

The Franklin Expedition



UDSL: Nov 13, 2014
Neil Newman

What was the Franklin expedition?

- A British voyage of Arctic exploration led by Captain Sir John Franklin sets off from England on May 19th, 1845 with 129 men. The ships are Terror and Erebus.
- The vessels are seen for the last time by Europeans in Baffin Bay July 28th, 1845
- Search missions are carried out starting 1848, involving 13 ships at peak effort
- There are no survivors. The ships are never found. Only a few tantalizing clues are discovered over the years.



Franklin Expedition in Canadian Culture

“In every culture many stories are told, (but) only some are told and retold, and these stories bear examining ... in Canadian literature, one such story is the Franklin expedition”

- Margaret Atwood

£20,000 REWARD

WILL BE GIVEN BY

Her Majesty's Government

TO ANY PARTY OR PARTIES, OF ANY COUNTRY, WHO SHALL RENDER EFFICIENT
ASSISTANCE TO THE CREWS OF THE

DISCOVERY SHIPS

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN,

1.—To any Party or Parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall discover and effectually relieve the Crews of Her Majesty's Ships "Erebus" and "Terror," the

£20,000.

OR

2.—To any Party or Parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall discover and effectually relieve *any* of the Crews of Her Majesty's Ships "Erebus" and "Terror," or shall convey such intelligence as shall lead to the relief of such Crews or *any* of them, the Sum of

£10,000.

OR

3.—To any Party or Parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall by virtue of his or their efforts first succeed in ascertaining their fate,

£10,000.

W. A. B. HAMILTON,

Finding a ship in the arctic is hard



What happened?

- Without survivors, our only clues come from discovering artifacts and Inuit oral tradition
- Only one document is ever discovered. The note is found in 1859 on King William Island



Arctic Ocean

GREENLAND

Beaufort
Sea

Baffin
Bay

King William Island

CANADA

Hudson
Bay

H. M. S. Ships Erebus and Terror
 (Wintered in the Ice in
 1846-7)
 23 of May 1847
 Lat. 70° 05' N Long. 98° 23' W
 Having wintered in 1846-7 at Beechey Island
 in Lat. 74° 43' 28" N Long. 91° 39' 15" W after having
 ascended Wellington Channel to Lat. 77° and returning
 by the West side of Cornwallis Island
 Esq. Commander
 Sir John Franklin commanding the Expedition
 All well
 Whosoever finds this paper is requested to forward it to the Secretary of
 the Admiralty, London, with a note of the time and place at which it was
 found; or, if more convenient, to deliver it for that purpose to the British
 Consul at the nearest Port.
 Quiconque trouvera ce papier est prié d'y marquer le temps et lieu où
 il l'auroit trouvé, et de le faire parvenir au plû tôt au Secrétaire de l'Amirauté
 Britannique à Londres
 Cualquiera que hallare este Papel, se le suplica de enviarlo al Secretario
 del Almirantazgo, en Londres, con una nota del tiempo y del lugar en
 donde se halló.
 Een ieder die dit Papier heeft gevonden, wordt hiermede verzocht, om het
 zelve, ten spoedigste, te willen zenden aan den Heer Minister van de
 Marine der Nederlanden te 's Gravenhage, of wel aan den Secretaris des
 Britsche Admiraaliteit te Londen, en daar by te voegen eenige Nota,
 inhoudende de tijd en de plaats alwaar dit Papier is gevonden geworden.
 Finnsom af dette Papir ombedes, naar Leilighed gives, at sende
 samme til Admiraltets Secretæren i London, eller nærmeste Embedsmænd
 i Danmark, Norge, eller Sverige. Tiden og Stedet hvor dette er fundet
 ønskes venligsbegynt meddelles.
 Was dieses Zettel findet, wird hier durch ersucht, denselben an den
 Secretair des Admiraltets zu London, zu übersenden, mit gefälliger Angabe
 an welchen Ort und zu welcher Zeit er gefunden worden ist.
 Party consisting of 2 Officers and 6 Men
 left the Ships on Monday 24th May 1847
 Gm. Gore, Lieut.
 Chas. F. Des Voeus, Mate.

