SIR WILLIAM EDWARD PARRY*

R. N. Rudmose Brown

SIR William Edward Parry (1790-1855), British admiral and arctic explorer, was born at Bath on December 19, 1790, the son of Caleb H. Parry, a physician of some celebrity of Devonshire descent. Educated at Bath Grammar School, he was a forward child, quick to learn, with an ear for music, and tall and athletic. His parents intended that he should study medicine; his going to sea was largely due to the chance that a friend of the family was Admiral W. Cornwallis. In June 1803 the Admiral agreed to take the boy on board his flagship *Ville de Paris* as a volunteer. War with France in those days made the Navy keen on recruits of any age. Parry had never seen the sea before the day of joining and had no strong leanings toward a naval career, but he soon made good and won the esteem of his officers. His ship was engaged in patrolling the Channel in the blockade of French ports, especially Boulogne, from which was expected Napoleon's invasion of England. Only on one occasion, however, was there a brush with the enemy.

Early in 1806 Parry was appointed a midshipman in the frigate *Tribune*, which also patrolled the French coast. In 1808 he was transferred to the *Vanguard* in the Baltic fleet and, in charge of a gunboat attached to the *Vanguard*, he had several brushes with Danish gunboats. The *Vanguard* returned late in 1809 and Parry passed his examination for lieutenant in 1810 and joined the frigate *Alexandria* on convoy duty for the Baltic. There were several engagements with Danish schooners and gunboats but nothing very serious. For some time Parry's ship lay off Karlskrona, Sweden, "in case we should be inclined to Copenhagen them." In 1811 the *Alexandria* was on the Leith station and Parry spent the winter of 1811-12 at Cromarty, Moray Firth, Scotland, where he became much interested in the construction of the Caledonian Canal. On patrol in protection of whales, his captain had orders to go as far north as latitude 76°N. but was baffled by pack ice around Bear Island and failed to reach Spitsbergen. Parry's interest in navigation led to his publishing in 1813 "Nautical Astronomy by Night", which gained wide use in the Navy. Next he served in *La Hogue* on the Halifax (North American) station, crossing the Atlantic in the *Sceptre*. There were a few exciting incidents, for Britain was then at war

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with the United States and Parry saw the *Shannon* with her prize, the *Chesapeake,* enter Halifax harbor. When *La Hogue* in 1814 returned to England, Parry, determined to remain on the North American station, transferred to one ship after another until early in 1817, when the serious illness of his father brought him home. Parry then contemplated a project for exploring Central Africa but this came to nothing.

The end of the Napoleonic wars and the setting free of many sailors and adventurous spirits led in 1818 to a minor boom in arctic voyages, with the problem of the Northwest Passage in the forefront. There was no more powerful advocate than Sir John Barrow, secretary to the Admiralty and one of the founders of the Royal Geographical Society. His arctic interests seem to have dated from youth, when he made a summer voyage in a Greenland whaler — a not uncommon beginning for polar travelers in years to come. Barrow held that of the various passages between Atlantic and Pacific that might exist "the northeast holds out the least encouraging hope" but that there was much hope of the discovery of the shorter Northwest Passage and also of a polar one. "That the North Pole may be approached by sea has been an opinion entertained both by experienced navigators and by men eminent for their learning and science." From time to time a whaler would report exceeding the parallel of 80°N. between Greenland and Spitsbergen and, allowing for roughness of observation, there seemed hope of navigable waters to high latitudes, perhaps to the Pole, in favorable years. A Northwest Passage, however, did not exist south of the Arctic Circle. The probable insularity of Greenland made possible an east-west passage, most likely in high latitudes, but Barrow adds that "although a communication may, and in all probability does exist between the two oceans, it by no means follows that there must also be found a navigable passage for large vessels." Several whalers in recent years had claimed to have reached high latitudes east of Greenland. A Hamburg ship in 1817 had traced the coast of Greenland as far north as latitude 70°. In the same year two English whalers claimed to have sailed beyond latitude 72° and 75°N. respectively. On the other hand, Baffin's discoveries in 1616 of Baffin Bay and openings to the north and west were discredited by many sailors. Barrow said of the voyage, "It is most vague, indefinite and unsatisfactory and the account is most unlike the writing of William Baffin."

Lastly, the occurrence of good ice conditions north and west of Spitsbergen in 1816 and 1817 was held, probably quite erroneously, to herald even more open conditions in 1818. Under these circumstances the advocacy of Sir John Barrow was successful in ordering the dispatch of two polar expeditions in 1818. One, consisting of H.M.S. *Dorothea,* Captain D. Buchan, and H.M.S. *Trent,* Lieutenant J. Franklin, was to try the polar route. It sailed north of Spitsbergen but accomplished little. The other was composed of H.M.S. *Isabella,* 385 tons, Captain J. Ross, and the hired brig, *Alexander,* 252 tons, Lieutenant W. E. Parry. The *Isabella* carried 57 officers and men, and the *Alexander* 37. Both, which were of course wooden vessels, were strengthened for their task. Parry notes that his vessel was much slower

and less wieldy than that of Ross, and so he had difficulties in keeping up with the *Isabella*.

