

nerable ships, at that phalanx of gallant and devoted men in hard conflict with nature, yearning for the distinction of saving their fellow men, and consider the generous expenditure and the boundless sympathy which have produced the noble spectacle, I pause, and for a moment doubt whether I should have written as I have done.

And yet it is still true that your noble work is incomplete, and that the glory which has hitherto invested it, is about to set in clouds and darkness. It will remain an imperishable fact that the search for these brave martyrs to their duty was given up, not because every part of the Arctic seas had been searched for them in vain, as is too often asserted, but because you have not distinctly authorised, nor sufficiently enabled them to be followed where alone they are to be sought, with any probability of success. Any attempt to divert men's minds from this melancholy truth will I am sure eventually fail.

It is to record my own dissent from such a fatal conclusion, and respectfully to protest against the arbitrary decree you have announced, that I have thus ventured to address you. Would that others who might prevail with you better than I can do, had rendered my hard task unnecessary; that they could induce you to feel that the blessing of them who were ready to perish might yet be yours.

My advocacy must be weakened, perhaps even my facts suspected, because I am too deeply interested, and indeed in some respects my position is a false as well as painful one, for as I could not have dared to plead with you at all unless I had had a husband's life at stake for my excuse, so it may look as if for his sake alone I pleaded, and expected such great things to be done.

There are some I trust amongst those who share with me a common sorrow who will not judge me thus, and all I think must feel, that had my humble endeavours met with any measure of success, it would have been for the good of the whole, as well as of him whose name has sometimes been too exclusively used as the representative of a corporate misfortune.

As to the approbation or the censure to which any poor efforts on my part have been obnoxious, my heart has been too full, and is so still, to be either oppressed by the obloquy or elated by the praise.

It remains for me only to thank your Lordships for the communication you have been pleased to make to me, that the widows of those who are to be considered as having died in the service of their country, after the 31st of March next, will be entitled to pensions, according to the existing regulations. Your Lordships will scarcely require me to tell you, after what I have written, that I do not feel it in my power either to claim or to accept a widow's pension.

Before concluding this long and painful letter, allow me to express a hope that I have not now, nor at any time, abused the privilege which belongs to weakness and irresponsibility, or which has been accorded to me by your generous indulgence; and if any hasty expression such as I ought to have avoided has escaped my pen, I entreat you to overlook it, as not intentionally disrespectful.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Jane Franklin.*