H. M. ships 'Erebus' and 'Terror' wintered in the ice in
 28 of May, 1847 lat. 70° 05' N. long. 98° 23' W.
 Having wintered in 1846-7 at Beechey Island in lat.
 74° 43' 28" N.; long. 91° 39' 15" W., after having
 ascended Wellington Channel to lat. 77° and
 returned by the west side of Cornwallis Island.
 Sir John Franklin commanding the expedition.
 All well.
 Party consisting of 2 officers and 6 men left the ships
 on Monday, 24 May 1847.
 Gm. Gore, Lieut.
 Chas. F. Des Voeus, Mate.

H. M. S. ships 'Terror' and 'Erebus'
 (Wrecked in the ice in
 23 of May 1847)

Having wintered in 1846-7 at Beechey Island
 in Lat. $74^{\circ} 41'$ N. Long. $99^{\circ} 51'$ W. after having
 rounded Wellington Channel to Lat. 77° and returning
 by the West side of Cornwallis Island.

Escomander.

Sir John Franklin commanding the Expedition

All well

Whoever finds this paper is requested to forward it to the Secretary of
 the Admiralty, London, with a note of the time and place at which it was
 found; or, if more convenient, to deliver it for that purpose to the British
 Consul at the nearest Port.

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 del Almirantazgo, en Londres, con una nota del tiempo y del lugar en
 donde se halló.

Een ieder die dit Papier heeft gevonden, wordt hiermede verzigt, om het
 zelve, ten spoedigste, te willen zenden aan den Heer Minister van de
 Marine der Nederlanden te 's Gravenhage, of wel aan den Secretaris des
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 i Danmark, Norge, eller Sverige. Tiden og Stedet hvor dette er fundet
 maaker venligst angives.

Wan ditse Zetel vindt, word hier-durek ersocht dewelken an den
 Secretar des Admiraltits te Londre, te zenden, met gefälliger angave
 an welken ort tial ut wächer dit is gefundt worden is.

Party consisting of 2 Officers and 6 Men
 left the ships on Monday 24th May 1847
 Capt. [Signature]
 The [Signature]

April 25, 1848 – H. M. ships 'Terror' and 'Erebus' were deserted on the 22d April, 5 leagues N. N. W. of this, having been beset since 12th September 1846. The officers and crews, consisting of 105 souls, under the command of Captain F. R. M. Crozier, landed here in lat. $69^{\circ} 37' 42''$ N., long $98^{\circ} 41'$ W. Sir John Franklin died on the 11th June, 1847; and the total loss by deaths in the expedition has been to this date 9 officers and 15 men.

The Graves



Lead poisoning

- Bone samples reveal high concentrations of lead in 1981
- Graves are exhumed for tissue / hair samples in 1984 confirming results
- Lead poisoning leads to severe mental and physical problems
- Badly soldered cans prepared in a hurry for the voyage?
- Poorly designed water systems?

Cannibalism

- The voyage had food supplies for 5 years
- "from the mutilated state of many of the bodies and the contents of the kettles, it is evident that our wretched Countrymen had been driven to the last dread alternative — cannibalism — as a means of prolonging existence"

