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ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

COPIES of INSTRUCTIONS Issued, during the present Season, to the Commanders of Her Majesty's Ships now engaged in the ARCTIC REGIONS in the Search for Sir *John Franklin's* Expedition.

(*Sir Thomas Acland.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
7 April 1854.

ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 4 April 1854;—for,

COPIES “of any INSTRUCTIONS which either have been Issued, or hereafter may be Issued, during the present Season, to the Commanders of Her Majesty’s Ships now engaged in the ARCTIC REGIONS in the Search for Sir John Franklin’s Expedition.”

Admiralty, }
7 April 1854. }

JOHN JONES DYER,
Chief Clerk.

INSTRUCTIONS Issued, during the present Season, to the Commanders of Her Majesty’s Ships now engaged in the ARCTIC REGIONS in the Search for Sir John Franklin’s Expedition

Sir,

Admiralty, 11 January 1854.

WITH reference to the Sailing Orders addressed to you on the 9th of February last by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, wherein you were directed to proceed in the summer of 1854 with the ship under your command from Port Clarence to Honolulu, and there wait their further orders; I have their Lordships’ commands to send you herewith a copy of Instructions which have been given to Commander Maguire of Her Majesty’s sloop “Plover,” and to desire that you complete your provisions and stores from Her Majesty’s ship which may convey these orders, and exchange any of your officers and men, and that you remain at Grantley Harbour until the summer of 1855. When that season shall have arrived, and you can leave the harbour, you will proceed to the northward for the purpose of assisting the “Plover” to return to Port Clarence, preparatory to her finally leaving Behring Straits, or in case the “Plover” has not wintered to the northward, for the purpose of communicating with the shore, and looking for any of the crew of Her Majesty’s ship “Enterprise,” should circumstances have compelled them to fall back on Point Barrow; and having remained on this service so long as the season will permit, you will again communicate with Grantley Harbour, and there deposit spare provisions, stores, clothing, coals, candles, &c., in the house which you may have built, also one or more boats, and having left every information for the guidance of any party who may arrive there, you will proceed with the ship under your command to San Francisco and Valparaiso for further orders.

You will on no account risk the safety of the ship, or her being detained during the winter of 1855; and you are distinctly to understand that no ship will be sent from the Pacific station in 1855 to communicate with Grantley Harbour; which port you must positively leave in the autumn of that year, in company with Her Majesty’s sloop “Plover,” should that ship be still at Behring Straits.

2 INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED TO COMMANDERS OF H. M. SHIPS

Should Her Majesty's sloop "Plover" have been lost or found unfit for service, rendering it necessary that she should be abandoned, you will receive Commander Maguire, his officers and crew, on board as passengers, in case they may not have joined the ship sent from the Pacific station.

In the event of England being at any time involved in hostilities with any other power during your employment on the above service, you are clearly to understand that you are not to commit any hostile act whatever, the ship under your command being fitted out for the sole purpose of aiding those engaged in scientific discoveries, and it being the established practice of all civilised nations to consider vessels so employed as exempt from the operations of war.

I am, &c.

Commander Trollope,
Her Majesty's Ship "Rattlesnake."

W. A. B. Hamilton.

Sir,

Admiralty, 11 January 1854.

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, by their instructions to you, dated the 15th February 1853, and transmitted to Behring Strait by Her Majesty's ship "Amphitrite," directed the return of Her Majesty's sloop "Plover," under your command, from the winter quarters at Point Barrow to Grantley Harbour, so soon as the season of 1854 would permit. I am now commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you that Captain M'Clure, in Her Majesty's ship "Investigator," arrived at a harbour on the N.E. shore of Bank's Land, on the 24th of September 1851, and subsequently communicated with Melville Island, thereby insuring the safety of the crew of that ship.

By your letter of the 21st of August last, it appears that Her Majesty's ship "Enterprise" had been seen by the natives of the northern shore of America, near the Colville River, in August 1851. If Captain Collinson should have found the same extent of open water along that shore as was experienced by Captain M'Clure, and if he pursued the same track, their Lordships have reason to expect that he may have been enabled to reach a position to the eastward of Cape Bathurst, and from thence, by means of travelling parties, to have obtained, from the records left by the officers of the "Investigator," information of the proceedings of that ship as a guide to his future plans.

In whatever position the "Enterprise" may at this time be placed, it is obvious that in the ensuing spring (1854) Captain Collinson, from the reduced state of his supplies, will be compelled to abandon his ship. It may be presumed that, if to the eastward of the Mackenzie River, and having found the records of Captain M'Clure, that he will push on with his crew to the north-eastward, with the view of reaching Melville Island, or he may divide his ship's company, and send one portion by the Mackenzie River, with the intention of reaching the Hudson's Bay posts.

If, however, by any unfortunate accident the "Enterprise" has been lost, it is by no means improbable that Captain Collinson may have returned to the "Plover." If such should have been the case, there will exist no further necessity for the detention of the "Plover" and "Rattlesnake" at Behring Strait, and my Lords desire you will accordingly proceed to San Francisco and Valparaiso to wait their further orders.

But should no further information have reached you respecting the "Enterprise" since she was reported off the Colville, it will be necessary for you to consider the expediency of remaining for another season at Point Barrow, with the view of affording assistance to Captain Collinson and his crew, should he still be compelled to fall back on the "Plover." On this point we are unable, from want of information relative to your proceedings since August last, and the further tidings you may have gained respecting the "Enterprise," to give you any definite instructions; their Lordships entirely rely on your judgment as to the necessity of your remaining another year. They desire me to acquaint you that

that the "Plover" and "Rattlesnake" are now detained solely on account of and to afford assistance to Captain Collinson and the crew of the "Enterprise." If you feel certain that the crew of that ship is safe, you are hereby directed to discontinue your present service and to return to Valparaiso. If you should, however, after full deliberation, deem it to be essentially necessary to extend the services of the "Plover" to another winter, it is their Lordships' directions, that you should exchange any of your officers or men, re-victual the ship, and again proceed to Point Barrow, provided the ship and your crew are efficient; but so soon as the season of 1855 will admit, that you proceed to Grantley Harbour, and from thence to San Francisco and Valparaiso, for further orders. You are distinctly to understand that it is not their Lordships' intention to send up a ship from the Pacific station to communicate with Grantley Harbour in 1855, and you are therefore positively to leave Behring Strait in that year, as directed.

In case of your not being able to place the "Plover" in the harbour at Point Barrow, or in any other safe position north of Grantley Harbour, you may return to that port (Grantley Harbour), and having deposited all spare provisions and stores with Her Majesty's ship "Rattlesnake," you may at once proceed to Valparaiso as before directed, as there does not exist any necessity for retaining two ships at that port, Commander Trollope having been directed to continue there until the summer of 1855, as per copy of the enclosed Orders.

In the event of any accident having occurred to the "Plover," rendering her unseaworthy, or of her having been, on survey, found unfit for further service, my Lords desire that the ship be placed in some safe position as a depôt, to afford shelter to any travelling or other party, and that you proceed, with the officers and crew, on board Her Majesty's ship "Rattlesnake," or whatever ship which may have been sent from Valparaiso, and consider yourself as a passenger in that ship.

In the event of England being at any time involved in hostilities with any other power during your employment on the above service, you are clearly to understand that you are not to commit any hostile act whatever, the ship under your command being fitted out for the sole purpose of aiding those engaged in scientific discoveries, and it being the established practice of all civilised nations to consider vessels so employed as exempt from the operations of war.

I am, &c.

To Commander Maguire,
Her Majesty's Sloop "Plover."

W. A. B. Hamilton.