They left the Thames on April 18, 1818, and, calling at Lerwick, Shetlands, rounded Cape Farewell on May 27. On June 17, their progress was stopped by pack ice in the neighborhood of Hare Island in about latitude 70°N. The position of this island was accurately determined. Here Ross and Parry joined an ice-bound fleet of over 40 whalers and were forced to stay until June 20. Following the advice of the whalers, Ross hugged the Greenland shore as he struggled north, battling with gales and heavy pack ice. His ships suffered minor damage but gradually gained northing. The strength of the ships saved them when jammed among heavy floes but they had the usual difficulties to face in crossing Melville Bay; the narrowest escape from being crushed was on August 8 when the ships were beset by heavy ice. If the floes had not receded the ships might have been lost.

On the same day land was seen in latitude 75°54′N. and near Cape York a small number of Eskimo with dog sledges were met. Ross had great difficulty in allaying the fears of these natives who never before had seen a ship or white men. They had hunting knives of meteoric iron which was said to be found near Cape York. This small group of Eskimo has a culture that depends on ice hunting throughout the year, using the vast ice fields of Inglefield Gulf and Wolstenholme Bay. They have abandoned the technique of summer hunting with kayak and umiak, and of caribou stalking and salmon fishing. Ross called these people Arctic Highlanders. Now they are called Polar Eskimo. North of Cape York so-called "red" or "pink" snow was observed on the cliffs which Ross named Crimson Cliffs. This phenomenon had been recorded by arctic travelers over a long period of time in various localities but it was only subsequent to this voyage that the cause was determined to be the presence in the melting snows of early summer of countless microscopic algae.

Ross pressed on impatiently, passing without examination the mouths of Wolstenholme and Whale sounds. His farthest north was latitude 76°54′N. The entrance of Smith Sound was blocked by ice but neither it nor Jones Sound was adequately examined and Ross seems to have assumed that neither was a through channel. Then Baffin's Lancaster Sound was reached with an entrance clear of ice and a depth of 660 to 1,000 fathoms. The ships stood in, everyone on the alert, expectantly looking for the long-sought passage. Parry especially had great hopes, though Ross said that the "general opinion was that it was only an inlet." After running westward for 30 miles, or as Ross says 80 miles, he (Ross) states that on August 31 he saw a chain of mountains (Crocker Mountains) ahead of the ships extending from north to south, and also a continuity of ice. Ross therefore ordered the ships to turn about, and leave the sound. Parry could not understand this decision but of course had to obey, even though he saw no land or ice barrier ahead. From Lancaster Sound the ships turned southward and on October 1 arrived off Cumberland Sound, but Ross did not examine it though it certainly suggested a way to the west. He arrived home the same month.

Ross had confirmed the old discoveries of Baffin but his contribution to the problem of the Northwest Passage was small. It was therefore not surprising that the next expedition was put in charge of Parry instead of Ross, and the route of advance was again to be by Baffin Bay and Lancaster Sound. The two ships were H.M.S. *Hecla,* 375 tons, with 58 officers and men, and H.M.S. *Griper,* 180 tons, with 36 officers and men. Parry was in command of the *Hecla* and Lt. Liddon was in command of the *Griper.* The *Hecla* as a rule had to be kept under easy sail to allow the *Griper* to keep up with her, for the *Griper* was a poor sailor. Captain E. Sabine was in charge of the scientific work, and among the other officers were Lieutenants F. W. Beechey and H. P. Hoppner.

The ships, provisioned for two years, left the Thames on May 8, 1819, and met the pack in the middle of Davis Strait on June 18. Sailing through much pack ice, they won a way northward and arrived off the entrance to Lancaster Sound on July 30, a month earlier than Ross had done the previous year. Parry wrote: "We were now about to enter and to explore that great sound or inlet which has obtained a degree of celebrity beyond what it might otherwise have been considered to possess, from the very opposite opinions which have been held with regard to it." This was the decisive turn in the voyage. Either the sound was a blind alley or it led to channels by which the Pacific might be reached. Several whales, including a number of young ones, were sighted, a discovery that led to extensive whaling in Lancaster Sound in years to come. On August 2 "more than forty black whales were seen during the day." A sounding in the entrance of the sound gave 1,050 fathoms with a bottom of mud and small stones but owing to the ship's drift Parry doubted if the real depth was more than 800 to 900 fathoms. Anticipating that the *Hecla* might be delayed by the slower *Griper,* he arranged a rendezvous at the meridian of 85°W. in the middle of the sound, but a strong easterly breeze helped the *Griper* along. On August 3 they were between Capes Warrender and Osborn, the two capes on the northern side of the entrance on Devon Island, or North Devon as named by Parry. The dark-looking hill just north of Cape Osborn, called Hope Monument and thought by Ross, who named it, to be an island was found to be on Devon Island. A solitary iceberg was visited by Sabine, Beechey, and Hooper for observations on variations. A sounding gave 373 fathoms, and a current reading gave a speed of 0.88 mi. per hour N. 65°E.

