

general point of rendezvous, but nothing was found but a paper left there by Capt. Parry, in 1819, which, although much damaged, was clearly deciphered.

On the 1st of September the Expedition arrived off Cape York, where a party was sent on shore to explore, and to fix a conspicuous signal, in which was placed a cylinder containing papers for the guidance of any party that might fall in with it, a service performed with much skill, under difficult circumstances, by Lieut. McClintock. The weather had now become stormy and foggy, but still the ships were pushed forward, despite all obstacles; guns were discharged; rockets and blue lights fired; and casks were each day thrown overboard, containing notices that a depôt of provisions and other necessities would be found at Cape Leopold, which place, the appointed rendezvous, it now became necessary for the Expedition to make as soon as possible, a course of considerable difficulty and danger, from the immense quantity of ice, which Sir James was of opinion was greater than had ever before been seen in Barrow's Straits at so early a period of the season.

On the 11th of September the ships entered Port Leopold harbour, a spacious and commodious bay, with excellent groundings, good depth of water, and a sandy bottom, situated on the northern extremity of the west shore of Prince Regent's Inlet. Fortunate was it that the right moment was chosen, for Sir James says—"Had we not got into port that day, it would have been impossible to have done so any day afterwards, the main pack having during the night closed the land, and completely sealed the mouth of the harbour. We had now," he continues, "accomplished one very material point, and were rejoiced to find the anchorage, of which we had before been in much doubt, well adapted to our purpose. I resolved, therefore, that it should be the winter quarters of the 'Investigator,' whilst the steam launch should proceed westward, in search of a harbour for the 'Enterprise.'"

It, however, shortly became certain, from the early setting in of winter, and the unbroken state of the ice, that it would be impossible to reach Melville Island, and the pack at the harbour's mouth preventing immediate departure, all hands were set to work, to land with the greatest despatch three months' provisions from each ship, on Whaler Point. These operations were still incomplete when, from the significant appearance of the young ice, it became necessary to turn attention to the ships. A quantity of heavy ice had drifted into the bay, and collected in their neighbourhood, and the young ice was making rapidly over, when a prevalence of easterly winds caused the pack to press so heavily against the outer margin of the harbour ice, that the ships were carried away with their anchors so far up towards the head of the bay, that they grounded at low water, and it became necessary for the crews to cut a channel in the ice forty feet wide, to warp them off the shore; this had scarcely been accomplished, when another severe pressure drove them again into shallow water, and had they not been hauled off in time, it is probable they must have laid aground all the winter. The work of cutting was recommenced, and after two or three days, they were again got into a position of comparative safety,