

6. Should the state of the ice in Baffin Bay be such as to render it doubtful whether you will be able to make your passage across to Lancaster Sound during the summer, it is our most positive direction that you are on no account whatever to run the risk of either the Phoenix or the Transport, being frozen in and detained during the winter of 1853-54; and if you should consider there is a chance of such being the case, you are immediately to send the Transport to Woolwich, and also return there with the steam vessel under your command. But if you should get through Baffin Bay, and find Lancaster Sound closed so as to prevent your making the passage to Beechey Island, you are to consider whether it will be possible to land the stores, coal, &c., at or near Cape Warrender, and from thence to send the Transport direct to England, and to take such steps as you may deem necessary, so as, if possible, to communicate overland with Beechey Island.

7. You are distinctly to understand that the principal and chief object of your orders is to communicate with Beechey Island, for the purpose of landing stores, and obtaining information, and from thence to return direct to England. But should the season prove to be a very open one, and on your return from Beechey Island, you should have an opportunity of examining the coast in the vicinity of Cape Walsingham, we do not object to your doing so, but on no account are you to risk the safety of the ship, or your being detained, as you must positively return to England this season.

8. We herewith send you instructions to Sir E. Belcher, or the Senior Officer at Beechey Island, which you will deliver on your arrival.

Given under our hands this 11th day of May 1853.

(Signed)

J. R. G. GRAHAM.

HYDE PARKER.

M. F. F. BERKELEY.

R. S. DUNDAS.

ALEX. MILNE.

To Edw. A. Inglefield, Esq.,

Her Majesty's Steam Sloop Phoenix,
Woolwich.

By Command of their Lordships,

(Signed) R. OSBORNE.

By the Commissioners for Executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

We have to inform you that we have dispatched Her Majesty's steam vessel Phoenix, under the command of Commander Inglefield, with the Breadalbane transport, to Beechey Island for the purpose of replenishing the ships under your command with stores and provisions, in case your supplies may have been so far reduced by the depôt formed at Melville Island and the various cachets on the coast, as to prevent you from continuing further search for Sir John Franklin, during this season and the winter of 1853-54, if the information you may have gained determine you to continue such further search.

2. In communicating with you on the subject of your former orders and the service on which you are employed, we are aware how impossible it is for us to send out any definite instructions with reference to your future proceedings, when we are ignorant of the position in which you may now be placed, or whether any traces of Sir John Franklin's expedition may have been found during last autumn or the spring of this year, and what steps you may have considered it most expedient to adopt. But if no trace of the missing ships have been found beyond the Wellington Channel, and if it should appear that by the extended search you may have been enabled to make in that quarter, that the missing ships did not proceed in that direction, and if Captain Kellett should have reached Melville Island, as directed by his instructions; and his land expeditions should also have failed in finding any such trace, it does not appear to us that there is any other direction in which a prospect of their discovery can be expected. Every accessible part of the shores of the Polar Seas, west of Lancaster Sound, will have been visited without finding a trace of the missing ships; except their former station at Beechey Island in 1845 and 1846. In such a contingency as this, and if such should likewise be your opinion, after mature consideration with the senior officers under your command, there appears no other course left but to abandon all further search.