Parry wrote of the hope and excitement on board as the vessels sped westward before a strong breeze. "It is more easy to imagine than to describe the almost breathless anxiety which was now visible in every countenance while, as the breeze increased to a fresh gale, we ran quickly up the sound. The mastheads were crowded by officers and men during the whole afternoon." An inlet to the south was noted and called Navy Board Inlet. "We saw points of land apparently all round this inlet . . . at a very great distance but our business lay to the westward, however, and not to the south." Meantime, land appeared on the northern side of the sound westward of Cape Warrender, "consisting of high mountain, and in some

parts of tableland." A large opening on the north was named Croker's Bay, "though the quickness with which we sailed past it did not allow us to determine the absolute continuity of land round the bottom of it." He believed, however, that it might be a passage from Lancaster Sound "into the northern sea."

With a fresh breeze the *Hecla* raced ahead and by midnight on August 3 had reached longitude 83°12′W. with the shores of the channel "still above 13 leagues apart." Ross's continuity of land, sometimes called the Croker Mountains, had almost certainly been disproved. Depth was now 150 fathoms. There were still many whales. The *Hecla* waited for the *Griper* and the two ships went on to the westward. Reefs were seen to the north off Cape Bullen. In a rough sea the *Griper* sounded in 75 fathoms but as apparently stranded floes inshore suggested shoal water, Parry marked the region on his chart to warn future navigators. At noon on August 4, in longitude 86°30′30″W., two inlets in the coast of Devon were sighted, Burnett and Stratton inlets; the depth was 170 fathoms. Parry noted the horizontal stratigraphy of those lands and the "buttresses" of the cliffs, which are probably slopes of scree. The sea was free from pack ice off Fellfoot Point, the water was "the usual oceanic colour, and a long swell was rolling in from south and east. Some of the most sanguine among us had even calculated the bearing and distance of Ice Cape, Alaska, as a matter of no very difficult or improbable accomplishment."

By the evening of August 4 Parry's good luck began to fail. From north to south across the sound heavy pack ice extended from Maxwell Bay on Devon Island to Leopold Island and Somerset Island, and a strong "ice blink to the westward afforded little hope." Here Parry noted many white whales and birds. Several schools of narwhals were also seen. On August 5 the ships reached longitude 89°18′40″W. in a depth of 135 fathoms with an eastward-setting current of 9 miles a day. The pack offered no passage. Some time was devoted to bringing ice on board for water supply and Parry comments on the better value of berg ice and the necessity of letting floe ice drain if it is to be used.

The ships stood south on August 5 with the intention of seeking, in a lower latitude, a clearer passage to the westward "than that which we had just been obliged to abandon." The compass became more sluggish and irregular as they moved southward in Prince Regent Inlet. After about 100 miles on this southward course, in latitude 71°53′30″N., Parry returned to Lancaster Sound as a more promising route. His extreme southern landfall was Cape Kater. From August 13 to 18 he tried and failed to make westward on the southern side of the sound. Then he crossed to the northern side, which subsequent exploration has shown to be a wise plan.

On August 21 there was clear water before them; all the ice had moved away. A breeze enabled them to move westward examining from boats the coast of Devon Island. At length the coast began to trend northward with open water and distant land. Parry decided this wide stretch of water was

a channel and he named it Wellington Channel. But he held westward into Barrow Strait, along which he made slow progress. A band of pack appeared across the strait but the ships were forced through it. More ice appeared but was passed. New islands were sighted. Land to the north was named Cornwallis and Bathurst and other islands received names. Fog, light winds, and streams of pack impeded progress but by September 4 the ships had reached the meridian of 110°W., an attainment which earned for them the sum of £5,000 offered by the British Government to such British subjects as might reach so far westward within the Arctic Circle. A headland on Melville Island in longitude 109°50′W., was suitably named Cape Bounty.

In spite of somewhat unpromising conditions, Parry had not lost hope of gaining the Pacific. He believed that experience had shown September to be an open month for arctic navigation: "I determined to extend our operations to the latest possible period." On September 8 they were abreast of Cape Providence, toward the western end of Melville Sound. A week later, in longitude 112°29′30″W., they were held up by ice and heavy winds. "I was reduced to the disagreeable necessity of running back to the eastward of Cape Providence." On September 20 Parry decided that the time had come to look for winter quarters and he chose a bay, on the southeastern coast of Melville Island, which he called Winter Harbor. Here he cut a canal of over 2 miles through a 7-inch floe by which the ships reached an anchorage of 5 fathoms on September 6.

