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(Formerly)

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ELEPHANT ISLAND EXPEDITION.

CONNECTED FILES.

NUMBER

D/1/67

Bipolar Botanical Expedition, South Georgia.

FROM: Commander M.K. Burley MBE, Royal Navy

H.M.S. SULTAN,
Gosport,
Hampshire
PO12 3BY

17th December, 1968

YE. 17/1
44 S.
Dear Tommy,

You may recall that I sent you a copy of my rough draft plan for going to Elephant Island in 1970. My original intention was to seek H.E.'s agreement in principle prior to submitting my formal proposal to the Ministry of Defence.

The feeling here now is that the Ministry of Defence should first bestow its blessing. Concurrence would then be sought from H.E. (through the Commonwealth/Foreign Officer?) rather than disturbing him unnecessarily if the Ministry of Defence decided to reject my proposal.

YE | I feel, nevertheless, you would like to know what is developing, and am therefore enclosing a copy of my submission. If you think it not inappropriate, you may like to show it to H.E. in anticipation of a formal approach later.

We are all revelling in the persistent and determined pressurisation going on over the Falkland Islands and deriving considerable unashamed malicious satisfaction from the discomfort obviously being experienced in some places. No-one can say the Falkland Islands are being 'overlooked' any more!

I am looking forward immensely to coming south again and all fingers are crossed that the plan will be approved. Deeply sorry we won't have the pleasure of seeing you in 1970 but hope your plan for flogging ice-cream to the leprechauns is developing well.

Love to Sheelah.

Yours ever
T. Thompson

T. Thompson, Esq., C.B.E.

copy 2

H.M.S. SULTAN,
Gosport,
Hampshire
PO12 3BY

16th December, 1968

Sir,

JOINT SERVICES EXPEDITION TO
ELEPHANT ISLAND, BRITISH ANTARCTICA

1. I have the honour to submit the following proposals for a Joint Services Expedition to Elephant Island for the consideration of the Joint Services Expedition Committee.

LOCATION

2. The Mountain range of the Andes extends down the length of South America and immerses itself in the sub-antarctic seas at Cape Horn. This ridge continues beneath the surface of the sea, as the Scotia Arc, with the high peaks projecting above the surface in four distinct groups of islands before it finally re-emerges and reasserts itself on the main Antarctic Continent. The southernmost group is known as the South Shetland Islands of which the Elephant Island group comprises the Eastern end (Annex A). Elephant Island itself is about the size of the Isle of Wight, mountainous, covered with a permanent ice-cap and with the height of the highest point approximating to that of Snowdon.

REGIONAL HISTORY

3. The South Shetland Islands were discovered in 1819 by Captain William Smith after his ship, the brig WILLIAMS, had been blown off course to the south whilst trading round Cape Horn. Elephant Island was first sighted the following year and the north coast charted at the same time. The name of the island was originally 'Sea Elephant Island', derived from the dense population of indigenous seals of this specie, but subsequently it appears to have been shortened to Elephant Island.

4. The first recorded landing on Elephant Island was in April, 1916 by Sir Ernest Shackleton and the survivors of his Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. His expedition ship, H.M.S. ENDURANCE, had been crushed by the pack ice in the Weddell Sea six months earlier and the Expedition, after a period drifting north-west on the ice, eventually reached sanctuary on Elephant Island in their three boats.

5. The first camp at Cape Valentine, on a shingle beach at the foot of a precipitous scree cliff, was abandoned after two days when it was discovered that it lay exposed to the ravages of the high spring tides and the north-easterly gales. The expedition then re-established itself at Point Wild (or Cape Wild as it was then named) in an improvised hut built with stone walls and a roof constructed around two of their boats. The third boat was used by Shackleton and his five companions for their epic 600 mile sea passage to South Georgia, followed subsequently by their remarkable mountain crossing in their rescue bid. The remainder of the expedition, meanwhile, remained encamped at Point Wild until August when all members were safely evacuated in the Chilean tug YELCHO.

6. The only other recorded landings occurred in 1922 when small parties were landed on beaches from the expedition ship QUINT whilst

... she was at anchor

she was at anchor off Cape Lookout and Minstral Bay (4 miles north of Cape Lindsay) and also about ten years ago when a small scientific party from the British Antarctic Survey landed briefly, during a forenoon, to undertake a programme of gravimetric observations.

7. Apart from unrecorded landings by the early sealers and whalers and the beach landings mentioned above, the island remains unexplored. No-one has ventured inland from the beaches due to the formidable mountainous and glacier-covered terrain. It is understandable that the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition should deem it prudent to conserve its resources for survival, in its perilous predicament in 1916, by keeping to the beach but it is nevertheless a striking illustration of the difficult and forbidding aspect of the inland terrain that an expedition of such a calibre should have been deterred from undertaking any degree of exploration and research into the interior during its enforced stay.

EXEDITION OBJECTIVES

8. It is proposed that the Joint Services Expedition should undertake the following objectives:-

a. Survey

Elephant Island, Clarence Island and Gibbs Island have been photographed from the air, with results held by the Directorate of Overseas Surveys, at a scale of approximately 1:27,000. Despite some cloud cover, the definition is excellent. This group of islands would all feature on the same map sheet at 1:200,000 and, at the end of the year when the three maps of the remainder of the South Shetland Group are published, will comprise the only region in the South Shetland Group remaining unsurveyed. It would therefore be more satisfactory, from the survey point of view, to regard the group as an entity rather than singling out one island for attention.

The aim will be to survey the whole group and to provide sufficient data for a slotted template laydown to be made. Subsequent plotting will be done at the Directorate of Overseas Surveys.

Once the Elephant Island group has been correctly positioned, the way will be open for the Hydrographic Department to plan a programme of hydrography and charting but at present this must await completion of the survey.

An outline of the scheme for the survey is given in Annex D.

b. Geology

The Shackleton Expedition made a small collection of rocks in 1916. These proved to be of great interest since they were metamorphic rocks and differed from material described previously from the South Shetland Islands. It is now apparent that the rocks comprising the Elephant Island group, which are highly folded with axes nearly parallel to the trend of the Scotia Arc, bear a close relationship to some of those from the South Orkney Islands but are quite distinct from the main South Shetlands Islands group.

It is proposed to carry out general geological mapping and detailed collections for petrographic description throughout the Elephant Island group.

c. Glaciology

The glaciological objectives would be to:

i. record ice temperatures at ten metre depths at a series of stations spaced 1,000 feet apart vertically from sea level to the summit.

ii. record snow accumulation measurements in 2 - 3 metre deep pits on the smoothest and most gently sloping plateau areas at any elevation.

iii. if time allows, record ice discharge measurements on the Island's principal discharge glacier (seven miles north-east of Cape

Lookout.

d. Zoology

The zoological objectives would be to:

- i. conduct a census of all breeding species of birds, area by area, with particular attention paid to penguins and petrels.
- ii. obtain specified information regarding nesting habits of snow and antarctic petrels and procure a selection of specimens.
- iii. obtain specimens of insects.
- iv. obtain a representative collection, for qualitative analysis, of sea shore biological specimens collected at low tide.
- v. conduct a census of seal populations (excluding elephant seals).

e. Botany

Nothing is known of the botany of the Elephant Island group apart from identification of two specimens brought back by Shackleton's Expedition. It is proposed that a primary botanical survey should be carried out involving general collections of all plant groups and the preparation of an ecological account of the island's plant communities. The addition of a non-Service specialist in botany will ensure that optimum value is obtained from the survey and any particular problems presented in the field can be the subject of a detailed investigation.

f. Search for traces of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition

Whilst at the first encampment at Cape Valentine, Shackleton cached an emergency supply of ten cases of Bovril sledging rations in a secure crevice in the rocks about 25 feet above high water level, by a great detached pillar of basalt (see Annex C, Fig 1). The Point Wild camp, which was occupied for $4\frac{1}{2}$ months, was established on a rocky ledge on the site of a combined Chinstrap and Gentoo penguin rookery and would be safe from even the highest tides. A secure food cache was also made about 25 feet above high water level. Contact has been established with the four surviving members of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and the fullest possible information is being obtained.

