

Wellington Channel. I was present at the interview he had with Captain Austin on board the "Resolute," on the 11th of August, when I can testify that Captain Penny made no application at that time for a steam-vessel; moreover, I can testify that the application for a steam-vessel would have been absurd, as it was quite impossible she could have proceeded up that channel. The "Felix" was the last vessel that left that spot on the 13th of August, at which time the barrier of ice was still across it; on that day, no water could be seen from Cape Spencer to the northward, and then Captain Penny's vessels were both to the eastward of Cape Riley. Captain Penny asserts that Captain Austin took the "Felix" in tow to take her home, that she might take the credit of his discoveries; but the truth is, that Captain Austin offered to tow Captain Penny's vessels out of Lancaster Sound, which offer he did not accept; and it was then that he offered to take us as far as Union Bay, Beechey Island, where Captain Penny must have seen the "Felix" as he passed.

I have now only one more subject to disabuse. Captain Penny's whole idea that Sir John Franklin went up the Wellington Channel, was based on the fact of his having found upon the ice two chips of wood, which I verily believe must have been thrown on the ice by some of his own crew, for otherwise they would have been found sunk considerably below the surface, and they were such pieces of wood as were numerous where the ships wintered. But if Captain Penny really believed that the missing ships had gone up what he now calls the Victoria Channel (not marked as such in the chart he gave to me), why did he not remain himself to explore it in the spring?—He ventured to say that he had not enough of provisions, because he had given some to the "Felix"; but this he denied on the Committee, as two cwt. of carrots and a bag of potatoes were all we got, and for which we would have supplied him with ten tons of coals, and six casks of flour; but Captain Austin would certainly have supplied him up to three years; besides the depôt at Leopold Island was within 60 miles of where his vessel would be. When I said in my evidence that Captains Austin and Penny were both justified in coming home, it was with the conviction that they both thought and believed that the locality was completely searched, and that they both believed (as I do) that the missing ships never went up that Channel. I have no doubt that they lost both seasons of 1845 and 1846, and that finding they had only provisions for another year (and perhaps less, as many of Goldner's canisters were found with only one cut at the top, which being convex were clear proofs of their putrescent condition), that they were lost on the passage home. Captain Penny's assertion (page 10), that the loss of two ships with the whole crews is next to impossible, and contrary to all experience; this observation cannot apply to ships wrecked in Baffin's Bay; after the month of September there is no experience of any ships being lost in Baffin's Bay, but in the summer.

In conclusion, I deeply regret that Captain Penny has been so imprudent as to publish what he has done; I believed that he really had been actuated by feelings of philanthropy, touching the rescue of my gallant friend Franklin and his brave companions; he had at one time gained my esteem and regard, and he knows that I acted as a peacemaker between him and those whom his virulent temper had offended. I was an admirer of his zeal and unflinching perseverance, and I then believed that he had no sinister motive; it has been therefore with mixed feelings of sorrow and of pity that I have been constrained to change my opinion of an individual who has proved that he ought not to have been elevated to the position in which he was unfortunately placed.

(signed) *John Ross*, Rear-Admiral.

—No. 7.—

Sir,

Admiralty, 13 March 1852.

I HAVE received and laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of the 10th instant, with its enclosure, on the subject of Adam Beck's deposition relative to the missing ships under the orders of Captain Sir John Franklin.

I am, &c.

Rear Admiral, Sir John Ross, c. B.

(signed) *Augustus Stafford*.

—No. 8.—

Sir,

267, Strand, London, 23 March 1852.

ENCLOSED you will receive the extract of a letter I have this day received from Inspector-general Lewis Platon, touching the fate of Sir John Franklin's expedition, which I am to request that you will be pleased to lay before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for their Lordships' serious consideration, and