Preparations for facing an arctic winter, an ordeal of grim severity in those days, were at once put in hand. The decks were roofed over, stores collected ashore, regulations made regarding rations, and, most important of all, hunting parties were kept regularly at work. It is stated that during the winter 3,766 pounds of caribou, musk-ox, etc., were killed. This fresh meat and the stock of dried vegetables, and the less important lime juice and freshly grown mustard and cress kept scurvy in abeyance. There were mild attacks but no deaths. The only fatality among the 94 people on the two ships was due to pulmonary trouble. Frostbite, too, was at a low level of occurrence. Indoor amusements included a weekly journal, the usual device of old-time polar expeditions for which the modern expedition with its winter work has no time. There were also theatricals and an elaborate masquerade and, of course, a Christmas feast. And there were classes to teach reading and writing.

No exploration was done until April when a 4-weeks' tour — the first on record from a wintering ship — was made across Melville Island to Hecla and Griper Bay and to Liddon Gulf and back; a team of men dragging a wheeled cart, loaded with fuel and provisions, with incredible exertion over snow and rocks and through slush and rivers.

The ice in the landlocked bay of Winter Harbour was slow to break up, but as the snow melted much of the low ground was revealed as being covered with vegetation, and game was plentiful. On August 1, 1820, the ships were released with the help of a channel sawn in the floe. Turning

westward, Parry was soon held up by heavy pack and gave up the attempt in longitude 113°48′29″W. after sighting from Cape Hay, Melville Island, high land in the distance. This was Banks Island between Parker Point and Rodd Head. Efforts to find a way to the west through the pack around Cape Dundas failed and the *Griper* had a narrow escape. "It became evident from the combined experience of this and the preceding year that there was something peculiar about the southwest extremity of Melville Island which made the icy sea there extremely unfavorable to navigation." The ice to the west and southwest of Cape Dundas was "as solid and compact, to all appearance, as so much land." Parry was unprepared for another winter and decided to return to England. On the way he discovered Somerset Island (North Somerset). In 6 days the ships reached Baffin Bay and by the end of October were home.

Parry met with justified acclaim. He had so nearly found a passage to the west that there could be no reasonable doubt of its existence. On the arrival of the ships in the Thames a thanksgiving service was held in the church of St. Mary-le-Strand. His native city, Bath, conferred on him its freedom; Norwich followed suit. He was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. The British Admiralty, keen to pursue further the quest, began at once to prepare a team for a new expedition. The ships were H.M.S. *Fury,* 377 tons, under Commander Parry, and H.M.S. *Hecla,* 375 tons, under Commander G. F. Lyon. F. R. M. Crozier, J. C. Ross, and H. P. Hoppner were among the lieutenants. The total of officers and crew was 118. The *Fury* and the *Hecla* were twin ships with interchangeable fittings, a precaution that Parry had suggested.

Parry believed that a more favorable passage might be found farther south. The official instructions were to sail westward through Hudson Strait, reach the mainland coast of North America and follow it northward to Bering Strait and the Pacific. This course depended upon the belief held by many authorities that Middleton's Repulse Bay was a through passage. The ships left the Nore on May 8, 1821, accompanied across the Atlantic only by a store ship.

On July 2 they came in sight of Resolution Island, at the eastern entrance to Hudson Strait, where they met difficulties and dangers due to strong currents and large icebergs and the *Hecla* sustained some damage. Early in August they reached Southampton Island and then a decision had to be made. Should they go north or south? North by Frozen Strait, if it afforded a passage, would take them quickly to Repulse Bay; south by a longer route would lead also to Repulse Bay by Roes Welcome Sound. Parry chose Frozen Strait and made the passage in spite of one belt of pack ice. At the north end of Southampton Island a great bay was named for the Duke of York. A landing was made on the western side. From this bay the ships moved northward through rock-strewn shoals and some ice into Repulse Bay. This was clear of ice and a thorough search failed to find the hoped-for passage to the west. Fairly luxuriant vegetation, much game,

and ruins of Eskimo settlements were found. Parry then returned to Frozen Strait, seeking a northward route.

After some difficult navigation among the islands and rocks of the western side of Foxe Channel and a close examination of every inlet of the southern end of Melville Peninsula, the ships were back again on September 2 to where they had been a month before and no progress in the discovery of a way to the west had been made. Every route seemed to be closed by land. The bad weather, together with strong currents, reefs, and worsening ice conditions, caused the near wreck of the *Fury,* and Parry realized that winter quarters had to be found. An inlet, more promising in its course than others, once more disappointed them. It was named after Lyon, and near its mouth an anchorage was found at Winter Island in 66°32′N., 84°W. It provided little shelter from the south, but proved satisfactory. Here the ships lay from October 8, 1821 to July 2, 1822.