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that traces of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition's stay may still remain. It is intended to carry out a thorough search for any such traces during the course of the expedition.

g. Cine-Photography

It is proposed to record on 16 mm colour film all aspects of the Expedition during its work on Elephant Island with a view to producing:

- i. A documentary film in colour for Service use (recruiting etc.)
- ii. A film in colour for general television showing.

h. Climbing

While climbing does not feature amongst the main objectives of this Expedition, an elementary knowledge at least will be a pre-requisite for the majority of the members in order to carry out the Expedition tasks. This Expedition will afford an excellent opportunity to demonstrate how climbing ability can be applied to a useful purpose rather than serving as an end to itself. It is anticipated, however, that first ascents of the highest peak (un-named) and other major peaks will be achieved in the course of other work in the programme.

COMPOSITION

9. It is proposed that the Expedition should total fifteen members drawn from three sources as described below:

- a. Service Element....

a. Service Element

It is proposed that the Service element of the expedition should total ten, comprising three members drawn from each Service, together with a medical officer who may belong to any Service. One of the Army members should be a survey specialist and one of the Naval members a Hydrographic surveyor.

b. Civilian specialists

From past experience, there is little doubt that given a brief preliminary indoctrination into the basic scientific requirements at the appropriate centre, the Service members of an Expedition should be sufficiently knowledgeable and competent to undertake simple scientific field-work and to bring back worth-while results subsequently for expert evaluation in the United Kingdom. The fielding of this Expedition, however, in a scientifically unknown group of Islands in Antarctica opens up considerable scope for a far more ambitious programme than could be achieved by non-specialists. It would be disappointing not to exact maximum scientific value from this unique opportunity for detailed professional research in the interior and also to avoid the risk of falling short of completion of the objectives, particularly the survey for want of expertise. It is proposed that specialists from the British Antarctic Survey should be attached to the Joint Services Expedition as follows:-

2 surveyors
1 geologist
1 botanist

c. Attachment of Chilean member

After three attempts in 1916 to rescue the Imperial Trans-antarctic Expedition from Elephant Island has failed, the Chilean tug YELCHO eventually succeeded in embarking the Expedition and taking it back to Chile. The Chilean nation derives enormous pride in this historic achievement which is exemplified in the perpetuation of the name YELCHO in one of the Chilean Antarctic Survey Ships and also the naming of the Chilean Antarctic Patrol and Research Ship PILOTO PARDO after the officer who commanded the original YELCHO at the time of the rescue operation. The Islands, which are the subject of this Expedition, are also known collectively to the Chileans as the 'Islas Piloto Pardo'.

To commemorate this notable rescue and foster the spirit of international co-operation engendered by the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, it is proposed that a Chilean - preferably a Naval Officer - who should speak some English and be reasonably adept at mountaineering, be invited to join the Expedition.

STATUS OF MEMBERS

10. The ten Service members should be regarded as being on duty.

The Chilean member should be considered as on loan service, with implied Ministry of Defence acceptance of responsibility for rations, clothing and equipment for the duration of the Expedition.

Responsibility for clothing, equipment and passage to and from the Falkland Islands for the four British Antarctic Survey scientists attached to the Expedition would devolve on the British Antarctic Survey except that, for the sake of convenience in the field, they would be victualled from Expedition rations. Repayment for these rations would be an Expedition responsibility.

H.M.S. ENDURANCE

11. The services of H.M.S. ENDURANCE will be essential for the undertaking of this expedition although it is appreciated that this plan may possibly conflict with the projected priorities concerning her programme during the 1970/71 season.

12. The objectives of this expedition have been described in some detail in paragraph 8 and their value would need weighing against the other considerations affecting H.M.S. ENDURANCE's employment. The work to be undertaken, particularly in mapping extremely difficult, remote and unexplored regions, represents a constructive and significant contribution to British research in Antarctica. Enquiries, necessary to formulate these preliminary plans, have elicited an enthusiastic and encouraging response from the organisations who would benefit from the proposed work. This response leaves little doubt that the project, if approved, gives assurance of being a thoroughly viable and worthwhile venture. There are, however, other factors which may be worthy of mention.

a. The correct positioning of the islands is a pre-requisite for hydrography and charting. Work by the Hydrographic Department, in this respect, is therefore being inhibited until the survey has been completed.

b. One important aspect of the role of H.M.S. ENDURANCE is maintaining a Royal Navy 'presence' in the Antarctic. It is submitted that this presence may be maintained as effectively and with as valuable a purpose off Elephant Island as off any other part of British Antarctica.

c. It is understood that there may well be one (or possibly two) young hydrographic surveyor volunteers whose primary purpose would be the acquisition of experience in an adventurous environment. In addition, it is understood that consideration would be given to reinforcing the surveying potential of H.M.S. ENDURANCE by the appointment of an additional Hydrographer. It is submitted that the field experience accruing to these officers, and the Army surveyor, would be of considerable benefit to the respective Services.

13. It is a fortuitous coincidence that the Ship is the namesake of the vessel which transported Shackleton and his Expedition south in 1914, to begin one of the most heroic episodes in the history of Antarctic exploration, and that she may be associated closely with this venture.

MARITIME SUPPORT REQUIRED

14. It is proposed that Expedition stores and provisions should be embarked in H.M.S. ENDURANCE at Portsmouth prior to sailing south in the Autumn of 1970. The Service members and the Chilean officer would join at Montevideo and the four British Antarctic Survey members in the Falkland Islands, having taken passage south in a R.N.S. Ship. Expedition accommodation, whilst embarked, would be a secondary consideration to the requirements of the Officers and Ship's Company; sub-standard/improvised accommodation would be acceptable.

DUMPS AND DECONTAMINATION....

DUMPS AND DISEMBARKATION

15. The Expedition members would require to be disembarked by boat or helicopter and stores established in four dumps on Elephant Island. The purpose in distributing dumps is to ensure the fullest possible effort being applied to constructive fieldwork without being sapped by stores replenishment over unnecessarily long distances.

16. Each dump site should be accessible both from the sea by boat and from inland. The ideal would be to cache each dump on snow-free rock at an altitude of at least 500 feet by helicopter. If wind conditions preclude helicopter operations, however, the dumps would need to be established by boat at a lower altitude but clear of springs high water level.

17. From the aerial photographs, it would appear that suitable sites exist in the vicinity of Point Wild, Cape Lindsay and two capes in the southern part of the Island as indicated in Annex E and described below:-

Dump A - Cape Lindsay

This would seem to be the best dump site. Photographs indicate a snow free slope rising inland not too steeply from the beach. The beach itself is protected from the prevailing N.E. winds by two long spits projecting out to sea (these are more apparent in Annex B than Annex E). Frank Wild, Shackleton's second-in-command, wrote in 1923 referring to Cape Lindsay: "The reports of whalers speak of a large bay with safe anchorage where the landing is good". This site also coincides with one of the trig points to be occupied and it is proposed to make this the main base.

