

**CAPTAIN SIR JOHN ROSS'S**  
VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY IN SEARCH OF A  
**NORTH-WEST PASSAGE,**

AND  
RESIDENCE IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS IN 1820, 30, 31, 32, 33, INCLUDING THE REPORTS OF  
CAPT. J. C. ROSS,  
AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE NORTHERN MAGNETIC POLE.

**CHAPTER I.**

THE PROJECT OF THE EXPEDITION, AND ITS OUTFIT.

AFTER the return of that expedition which had attempted to reach the Pole in 1827, I submitted, to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and, subsequently, to the Lord High Admiral, the plan of the voyage which I am now about to relate. I had long been convinced that the navigation of the arctic sea would prove more easy to a steam vessel than to any merely sailing ship, and for reasons which will, I believe, be fully appreciated by all to whom this navigation is familiar. When the ice is open, or the sea navigable, it is either calm, or the wind is adverse, since it is to southerly winds that this state of things is owing: so that the sailing vessel is stopped exactly where every thing else is in her favour, while the steam boat can make a valuable progress. The small draught of water in these vessels is another advantage; their power can also drive them through bay ice where, except in a fresh and favourable breeze, a sailing ship would be entirely impeded: while to add to all, the facility with which they can be moved, without wind, or in spite of it, must render it comparatively easy for them to avoid the masses of ice, and also to find places of shelter, where other vessels would fail.

This proposal was not, however, accepted: but being satisfied that the possibility of the expected route to the westward, through Prince Regent's inlet, might thus be established, or otherwise, and the question, therefore, as far as related to a north-west passage by this strait, be set at rest, I resolved not to abandon my design, without making some further trials, in another manner.

I therefore laid the scheme which I had formed, before Mr. Sheriff Booth, an old and intimate friend, with whose liberality and spirit I was well acquainted: but as, at that time, the parliamentary reward of £20,000 was still held out to the discoverer of a north-west passage, he declined embarking in what might be deemed by others a mere mercantile speculation.

In 1828 I again submitted my plan to the Admiralty, with some improvements; but the answer which I received was, that government did not intend to send out any more expeditions on this enquiry.

I was then persuaded to apply to Mr. Thornton, of Old Swan, a well-known London merchant; pointing out to him, as a temptation, the value of the promised reward, and that of the Fury's stores, which I could not fail to reach. My answer was delayed for three months; and, at the end of that time, it was a refusal.

Soon after, it was with some surprise I heard that a bill had been brought into parliament and passed; of which, while abolishing the board of Longitude, the effect also was to repeal that which had held out the above-named reward for the discovery of a north-west passage.

Whatever else might be my thoughts on this subject, it had the advantage of at least removing the scruples of Mr. Sheriff Booth: and I accordingly received from him, in the most liberal and disinterested manner, entire power to provide on his account, all that I deemed necessary for the expedition.

After examining various steam ships that were advertised

for sale, I purchased, at Liverpool, the Victory, which had been once employed as a packet between that port and the Isle of Man, and replaced the old paddles by the superior ones of Mr. Robertson's construction; arriving with her in London, on the 2d of November.

Here she was put into the hands of Mr. Fearnall, to be raised on, and to be strengthened in the usual manner, which I need not describe. Her original tonnage was 85, but by raising five feet and a half on her, she became capable of carrying a hundred and fifty tons, including the engine with the necessary complement of provisions.

The engine was made by Braithwaite and Erickson, being a patent contrivance; and the paddle wheels were so constructed that they could be hoisted out of the water in a minute. There was no flue; instead of which, the fires were kept in action by bellows, and it was, of course, a high pressure engine, the boilers of which were heated by pipes passing through them, in a manner now sufficiently familiar.

The stores of provision and fuel were for a thousand days; the former being of the best quality, and containing a proportion of preserved meats; while all the usual necessities which experience had taught us to provide for such voyages as this, were supplied in the same liberal manner.

With instruments we were well furnished; having every thing that could be really wanted. Besides two chronometers of my own, there was one lent by Messrs. Parkinson and Frodsham, and three were entrusted to us by Mr. Murray. I had a transit instrument of three feet radius, a theodolite of nine inches, and a powerful telescope by Tulley; with five sextants, two altitude instruments, four barometers, twelve thermometers, two dipping needles, and several compasses; besides which H. M. Government lent me several valuable instruments and books which had been used in the former expeditions.

Having at length brought every thing to a state of forwardness, I signified my intentions to the Admiralty; and soon after made them public. On this, applications to serve in the expedition under me, came from many quarters, even from officers of my own rank; some of whom also offered to bear a share in the expenses, so strong was the interest which had been excited. They were not less numerous from men who wished to serve as sailors; but my officers had already been chosen, and the list of men was soon filled up.

As my second in command, I had chosen my nephew, Commander Ross, who had been on every one of the northern voyages, while my former purser in the Isabella, Mr. Thom, volunteered as third; both of these officers undertaking, like myself, to serve without pay. A surgeon, Mr. Macdiarmid, was procured some time afterwards.

Among the petty officers were three mates; and our crew consisted of a carpenter and his mate, two engineers, three stokers, a steward, a cook, and nine seamen; the names of the ship's company were as follow:

John Ross, captain, R.N. James Clark Ross, commander, ditto. William Thom, purser, ditto. George Macdiarmid, surgeon. Thomas Blauky, first mate. Thomas Abernethy, second mate. George Faylor, third mate. Chimham Thomas, carpenter. Alexander Brunton, first engineer. Allan Mac-