The winter was passed in comparative comfort, which in large measure was due to the visits of tribes of Eskimo, who not merely hunted for the explorers but taught them some of the necessary technique. Thus there was no serious outbreak of scurvy. One of the Eskimo, a woman named Kigliuck, was found to have more than ordinary intelligence and a considerable knowledge of the distribution of land and water in that area. She was persuaded to draw a plan, which lacked a sense of scale but had some sense of direction. It showed the coast extending northward of Winter Island and then turning east, then west, and then south-south-west to within three or four days' journey of Repulse Bay. This suggested a strait to the west and all hands had high hopes when on July 2, 1822, the ships put to sea, after the ice had broken up along a canal that had been started in early June.

Ice, carried southward by a strong current, impeded progress but by July 12 the ships were off the mouth of Barrow River in latitude 67°18′N. and soon reached the fertile peninsula of Amitioke. Signs of Eskimo became more abundant. High land to the north proved to be at the entrance to an inlet or strait, but it was frozen over and quite unnavigable in the middle of July. Four weeks of struggle got the ships no farther than the entrance. Parry therefore decided to make a land journey and, setting out on August 14, in a few days reached an east-and-west strait, two miles wide with an eastward-setting current of at least two knots. It was named Fury and Hecla Strait and thought to be the long-desired passage. Ice barred any attempt to sail along it. A land party under Lieutenant Reid went 60 miles to westward on the northern shore to latitude 70°N. and thence they saw the southern shore trending southward. This strait is actually about 100 miles in length and is probably rarely navigable.

It had now become necessary to look for suitable winter quarters. Igloolik, an island to the south of the eastern entrance and much frequented by Eskimo, was chosen, and again Parry indulged in canal cutting, this time for a length of 4,343 feet. Once more Eskimo hunters helped the men through the winter. On August 8, 1823, after cutting through a mile of ice,

the ships were again free, but the ships' surgeon found the men too enfeebled with symptoms of scurvy to risk another season in the North. Parry had planned to send home the *Hecla* and keep the *Fury* for two years more if necessary and so solve once and for all the problem of the passage. He took his surgeon's advice, however, and sailed for home. The two ships reached Lerwick, Shetland Islands, on October 10, 1823, and were in the Thames on October 21.

It had been a most important expedition. Though it had not been successful in finding the Northwest Passage, at least it had added much to the knowledge regarding Arctic America and possible routes to the west. Parry's reputation stood high and the following year, 1824, he was put in charge of another naval expedition, again with the *Hecla* and *Fury*. He had among his officers several old associates and future explorers, H. P. Hoppner, J. C. Ross, H. T. Austin, H. Foster, F. R. M. Crozier, and C. Richards. The total strength was 122, all told. In the same year G. F. Lyon, in the *Griper*, made an independent and unprofitable voyage to Repulse Bay and J. Franklin a land journey.

Parry sailed on May 19, 1824, with orders to explore the southern end of Prince Regent Inlet in the hope of finding a passage. "I saw no reason," said Parry, "to doubt the practicability of ships penetrating much farther to the south by watching the occasional openings in the ice. It is also probable that a channel exists between North Somerset and the northern coast of America." Ice conditions in Baffin Bay proved very bad and it was not until September 10 that the ships reached Lancaster Sound. New ice was rapidly forming and winter had begun when winter quarters were established at Port Bowen, on the eastern side of Prince Regent Inlet, in latitude 73°14′N. after Parry's usual cutting of a canal. This northwestern part of Baffin Island proved to be a barren and desolate region. A few bears were shot but hares were scarce and there were no caribou. In the immediate vicinity Eskimo remains were scanty.

In June 1825, J. C. Ross made a land journey to the north of Cape York, the northwestern extremity of Baffin Island, and saw Barrow Strait clear of ice. H. P. Hoppner made an eastern journey over entirely barren and rugged land but established little. J. Sherer made a journey south to Cape Kaye, latitude 72°15′N., and found many Eskimo remains. On July 20 the ships left Port Bowen and stood across the inlet to the west. They met heavy ice and severe gales. The *Fury* went ashore several times and was so badly damaged that she had to be abandoned, all hands being transferred to the *Hecla*. The *Hecla* then refitted in Port Neill, a small harbor a little south of and much superior to Port Bowen. She left this anchorage on August 31 and reached Sheerness on October 20, 1825.