Inuit encounters

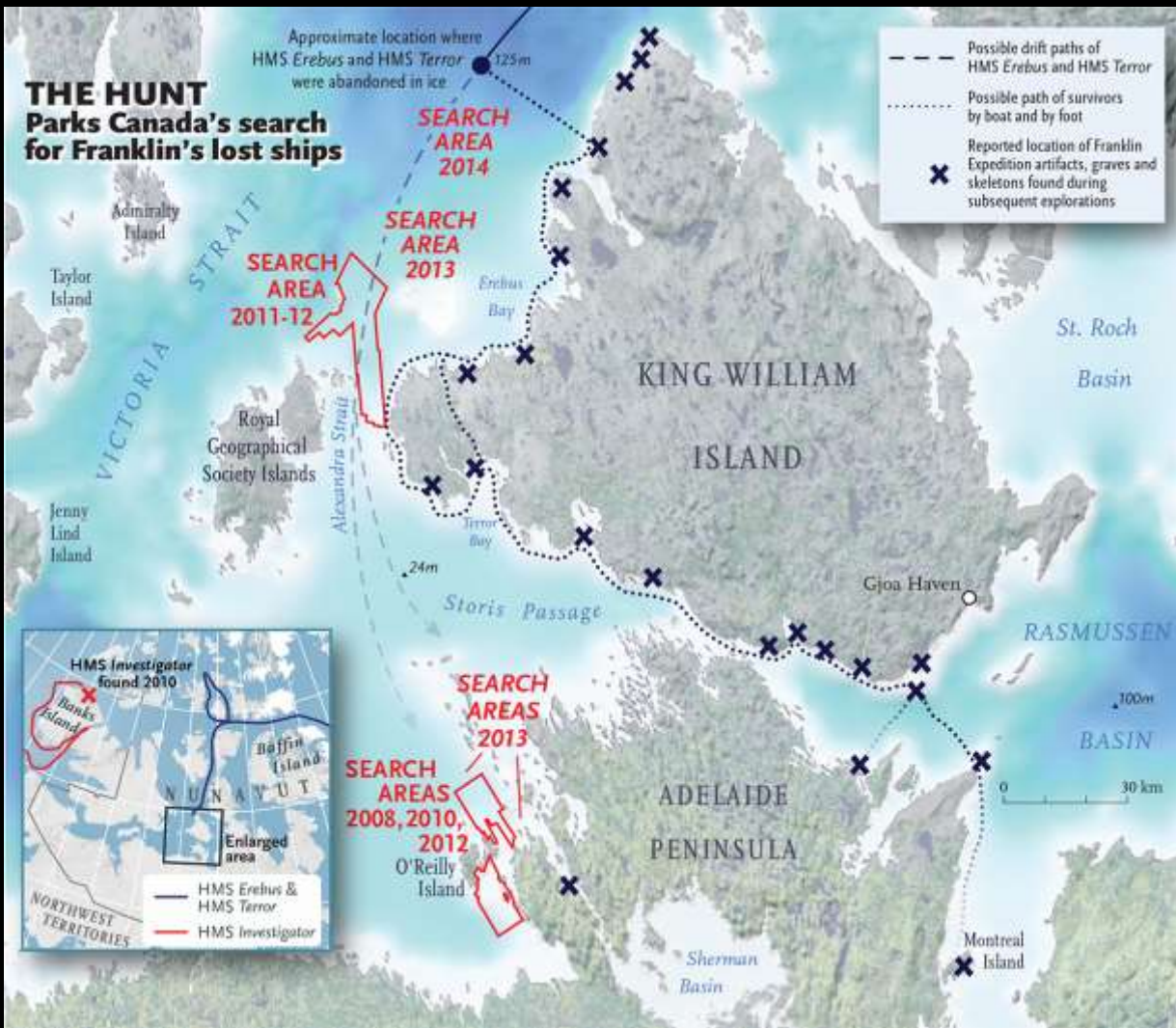
- 1850: Inuit board an abandoned ship. Later, 40 men are seen walking south.
- 1851: Inuit hunters see four men heading south
- 1852-1858: Possible sighting of two survivors heading south
- 1854: Inuit interviews: items from expedition, tells that men starved to death after resorting to cannibalism

HMS Investigator

- Set out in 1848 to search for Franklin
- Abandoned in 1853 after becoming trapped in the ice.
- Inuit use the ship's hull for copper and iron.
One year the ship is "Gone without a trace"
- Discovered in 2010

THE HUNT

Parks Canada's search for Franklin's lost ships



Ship discovery video



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Bell of captain's ship recovered from Franklin Expedition

KIM MACKRAEL
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Parks Canada has retrieved a bronze bell from the wreck of HMS Erebus, one of two ships lost during Sir John Franklin's doomed expedition in search of the Northwest Passage.

The bell was found resting on the upper deck of the ship, surrounded by underwater plant life but in good condition. An arrow, used to signify property of the British Royal Navy, is still visible on the exterior along with 1845 — the year the Franklin expedition began.

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Man Proposes, God disposes