Dump B - Point Wild

As one of the points previously occupied on the island, this site has the advantage whereat disembarkation and establishment of a dump can reasonably be assured. A sketch survey of this point was completed in 1916 during the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition's stay (Annex C, fig.2). The following description is extracted from J.M. Wordie's paper read on 20th June, 1921. "Cape Wild is hardly large enough to be called a Cape, being more of the nature of a Point. It consists at the northern end of a rocky knob, 95 feet in height, called Penguin Hill, joined to the mainland by a level spit of rocks and shingle resting on a solid rock basement; the level part of the Cape is almost exactly 100 yards in length, the breadth not quite 40 yards. At its south end, there is a small slope of dead ice which at one time was part of the Furness Glacier, and is today not entirely separate; it thus offers an easy and practicable way of getting on to the glacier". A further advantage of this site is that it also coincides with one of the trig points to be occupied and the dump will simplify logistic problems in working over the eastern part of the Island.

Dump C

From photographs, the site for this dump would seem very suitable and easy of access from sea and inland. Establishment of a dump here will simplify logistic problems in working in the south-east part of the island and particularly on the island's principal discharge glacier which is adjacent (paragraph 8(c)(iii) refers). It will also be the nearest dump to dump B, 14 miles to the north-east.

Dump D

Once more, this site appears suitable and easy of access from sea and inland. Work in the south-west of the Island will be conducted from this base which will also serve as a useful intermediate dump between A and C.

Frank Wild

18. Frank Wild remarked in 1922 that whilst ashore at Cape Lookout, the main part of the Island seemed to be much more accessible than it was from Cape Wild. If either dump C or dump D should prove unsuitable, this area might prove a suitable alternative. Under any circumstances, should it not prove practicable to establish all projected dumps, it would still be feasible to disembark team and stores and carry out a full programme using a reduced number of bases although the attendant logistic problems may well detract from the scope of the work undertaken.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

19. In the course of the season, the services of H.M.S. ENDURANCE and her helicopters would be needed for a period of some three weeks in furtherance of the survey task (Annex D refers).

20. On completion of expedition work in March, the members and stores would require to be re-embarked from Elephant Island. The four B.A.S. scientists would be disembarked at Port Stanley and the Chilean Officer at either Punta Arenas, Montevideo or Port Stanley in order of preference, depending on the homewards passage taken by H.M.S. ENDURANCE.

21. It is proposed that the ten Service members remain on board H.M.S. ENDURANCE for the passage back to the United Kingdom. This will afford opportunity, particularly for the Army and R.A.F. members, to acquire valuable practical knowledge of the work of all departments in a sea-going warship. At the same time, expedition stores could be cleaned, checked and packed ready for disembarkation and onwards routing at H.M. Dockyard, Portsmouth; field-work could be written up for presentation and Expedition reports prepared and forwarded. This passage time would also ensure that the variety of loose ends, inherent in the aftermath of any expedition, which may require the further attention of expedition members, will be minimised if not obviated.

PROGRAMME

22. The following is the proposed programme:-

Early September, 1970	Stores and provisions to be centralised at H.M. Dockyard, Portsmouth for packing.
Late September	Embark stores and provisions in ENDURANCE.
Late October	Service members fly from London to Montevideo. Chilean member travels to Montevideo. Embark in ENDURANCE at Montevideo.
Early November	Four B.A.S. scientists join Expedition. Four day shake-down in Falkland Islands.
Mid November	Establish dumps and disembark to Elephant Is.
Three week period between November 70 and March 71.	H.M.S. ENDURANCE operates in close support of survey.
March, 1971	Re-embark in H.M.S. ENDURANCE.
March	B.A.S. scientists disembark at Port Stanley
Early April	Chilean member disembarks
Early May	Disembark stores and Service members at Portsmouth. Expedition disperses.

COMMUNICATIONS

23. It is proposed to establish a radio link at the main Expedition Base Camp on Elephant Island to maintain periodic contact with H.M.S. ENDURANCE and/or Stanley radio, in addition to local

communication.....

communication with detached parties. It is anticipated that the radio will be operated from Dump D for the duration of the Expedition.

PROVISIONS

24. It is proposed that the assembling and packaging of the cold weather rations be undertaken by the Department of the Director General Supplies and Transport (Naval). The arrangements made for the Combined Services Expedition to South Georgia in 1964/65 proved admirable and little variation of the arrangements would be called for.

25. It is proposed that the Expedition should be victualled as a single entity but that repayment, at the rates laid down in QRRN 1467, would be debited against Expedition funds in respect of rations provided for the four B.A.S. scientists.

STORES OTHER THAN RATIONS

26. A list of stores requirements, which would be approximately comparable to that provided for the Combined Services Expedition to South Georgia in 1964/65 will be drawn up in detail as soon as required. It is hoped that most requirements would be obtainable from Service sources except for a. a quantity of specialised items, the cost of which is estimated not to exceed £1,000 and which would be purchased from Expedition funds and b. a quantity of scientific instruments which will be lent from the Scott Polar Research Institute and the British Antarctic Survey.

27. It is proposed that the Department of the Director General Supplies and Transport (Naval) co-ordinate the initial assembly and packing of stores (including rations), clothing and mess traps. By an appropriate date prior to H.M.S. ENDURANCE's departure from Portsmouth, all stores should be centralised in a store-room in H.M. Dockyard, Portsmouth and S.N.S.O. requested to arrange final packing suitable for cold weather and exposed conditions.

FINANCIAL ESTIMATE

28. It is anticipated that the cost of fielding the Expedition would be of the order of £3,650. An estimate of income and expenditure is as follows:

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
Members' contributions	750	Air fares to Montevideo (ten)	1,950
Nuffield Trust	750	Repayment for civilians' rations	200
Royal Geographical Soc.	100	Purchase of equipment not available through Services	1,000
Mount Everest Foundation	100	Insurance	50
Treasury Contribution	1,950	Preparation/publication of reports (scientific)	150
	<u>£3,650</u>	Expenses on passage/Montevideo for shore accommodation etc.	150
		Miscellaneous (postage, purchase of maps & photographs, bank expenses, printing of main report etc.)	150
			<u>£3,650</u>

CONCLUSION

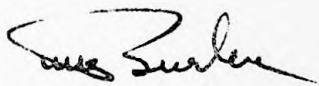
CONCLUSION

29. In conclusion, it is submitted that this plan affords unique and outstanding opportunities for a wide variety of training and experience of an expert and advanced type for leaders of future expeditions. In addition, the work undertaken will represent a real and valuable contribution to Antarctic research.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant



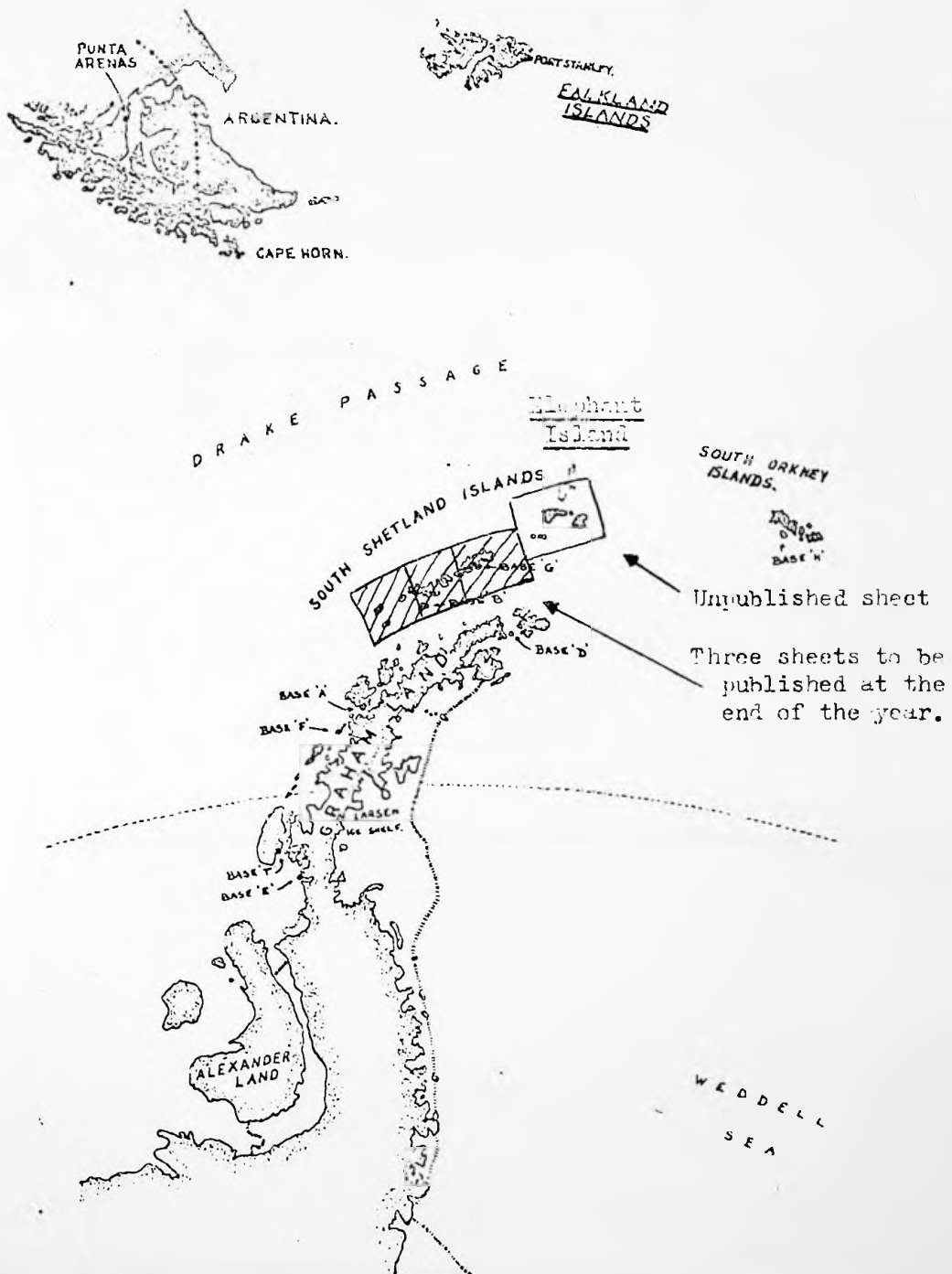
(M.K. BURLEY)
COMMANDER
ROYAL NAVY

The Commanding Officer,
H.M.S. SULTAN

Annexes

- A Map of British Antarctica
- B Map of Elephant Island group illustrating scheme of survey
- C Sketch maps of points occupied on Elephant Island
- D Outline scheme for survey of Elephant Island group
- E Aerial photographs of Elephant Island indicating dump sites

MAP OF BRITISH ANTARCTICA

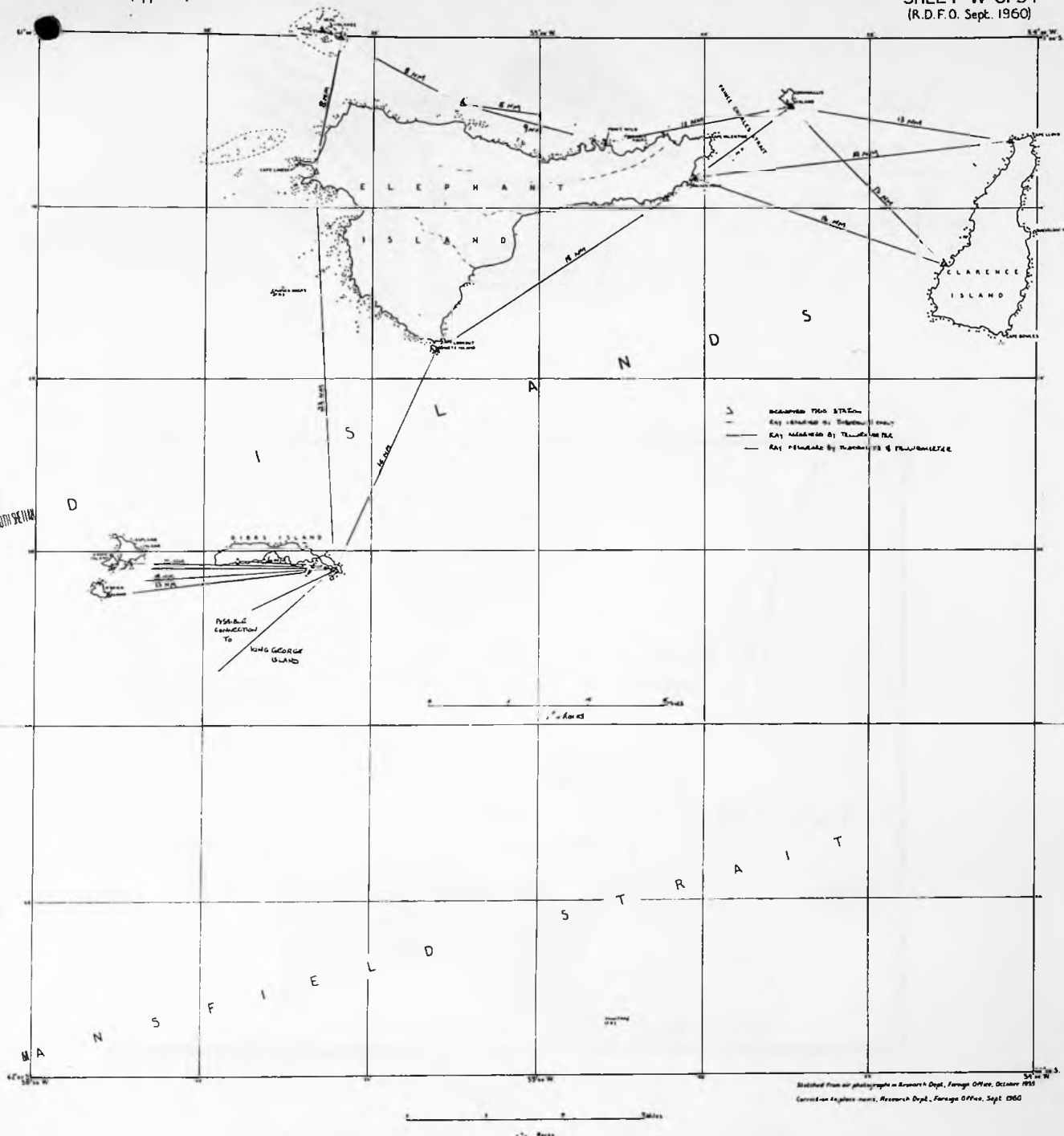


1:200,000 (Approx.)

FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES

(PROVISIONAL ISSUE FOR POSITIONS OF PLACE-NAMES)

SHEET W 61 54
(R.D.F.O. Sept. 1960)



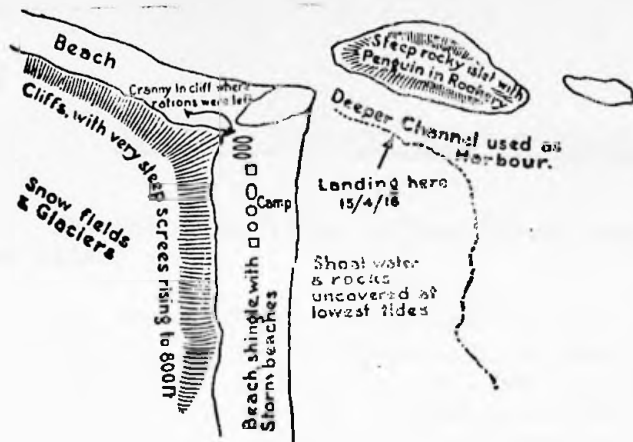


Fig. 1

Sketch map of first landing place and camp at Cape Valentine.

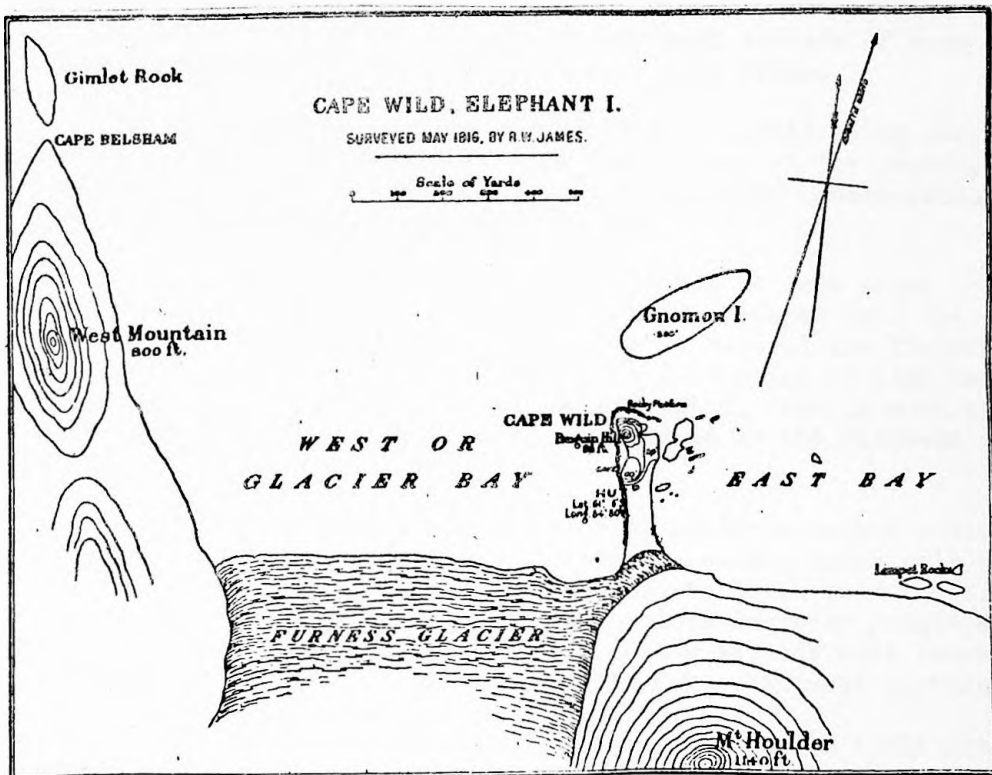


Fig. 2

Sketch map of Cape Wild and adjacent terrain

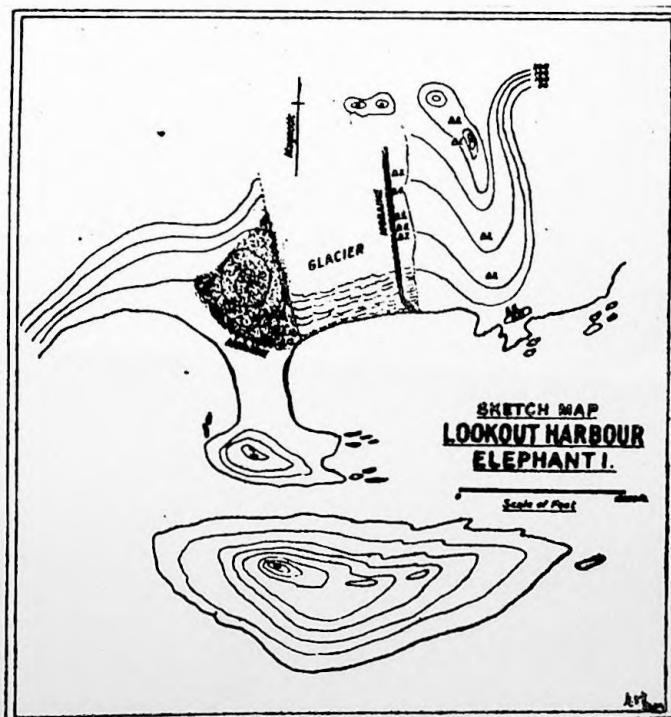


Fig. 3

Sketch map of Cape Lookout and Rowett Island

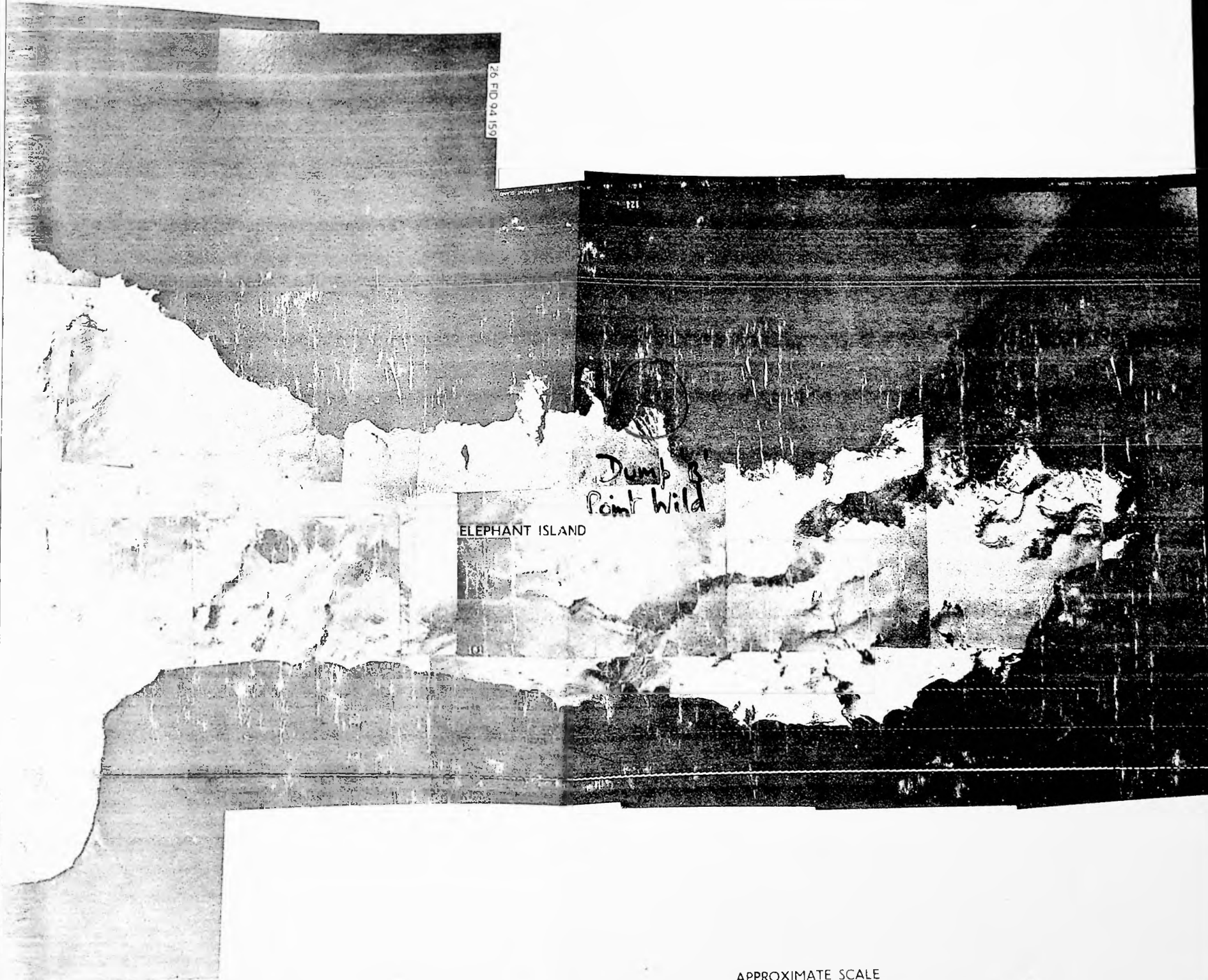
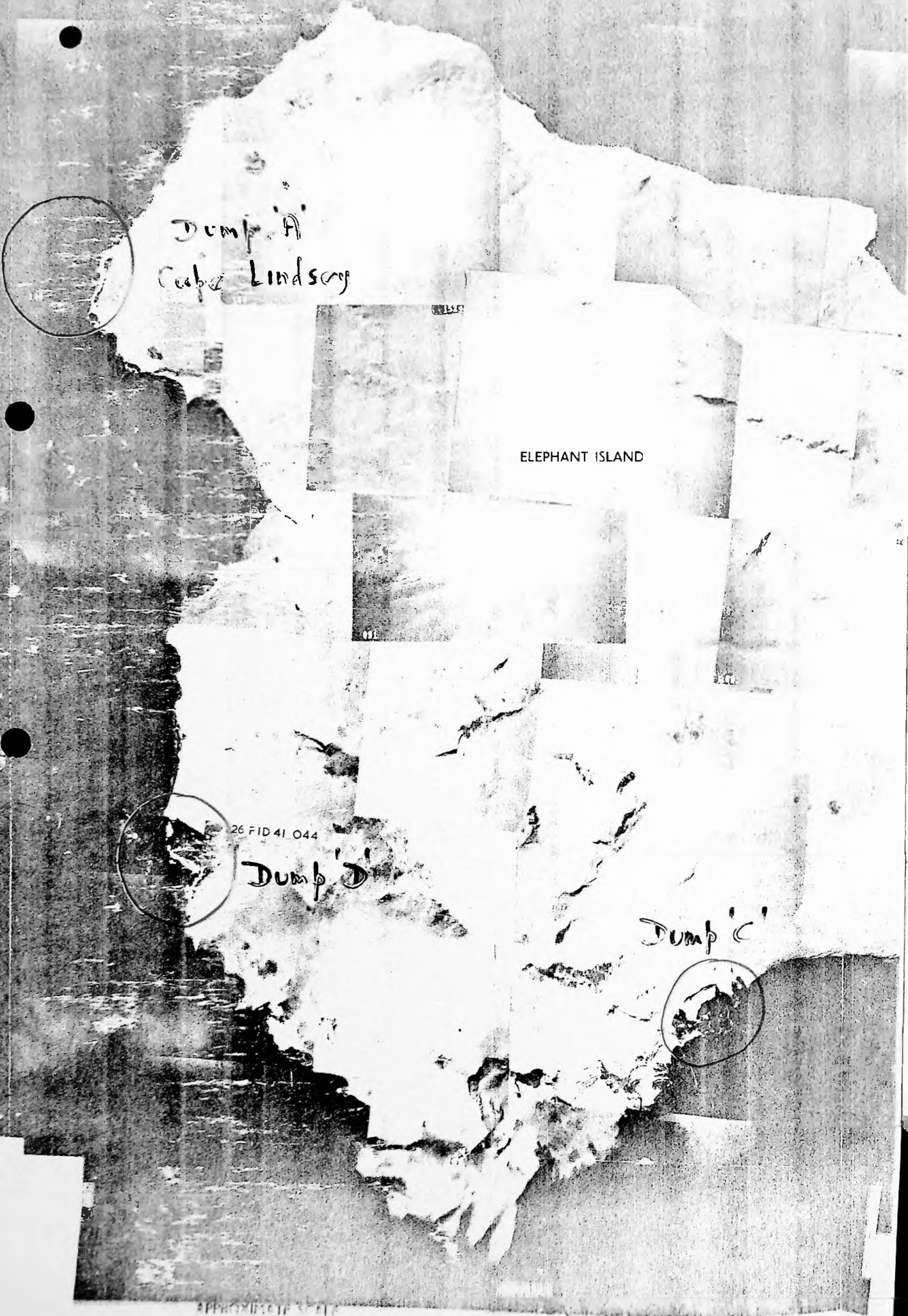
ANNEX D

OUTLINE SCHEME FOR SURVEY OF ELEPHANT ISLAND GROUP

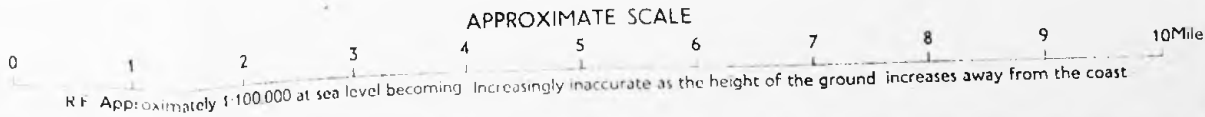
1. The following is an outline scheme for the survey of the Elephant Island group.
2. The map at Annex B, sketched from the aerial photographs, indicates the trig. stations which will require to be occupied during the course of the survey. All the points were chosen with Directorate of Overseas Surveys advice on position to link up with the photography. Points were selected with two considerations in mind:-
 - a. The need to be approachable by boat in case of down draughts which could preclude helicopter operations.
 - b. The need to be at a low altitude to avoid being obscured in the low cloud which is a predominant feature of the region. Sufficient height for lines of sight is the prime consideration and most of the points are below 400 feet.
3. A closed tellurometer circuit would be made round Elephant Island with other trig points being brought into the scheme by bearing and distance. This will control the Elephant Island group and, if weather allows, the connection to King George Island via Bridgeman Island would be attempted; two or more sun or astro azimuths will, in any case, be required in the Elephant Island group.
4. Accurate identification of trig stations on the photographs will, of course, be essential. Helios and beacon lamps will be required on the longer lines. Rays would be taken from the trig. stations to fix and height other major points wherever possible; barometer traverses into the interior of the islands will increase the number of height positions available for subsequent plotting.
5. As much check computing will be done in the field but all results would be passed to the Directorate of Overseas Surveys on return to enable it to plot this final sheet of the South Shetland group.

FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES
PRINT LAYDOWN

ELEPHANT ISLAND (East)



DOS IN FID 61.54 NE 1 (Extended)
RESERVED



Approximately 1:100,000 at sea level becoming increasingly inaccurate as the height of the ground increases away from the coast

17th February 1969

Very many thanks for your letter of the 17th December about your projected expedition to Elephant Island.

His Excellency has seen your scheme and awaits with interest the outcome of your approach to the Ministry of Defence.

Praise be, there has been a let up in the 'Fate of the Falklands' saga but Lord Chalfont's visit, though exhausting, did us all a lot of good. Being face to face with a British Minister rather than with nothing but a telegram pad brought things out into the open here. You know what it is like when a boil bursts - the blessed relief - even if the sickness is still in the body!

We leave here on the 2nd May and might even flog icecream to tourists visiting the leprechauns but no firm plans have been made.

Sheelah sends her love.

Commander M.F. Burley, M.B.E.,

RRE.

15

CS

3

Cdr Bunley's Expedition to Elephant 1st

If part from it anything to go by,
I think what you will find Bunley
and his team very worth while.
We thoroughly enjoyed having the
former South Georgia team in Stanley
boats on the outward & return
trips. Bunley is an excellent leader.

lt 27/5

S/K ? Have we opened a file for this subject:
or perhaps we could use the file on the 1964/5 South
Georgia Expedition with suitable addition to 1976.
Then 1976 file for a mid-August date.

J. 28/5

FROM: Commander M K Burley MBE Royal Navy

4

HMS SULTAN
Gosport
Hampshire
PO12 3BY

12 June 1970

Dear Mr. Jones,

You doubtless know that HMS ENDURANCE will, this coming season, be bringing down a Joint Services Expedition, of which I am privileged to be Leader, to carry out work in the Elephant Island group between December and April, 1971. We are all looking forward very much to this and I, especially, to renewing acquaintanceship with the Falkland Islands en route.

A proposal is being made that ENDURANCE should arrive at Port Stanley on Saturday 28 November and sail for Elephant Island on Wednesday 2 December. These dates have not yet been approved, however, and are likely to change. I have no doubt, though, that by the time this letter reaches you, the drums will have relayed the firm dates. It is not planned that the expedition should return to the Falkland Islands on completion of the time South.

Regardless of any changes, it seems probable that the Ship (and Expedition) will be in for some four days. During this time, I am keen for the members of the Expedition to have the opportunity of spending some three days (and two nights) camping out and checking that tents, cooking equipment etc. are on top line before we land on Elephant Island, not to mention seeing a little of the Falkland Islands. This period could, if necessary, be reduced by one day (and night).

Radio
Talk: also
Interview?

After the 1964-65 Joint Services Expedition to South Georgia during which we retraced the route taken by Shackleton across the island, I was invited to lecture at the Royal Geographical Society, Royal Scottish Geographical Society, various Universities etc. These talks seem to have been well received and, in view of the very warm welcome and hospitality extended while we were in the Falkland Islands, the thought occurred to me that there may be one or two people who may be interested in hearing this account of our activities in South Georgia. If you feel there is scope for this, I would be happy to fall in with any arrangements you suggest and, if necessary, making my way back to Stanley from the camp for this occasion, possibly with the kind assistance of the intrepid Royal Marines' transport.

The talk would last about 70 minutes, excluding questions, and would be illustrated by 35 mm colour slides. If it is felt that the audience would not be driven to distraction by the length of the session, there is also a 25 minute colour film, including some fascinating sequences taken from Shackleton's original film; I believe a copy of this has already been shown in Stanley and anyway I think it could be too protracted a session. I would nevertheless accede to your judgment.

Lastly but perhaps most important of all, I would like to call on

Reply at 6

His Excellency to acquaint him personally with our Expedition plans. This call would, of course, be at His Excellency's convenience but if it would be possible for this to be made on the day of our arrival (assuming we arrive in the forenoon), this would suit us ideally.

A list of the expedition members is enclosed for your information.

I am sorry to hear Sir Cosmo is leaving before we arrive - I understand he is returning on 27 September. Would be grateful if you would give him and Lady Heskard my very best wishes and respects.

I look forward to the pleasure of meeting you in November.

I am sincerely
Yours
Walter Heskard

J.A. Jones, Esq.,
Colonial Secretary

Reply at 6

Mr For ack. initially. J 3/8

CS. Cdr Bowley's party will
be in ~~Stanley~~ - they are
likely to be good value &
I am sorry I shall miss
them. ^{With the compliments of} Please have papers
filed.



LONDON, S.W.1

PK GR 7/18/8

th.
5 VI / 70

18/8/70

4A

JOINT SERVICES EXPEDITION, ELEPHANT ISLAND

MEMBERS

Primary Expedition
responsibilities

Commander M.K. Burley, MBE, AMBIM, Royal Navy H.M.S. SULTAN, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 3BY (Telephone: Gosport 80331, Ext. 220)	Leader
Lieut-Commander J.R. Furse, Royal Navy R.N. Engineering College, Manadon, Plymouth, Devon	Deputy Leader Zoologist
Captain C.M. Agnew of Lochnaw, yr, R.H.F. 1st Battalion, Royal Highland Fusiliers, Kiwi Barracks, Bulford, Wiltshire	A/Glaciologist Radio
Flight Sergeant G. Bruce, Royal Air Force, Kinloss, Forres, Morayshire (Telephone: Forres 2161)	A/Zoologist (Ornithology)
Marine Engineering Artificer(H) 1st Class D.M. Burkitt R.N. Air Station, Lossiemouth, Morayshire	A/Geologist Cine-photography
Captain J.P. Elder, Royal Engineers School of Military Survey, Hermitage, Berkshire (Telephone: Hermitage 371)	Surveyor
Lieutenant J.F. Hunt, B.Sc., Royal Navy H.M.S. RESOLUTION (Starboard), B.F.P.O., Ships.	A/Zoologist (Mammalogy)
Flight Lieutenant G.H. Jacobs, R.A.F. Regiment Royal Air Force, Kinloss, Forres, Morayshire (Telephone: Findhorn 386)	A/Surveyor Clothing
Lieutenant R.M.G. O'Brien, MA, Royal Signals T & A.V.R. Department of Geography, The University, Dundee, Angus (Telephone: Dundee 23181, Ext. 502)	Glaciologist
Flight Lieutenant H.N. Patrick, Royal Air Force Royal Air Force, Stradishall, Near Newmarket, Suffolk (Telephone: Wickhambrook 461, Ext. 177)	A/Surveyor Still photography Trials reports
Lieutenant A.N.D.C. Rackham, Royal Navy H.M.S. BULLDOG, B.F.P.O., Ships	Deputy Surveyor
Lieutenant R.Y. Roxburgh, B.A., Army Air Corps, 16th Parachute Brigade, Farnborough, Hampshire	Geologist. Equipment.
Lieutenant E.C. Walshaw, Royal Artillery, 25 Light Regiment, Royal Artillery, B.F.P.O.1	A/Botanist. Rations.
Surgeon Lieutenant R. de H. Wells, MRCS, LRCP, MB, BS, R. Navy R.M. Barracks, Eastney, Portsmouth, Hampshire (Telephone: Portsmouth 22351, Ext. 6228)	Doctor. A/Zoologist (Sea shore biology and terrestrial invertebrate zoology)

THE FOURTEEN MEN OF ELEPHANT ISLAND

4B
Received for 1700 20/11/70
TC

An icy reception awaits fourteen British officers and men later this autumn on the storm-tossed and uncharted shores of Elephant Island off continental Antarctica.