The expedition had been most disappointing and had added little or nothing to the solution of the problem of the Passage. Already in 1823 Parry had been made acting hydrographer; on his return he was made hydrographer. He did not try again to find the Northwest Passage. His arctic days, however, were not over. On the contrary, he virtually initiated the

attempts to solve the second great problem of arctic exploration, the attempt to reach the Pole. No arctic explorer had wider experience than Parry when his plan was accepted by the Admiralty and the Royal Society in 1827. His ship was again the *Hecla* and he had with him among others, J. C. Ross, H. Foster, F. R. M. Crozier, and R. McCormick. The project, which had the support of W. Scoresby and J. Franklin, entailed travelling over the pack or through open water from a high northern land base. Spitsbergen, as lying within 600 miles of the Pole and being relatively easy of access, was chosen as the base; supplies for 90 days were to be taken, thus providing for an average speed to and from the Pole of 13.5 miles per day. Parry was ordered also to survey the northern and eastern coasts of Spitsbergen and to make magnetic, meteorological, and hydrographic observations and to collect specimens of plants, animals, and minerals, and to report on the whaling industry and its future.

The *Hecla* left the Thames, towed out by a steamer, on March 4, 1827. On the way across the North Sea, Parry tested sledge equipment and clothing and experimented on his polar party with a diet of pemmican. At Hammerfest he embarked eight reindeer as draught animals. They were never used. On April 29 the ship left for the north and soon fell in with several whalers. On May 11, Black Point (Salpynten), at the southern end of Prince Charles Foreland, was sighted and on May 14 Hakluyts Headland. Here the ship was caught in drifting pack and incurred some risk from pressure. It passed Cloven Cliff (Klovningen) and Red Bay (Raudfjorden). A reserve supply of provisions was landed on Red Beach as a precaution against the loss of the ship. Then it drifted past Wide Bay (Wijdefjorden) and from a boat Parry examined Mussel Bay (Mosselbukta) and found it unsuitable for a harbor. Forty-five years later Nordenskiöld was to find it most satisfactory. At Verlegen Hook (Verlegenhuken) the ship got clear of the ice. On June 14 the ship was in latitude 81°5′32″N. and might have gone farther north if it had been desired. From an altitude of 300 feet on Walden Island (Waldenöya), where some stores were landed and which yielded no sign of an anchorage, the explorers "had a clear and extensive view of the Seven Islands (Sjuöyane) and thought that they saw land to the east, but that was a mistake. Next the ship visited Little Table Island (Lille Tavleöya), where some stores were landed, but where no anchorage was found.

Back at Verlegen Hok, Parry examined Treurenburg Bay (Sorgfjorden) from a boat and decided that a cove on the eastern side would serve his purpose, after cutting a canal of some 1,300 feet. There on June 21 the ship was anchored and made fast to the shore. Hecla Cove served Parry well, but in this respect he was lucky. No whaler would have risked his ship in this long inlet on the eastern side of the Verlegen Hook Peninsula (Mosselhalvöya). In a bad or even normal ice year a vessel might easily be trapped there and held at least a year. "The main object of our enterprise now appeared almost within our grasp, and everybody seemed anxious to make up by renewed exertion for the time we had unavoidably lost." Next day

Parry landed a launch and stores with a view to making the polar party independent of the ship in case the ship was driven to sea and lost touch with. Lieutenant Foster was put in charge of the *Hecla* and ordered to ship ballast equal in weight to the stores, etc., that were landed. He was then, during the absence of Parry and his party, "to proceed on the survey of the eastern coast", but to relinquish this survey if he thought that the ship was in danger. "I also gave directions that notices should be sent in the course of the summer to the various stations where our depots of provisions were established, acquainting me with the situation and state of the ship, and giving me any other information which might be necessary for my guidance on our return from the northward." Thus Parry showed his habitual care and provision against possible accident.

On June 21, 1827, Parry left his ship and set out for the Pole. He took two boats, the *Enterprise* and the *Endeavor*. He was in charge of one and Lieutenant Ross of the other. Each boat had also a second officer and ten men. The boats, which were built of thin planks of oak and ash, sheets of waterproof canvas, and thick felt could also be used as sledges. Provisions for 71 days were taken, "which, including the boats and every other article, made up a weight of 260 pounds per man. Lieutenant Crozier in one of the ship's cutters went with the polar party as far as Walden Island to carry some of the weight and to place a third store of provisions on Low Island (Lågöya). The rough nature of the ice and the amount of open water had made it clear that neither wheels nor reindeer would be of any use. Therefore the reindeer were left behind.

The next day the party left Low Island, still in fine weather but with much ice about. There were many walrus, but "we were very well satisfied not to molest them, for they would soon have destroyed our boats, if one had been wounded; but I believe they are never the first to make the attack." The boats served well but were very heavy to row. Walden Island, where they parted with Crozier's cutter, afforded a short rest and at Little Table Island (Lille Tavleöya) the cache of stores was resecured against bears. Parry directed Crozier to arrange that a spare boat be placed on Walden Island. At midnight on June 23 the boats were in latitude 80° 51′ 13″ N. and making good progress with a notable east-setting current. The weather soon became thick and the pack ice closer but a little to the west clear water was found and progress made to the northwest.

