance about the same.

How was the wind?

On the starboard side.

Do you recollect what sail was set?

Under easy sail; thinks topgallant sails were set, but not sure.

State how long the vessels remained in sight of the "Renovation"?

Distinctly for half an hour, and over an hour altogether.

When you first saw the vessels, did you state to the captain, mate, or crew, that in your opinion they might be Sir John Franklin's ships?

Immediately after I was called I examined the ships with a telescope, and stated my opinion, first to the mate and to the captain, and spoke general, that they were Sir John Franklin's ships.

What