

## NOTES ON FRANKLIN RELICS\*

Mr. L. A. Learmonth, formerly of the Fur Trade Department, Hudson's Bay Company and a Fellow of the Arctic Institute has provided *Arctic* with notes and sketch maps concerning traces of the Franklin Expedition found in the King William Island region of northern Canada. The map published here is based on the Canadian National Topographic Series map on a scale of 8 miles to the inch, with amendments by Mr. Learmonth. The following items refer to the large map.

Mr. Learmonth and Mr. D. G. Sturrock discovered the remains of three men at Tikeraniyou (1) together with a George IV Half Crown and a large ivory sailor's button (Pootogo). The remains were taken to Gjoa Haven and the relics forwarded to Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg<sup>1</sup>. The place is a point of land shaped like a crooked finger, and is where the land bends round to the southwest, between 12 and 15 miles west of Starvation Cove.

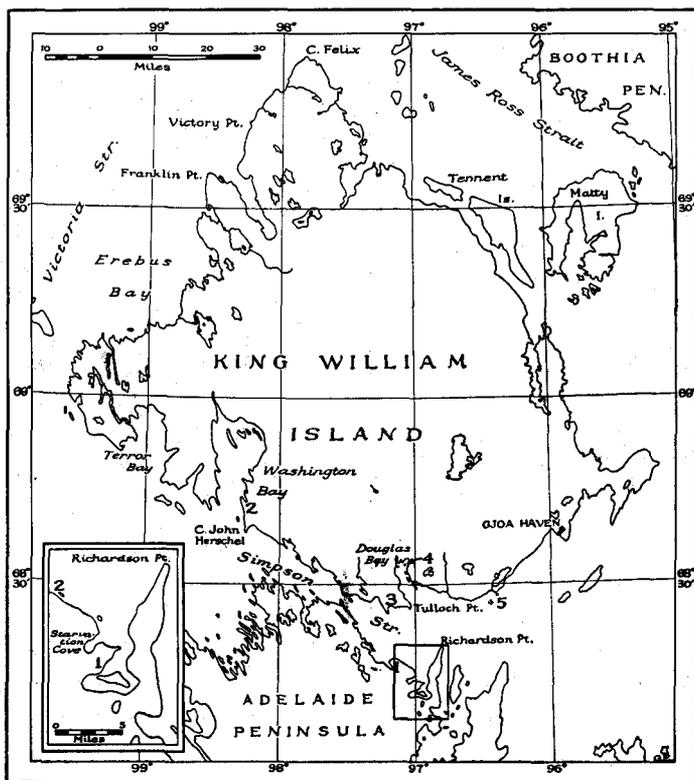
A skull and some bones were found at (2) near Washington Bay late in June 1942 and were taken to Gjoa Haven.

Two skulls were discovered on the beach at (3) near Tulloch Point in June 1942 and forwarded to the R.C.M.P. at Cambridge Bay, where they were buried near the grave of Patsy Klengenberg.

Remains of seven of Franklin's men were found at (4), Douglas Bay, by Paddy Gibson\*.

Bones of four of Franklin's men were moved from islands at (5) and along with three others from Tikeraniyou were buried under the beacon at Gjoa Haven.

The following items refer to the small inset map of the Richardson Point area. Jaw bones of three white men discovered at (1) in June 1942. Most of the teeth were in place, in good condition, and not ground down as would have been the case with adult Eskimos. Mr. Learmonth also found one whole skull and many large bones scattered on the sur-



face close to an old Eskimo seal cache. Moss had grown over many of the bones. He erected a small cairn where the bones were discovered, and a larger one at the sky line on the ridge above, and which can readily be seen from the sea. He took all the bones to Gjoa Haven.

Neniook, Eyaritutuk's mother, about seventy years old, reported having come across the skeletons of seven white men still partly clothed in blue serge, and partly buried in the sand and seaweed on a small island in the vicinity of (2). Hard boots with nails in the soles were also noted by Neniook who was a small child at the time. She was not available at the time Mr. Learmonth searched several small islands in the vicinity very carefully, but he failed to discover any evidence.

