

shortest route to Fort Simpson. The guide will be paid 40 M. Br. for the trip, with ten skins additional if he perform the journey in less than twenty days; his companion is to receive thirty skins.

As it is not improbable that an express may arrive here during my absence, and before you leave this, you are hereby authorized to open any official letter or letters to my address that it may bring. If you learn by them that the party of Sir John Franklin has been found, or certain knowledge of their fate obtained, making it unnecessary to carry on the summer search with boats, you will, as quickly as you can, use every effort to get the stores, &c. now at the Kendall River transported to the Forks of the Dease, and "cached" there under the care of a man or two, until the river is navigable, when you will send one of the small boats for them. It would nevertheless be advantageous to leave a couple of men and Indians at the provision station on the Kendall to await my return.

Any packet that may be brought here after your departure should be sent after you by Fabien, and directions are to be given him to do so.

Should any unforeseen occurrence prevent my return from the coast to the Kendall in June, you are to endeavour to carry out the objects of the expedition in the same way as I would have done if present, with this exception, that you had better proceed in the direction as nearly as you can which I had previously taken, unless the men that accompanied me reach you in safety, and report that there are no traces of the missing navigators in that quarter. In such a case the route I would recommend is round either the east or west known extremity of Victoria Land, and then towards Cape Walker, if the land trends that way; but information from the Esquimaux may lead you to follow some other course.

With these harmless people you will carry on a friendly intercourse, and endeavour to gain their confidence, which it is not easy to do, as they are very shy and timid.

Whatever may be the distance that the ice permits you to advance, you should commence your return so as to reach the Coppermine by the 4th or 5th September at latest, unless the autumn is very fine, and there is some advantage to be gained by a longer stay on the coast.

On your arrival here you will immediately embark all the party and property of every description in the two large boats, and proceed to Fort Simpson; thence, if no orders to the contrary are received from Sir George Simpson or Mr. Colville, on to Slave Lake, or, if possible, Athabasca, by open water, with the men that were engaged in the Red River Colony, who are to travel thither as soon as winter journeying is practicable.

At your earliest convenience you will forward to Sir George Simpson a brief statement of your proceedings from the time of my leaving this place to the date of your letter.

Having full reliance upon your solicitude to execute efficiently the duties assigned to you, I trust you may be successful in their performance, and be blessed with health and favourable weather to carry them on satisfactorily.

Given under my hand, at Fort Confidence, Bear Lake, this 22d day of April 1851.

(Signed) JOHN RAE, C.F.
Commanding A. S. Expedition.

DR. RAE TO SIR GEORGE SIMPSON.

Provision Station, Kendall River, 10th June 1851.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that I arrived at this place to-day from the Arctic coast with my two men, having been absent forty-two days, during which the shore of Wollaston Land was examined to the eastward of longitude 110°, and westward as far as longitude 117° 17', without finding any strait or passage leading to the north, and without seeing any traces of Sir John Franklin's party, or obtaining any tidings of them from the Esquimaux we met with.

I left Fort Confidence on the 25th April, accompanied by four men with three sledges drawn by dogs, and a small sledge drawn by the men alternately, on which our provisions and baggage were stowed. We reached this station on the 27th, and were detained two days by stormy weather. This time was profitably employed in arranging our baggage and stores, repairing and strengthening our sledges, and in recruiting the dogs.

On the 30th, everything being in readiness and the weather fine, I started for the coast with two men (Beads and Linklater), and two sledges drawn by five dogs. A fatigue party of three men and two dogs accompanied us to within half a day's march of the coast. In consequence of a great thaw that had occurred the previous week, which cleared much of the ground of snow, the travelling was extremely bad, and although long detours were made to find a good road for the sledges, they got much injured by the stones.

On the 1st May we put "en cache" for our return journey, a little pemmican and flour, and next day, when ten miles from the coast, the fatigue party was sent back. After experiencing much difficulty in crossing some deep ravines we reached the shore of Richardson Bay, about five miles west of the mouth of the Coppermine near midday, when I was