Parry explains the system of traveling which he had proposed to follow. In order to avoid the glare and to have warmer conditions for sleeping, he had planned to travel by night— there was no darkness — and to rest by day. Also there was the hope that the snow surface of the floes would be harder with a lower sun. Sleeping clothes were furs and traveling clothes were box cloth. The sails were spread over the boats as awnings at the time of supper and sleep. The temperature during sleep was 36° to 45° F. and occasionally higher. Sleep was for 7 hours. The allowance of provision for each man per day was 10 ounces of biscuit, 9 ounces of pemmican, 1 ounce of sweetened cocoa powder, 1 gill of rum, and 3 ounces of tobacco a

week. Fuel consisted of spirits of wine (alcohol), of which the daily allowance was 2 pints.

On the evening of June 24 began the laborious travelling over the rugged pack ice; sometimes three or even four journeys over the same ice had to be made. Progress was very slow; by 5 a.m. on June 25 Parry estimated that they had made about 2.5 miles of northing since taking to the ice. At noon they were in latitude 81° 15′ 13″ N. June 26 was a day of rain which made moving very uncomfortable and added to the difficulty that the rough surface presented. It became so bad for travelling that they halted at midnight and did not proceed again till the following evening when a change of wind drove the pack together instead of tending to disperse it. On June 28 they came "to a floe covered with high and rugged hummocks which offered a formidable object to our progress and necessitated a circuitous route." On June 29 when they halted at 2 a.m. they had made about 1.25 miles of northing in 6 hours and in a full day's work made only 2.5 miles in all. On June 29 they had reached by midnight latitude 81° 23′ N., or a gain of only 8 miles of northing in 4 days.

And so the hopeless task went on. They rowed at times but not always to the north; more often they climbed hummocks or floundered through deep snow or slush; sometimes it rained, often it snowed. On July 1 they reached latitude 81° 30′ 41″ N. Generally "as soon as we landed on a floe Lieutenant Ross and myself went on ahead, while the boats were unloading and hauling up, in order to select the easiest road for them," and they frequently climbed hummocks of 15 to 25 feet to survey the possibilities of the route. And so these enthusiasts went on, never giving up the hope of accomplishing their task. A few birds noted in Parry's diary alone broke the monotony of ice, water, snow, rain, and fog. On July 5 they had reached latitude 81° 45′ 15″ N. The labor of the journey became worse, not easier, and they never reached the main ice or continuous floes which they expected. On July 7, when they made one of their frequent launchings, not a large or level piece of floe was to be seen to the north. The idea of the main ice came from the Phipps expedition, "one continuous plain of smooth unbroken ice, bounded only by the horizon." As a permanent feature this does not exist, though in occasional years it may occur over limited areas. The warmth of the weather and the frequency of rain also surprised Parry, and added greatly to the difficulties of travel.

It seems to have been early in July that Parry began to fear that, owing to the south-setting drift, his task was immensely more difficult than he had contemplated. On July 17 he noted that, in spite of walking a mile northward, his evening and noon positions were practically identical. Southerly winds alone checked this unwelcome drift and the frequency of southerly winds was surprising. These winds and the high temperatures suggest that Atlantic low pressure areas were strongly invading the Arctic Ocean that month. The current from a northerly direction is now known to be caused by the prevailing winds and currents from the Arctic Ocean. But of this circulation Parry was entirely ignorant. Despite his failure other

later explorers attempted the same route and naturally had no success. O. Torrell in 1858 proposed to repeat Parry's plan, but gave it up owing to unfavorable ice; A. E. Nordenskiöld in 1865 and in 1872 proposed the same route to the Pole. It was not until the drift of Nansen's *Fram* in 1895-96 that this opposing current was firmly established.

On July 20 Parry noted "how great was our mortification in finding that our latitude, by observation at noon, was only 82° 36′ 52″, being less than 5 miles to the northward of our place at noon on the seventeenth." Occasionally they had a few hours of good fortune. On July 22 level floes and convenient lanes of water gave an advance of 10 to 11 miles but a net gain of only 4 miles. Soon they were actually losing northing. Parry realized that the southward drift "put beyond our reach anything but a very moderate share of success in travelling to the northward." The 83rd parallel was accepted as the limit. To reach that would use up half the supplies, break all records, and qualify the party for the bonus offered by the British Government. The highest latitude actually gained was 82° 45′ N. at 7 a.m. on July 23; "at the extreme limit of our journey, our distance from the *Hecla* was only 172 miles." The whole distance covered, including relays, was 668 statute miles. The party had a day's rest in fine weather round about their north record and then turned southward (July 27). The return journey was easier and more use could be made of the boats. Always keen to use as food any seal encountered, the party also had a particularly acceptable meal from a large bear. On August 11 they gained open water in latitude 81° 34′ N., and the following day landed on the most northerly islet of the Spitsbergen group, in latitude 80° 50′ N., which Parry named Ross Island after his former commander. On the 15th they were at Low Island and 6 days later reached the *Hecla* in good condition with no casualties. Parry's venture, doomed to failure from the start, made a northern record that was not beaten until 1875 when P. Aldrich of the Nares Expedition reached latitude 82° 48′ N. in Grinnell Land (Ellesmere Island).