In a letter accompanying the above notes Mr. Learmonth suggests that it might be appropriate for a cairn or other memorial to be erected at Victory

Point, King William Island "commemorating the landing of 105 men under Crozier from the abandoned *Erebus* and *Terror*". It was there, he points out, that the only written record ever recovered from the expedition was found. He also suggests a cairn and a memorial plaque for the grave of the seven men buried near the Hudson's Bay Company post at Gjoa Haven. "Their names of course are unknown, but did they not die in a great cause? Whoever they may be, did they not fight as tough a battle as any unknown soldier?"

In August 1948, Mr. Learmonth flew north from Winnipeg on the H.B.C. Canso with Mr. R. H. Chesshire, Manager of the Fur Trade Department. He plans to remain in the area of Fort Ross throughout the winter, in order to carry out archaeological, geographical and other studies.

\*See also Gibson, Wm. Sir John Franklin's last voyage. *The Beaver*, June, 1937: 44-75.

NARES AND PEARY NOTES

Arctic Expedition  
 N. M. Alert, at Gjoa Bay Beach  
 Lat 52° 27' North Long 61° 22' West  
 25th July 1876  
 N. M. Alert wintered off this coast inside the grounded ice 1875-1876  
 N. M. Discovery in concert passed the same winter in a well defined harbour  
 in Lat 52° 44' North Long 65° 5' West  
 The sledge crews after a very severe journey over the ice succeeding in  
 obtaining Lat 53° 20' 30" N. No land has been sighted to the North &  
 another summer explored the coast line to the northward and westward to  
 Lat 52° 20' N Long 54° 00' W Cape Columbia the northernmost Cape  
 being in Lat 52° 41' N Long 70° 30' W  
 Sledge parties from the *Discovery* have explored the Greenland  
 shore for some distance to the northward and eastward, but the  
 result of the examination is not yet known to me  
 Scoury attacked nearly all the men employed in sledge travelling  
 Two deaths have occurred Nels C. Peterson from the effects of  
 a severe frost bite (which necessitated a part of each foot being  
 amputated) followed by exhaustion and scorbutic taint  
 and Henry Peter Gunner & Co who died from scoury and general  
 debility when absent on a sledge journey, and was buried on the  
 floor in Lat 52° 41' N  
 The ice in the Polar sea broke up on the 20th July - when it permits  
 us to move, the *Alert* will proceed south and join company with  
 the *Discovery*; both ships will then sail for Port & outlets, and  
 most probably thence to England  
 G. S. Nares  
 Captain R. N.  
 Commanding Arctic Expedition

Cape Sheridan, Sept. 5th 1905  
 The Peary Arctic Club's ship Roosevelt  
 arrived here from New York at 7 A.M. and made fast to  
 the ice foot under the point of the cape awaiting the  
 turn of the tide to proceed to Cape Meda  
 The Roosevelt left New York July 16th  
 Sydney, Cape Breton, July 26th, arrived Cape York Aug 7th  
 and left that Aug 17th Her last stopping place was the ice  
 foot south of Cape Union which she left at 3.30 this morning  
 Personally visited the Alert's Cairn at  
 Gjoa Bay Beach and took therefrom Alert's Record, copy of  
 which accompanies this Report of the Roosevelt's Campaign  
 is also enclosed.  
 Robert Peary U.S.N.  
 Commanding the Expedition

U.S. Navy and Coast Guard icebreakers which re-supplied Canadian-U.S. Arctic weather stations in 1948 also visited the Cape Sheridan region on the northern coast of Ellesmere Island, Canada.

Two notes of historic significance were found in cairns, the one a copy of a message left by Captain G. S. Nares, R.N., in July 1876 and the other by Admiral Peary, U.S.N., in September 1905.

(R.C.N. photos)