During Parry's absence Foster had made a chart of Treurenburg Bay and had surveyed Hinlopen Strait (Hinlopenstretet) as far as latitude 79° 33′ N., which is about the latitude of the Foster Islands (Fosteröyane). The features of the early Dutch maps were all recognizable even if the latitudes and longitudes were at fault. Around Hecla Cove game was fairly abundant and offered ample fresh meat during the summer. Foster and his men shot 70 reindeer and 3 bears. The *Hecla* sailed, homeward-bound, on August 28 via Red Beach and anchored in the Thames on October 6. And so ended the polar voyage of one of the most determined and successful of all polar travelers.

On his return Parry resumed the duties of hydrographer, a post that he kept until 1829. In that year he was knighted and awarded an honorary D.C.L. by the University of Oxford. His friend Franklin received a degree on the same occasion. He then accepted a post as Commissioner of the Australia Agricultural Company in New South Wales, with headquarters

at Carrington, Port Stephens, about 90 miles north of Sydney, the settlement of this colonizing company with its million acres. Parry found the territory "a moral wilderness" but in 5 years his energy and orderly mind had worked wonders in the way of productive settlement and good government. After 5 years Parry, his wife, and four children returned to England, largely on the grounds of ill health; the Australian work had been a great strain on his constitution. He looked around for some less exacting work and in March 1835 was appointed Assistant Poor-Law Commissioner in Norfolk, being chosen from a thousand candidates. The work, however, was too arduous, and in 1836 Parry resigned. In that year he was promoted to captain and for a short time was employed by the Admiralty in organizing the packet-boat service between Liverpool, Holyhead, and Dublin. In the next year, 1837, another and more important post was made for him as head of a new department of the Admiralty under the title of Controller of Steam Machinery. Many years earlier, in fact in 1813, Parry wrote: "I have this morning been to see the block machinery worked by steam in the dockyard. . . . I never before saw a steam engine . . . I am confident that if we live 20 years, we shall use steam applied to a hundred different purposes on board a ship. . . ." Parry's former interest in the Caledonian Canal in the Highlands of Scotland led to his being employed by the Government in 1841 in drawing up a report on the canal and its probable value. This meant visits to most Scottish and many English ports, and, of course, to the canal works. His report led to the completion of the canal and its opening in April 1847.

Parry's health was now poor and he went to live at Hampstead, London, which has always had a reputation for salubrity. An operation improved his health for a time and he continued his work as Controller of Steam Machinery: "The screw propellor (was) now justly regarded as indispensable in every man-of-war" (1845). He took an active part in the preparation of the *Erebus* and the *Terror* which sailed in May 1845 under Sir J. Franklin to make the Northwest Passage. "Again, my dear Parry, I will recommend my dearest wife and daughter to your kind regard," wrote Franklin on the eve of sailing. Some years later his advice was again in demand in search operations.

The strain of work was telling on Parry and in 1846 he thought of retiring, but the Admiralty appointed him Captain Superintendent of the Naval Hospital at Haslar, Gosport. There he spent 6 busy years. In 1852, he was promoted Rear Admiral and then went to live at Bishops Waltham in Hampshire. During the year he resided there came the news of Sir H. M'Clure's triumph in finding the Northwest Passage. In 1854, he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Greenwich Hospital. By all accounts his period of administration was a happy and useful one. Parry, however, was far from well. The year 1854 was marked by a cholera epidemic in parts of London and, while it is not certain that Parry suffered from that affliction, he was advised to consult certain doctors abroad. In June 1855

he reached Ems but all efforts were unavailing and Parry died there on July 8, 1855. He was buried at Greenwich.

The name of Parry Mountains was given in 1841 by J. C. Ross to a "range" in the Antarctic running southward from Cape Crozier near the volcanoes of Erebus and Terror. The range does not exist. The most important geographical feature named for Parry is the Parry Islands (now part of the Queen Elizabeth Islands) in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, which include Cornwallis, Bathurst, Melville, Eglinton, and Prince Patrick islands. Parry himself originally called these the North Georgian Islands.

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