The men - all hand-picked scientific and polar enthusiasts from the three Armed Services - will constitute the Joint Services Expedition which will explore and survey this remote island which is described as "one of the dwindling number of unexplored areas in the world". This will be the most ambitious expedition mounted on a joint Service basis for at least a quarter of a century.

The leader of the expedition, Commander Malcolm Burley, M.B.E., R.N., and his thirteen men, will spend five months on Elephant Island which is about the size of the Isle of Wight and forms part of the South Shetland Group. No joint Service expedition has ventured so far south before.

The first of the few recorded landings on the beaches of Elephant Island, which is mountainous and covered with a permanent ice cap (the highest peak is about the height of Snowdon), was in April 1916 by Sir Ernest Shackleton and the survivors of his Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

The current expedition members will fly to South America in November where they will embark in the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship H.M.S. ENDURANCE for passage to Elephant Island. H.M.S. ENDURANCE, namesake of Shackleton's famous ship, will have embarked the expedition's stores at Portsmouth before sailing south to carry out her own polar duties. The team will re-embark for return to U.K. in the ENDURANCE in April 1971.

The scientific activities which the fourteen officers and men will undertake will include surveying, geological, glaciological, zoological and botanical work, while a search will also be made for traces remaining of the occupation by Shackleton's expedition of over fifty years ago.

Commander Malcolm Burley, the leader, is one of the Royal Navy's most experienced polar explorers and mountaineers. He is supported by a team comprising four Naval officers and one rating, five Army officers and two Royal Air Force officers and a flight sergeant. All are specialists in some relevant scientific study.

Four zoologists in the team will carry out a census of birds in the area, gather information on nesting habits of petrels, obtain specimens of birds and insects, obtain a collection of sea shore biological specimens, and conduct a census of the seal population.

The expedition zoologist is Lieutenant Commander Christopher Furze R.N. who is stationed at the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon. Specialising in mammology on the island will be Lieutenant John Hunt, B.Sc., R.N., who is serving in the nuclear-powered Polaris submarine H.M.S. RESOLUTION. The expedition's doctor, Surgeon Lieutenant Roger Wells, R.N. of the Royal Marine Barracks, Eastney, will also conduct research on sea shore biology and terrestrial invertebrate zoology.

Elephant Island has never been surveyed albeit that aerial reconnaissance has provided the bare outline of the coast. The expedition supported by H.M.S. ENDURANCE for three weeks, will survey the island and once it has been correctly positioned the Navy's Hydrographic Department will be able to progress a programme of hydrography and charting.

The expedition surveyors are Captain John Elder, Royal Engineers, Lieutenant Tony Rackham, R.N., Flight Lieutenant Harry Patrick, R.A.F. and Flight Lieutenant Gordon Jacobs, Royal Air Force Regiment. Lieutenant Rackham is a qualified Hydrographer in the Navy's Hydrographic Service and is at present First Lieutenant of the survey ship H.M.S. ENTERPRISE.

The Shackleton Expedition made a small collection of rocks on the island in 1916 and these proved to be of considerable scientific interest. It is intended to carry out general geological mapping and this work will be handled by Lieutenant Richard Roxburgh, B.A., Army Air Corps. He will work with Chief Petty Officer David Burkitt, who is stationed at the Royal Naval Air Station, Lossiemouth, and was a member of the Royal Navy's ski team in 1968.

The glaciological objectives of the expedition will be to record ice temperatures, record snow accumulation measurements and gather ice discharge data on the island's principal glacier.

Little is known of the botany of the Elephant Island group, apart from identification of two specimens brought back by Shackleton's expedition. A primary botanical survey will be carried out involving collections of all plant groups and the preparation of an ecological account of the island's plant communities.

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that traces of the old Imperial Trans-Arctic Expedition's stay on Elephant Island may still remain. A thorough search will be made for such evidence.

While climbing does not feature amongst the main objectives of the expedition it is anticipated that first ascents will be attempted on the highest peaks of the island. The South Shetland Islands were discovered in 1819 by Captain William Smith after his ship, the brig WILLIAMS, had been blown off course to the south whilst trading round Cape Horn. Elephant Island was first sighted the following year. The name of the island was originally Sea Elephant Island, derived from the dense population of indigenous seals of this species.

Shackleton's was the first recorded landing on the island in 1916. Other recorded landings occurred in 1922 when small parties were landed on the beaches from the expedition ship QUEST, and also about ten years ago when a small scientific party from the British Antarctic Survey landed briefly, during a forenoon, to undertake a short period of gravimetric observations. The only other known landings were on Point Wild in 1966 when a helicopter from H.M.S. PROTECTOR and a small party from the Chilean ship PILOTO PARDO paid brief calls to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the evacuation of Shackleton's expedition.

Apart from unrecorded landings by early sealers and whalers, and of those mentioned above, Elephant Island remains unexplored. No one has ventured inland from the beaches due to the formidable mountainous and glacier-covered terrain. It is understandable that Shackleton's expedition should deem it prudent to conserve its resources for survival in its parlous predicament in 1916 by keeping to the beach. But it is nevertheless a striking illustration of the difficult and forbidding aspect of the inland terrain that an expedition of such a calibre should have been deterred from undertaking any degree of exploration and research into the interior during its enforced stay. The 1970-71 British Joint Services Expedition will have unique and outstanding opportunities for scientific research. The work undertaken by these men of the three Services should represent a real and valuable contribution to Antarctic Research.

EXPEDITION TO ANTARCTIC BY SERVICES PLANNED

An expedition next year to explore the Elephant Island Group in the Antarctic - described as "one of the dwindling number of 'unknown' areas in the world" - will probably be the most ambitious to be mounted on a joint Service basis for a quarter of a century.

Led by Commander Malcolm Burley of the Royal Navy, ten men of the Services and a small party of civilian scientists will spend five months on the island, which is about the size of the Isle of Wight and forms part of the South Shetland Group. No joint service expedition has ventured so far south before.

The first of the only three recorded landings on the beach of the island, mountainous and covered with a permanent ice-cap with the highest peak about the same height as Snowdon, was in April, 1916 by Sir Ernest Shackleton and survivors of his Imperial Transantarctic Expedition.

They reached sanctuary on Elephant Island - so called because of its dense population of elephant seals - in three boats after their expedition ship HMS Endurance had been crushed and sunk in the pack ice in the Weddell Sea. The expedition remained marooned on a small spit while Shackleton and five companions made their epic 600 mile sea passage for help to South Georgia.

It is planned that the expedition should leave Britain in October 1970 and be picked up from the island by the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship Endurance, namesake of Shackleton's vessel, returning to Britain by air in April of the following year.

The scientific activities undertaken will include surveying, geological, glaciological, zoological and botanical work, while a search will also be made for traces remaining of the occupation by Shackleton's expedition of over fifty years ago.

Commander Burley, the expedition's leader, is already familiar with the South Shetland Islands having carried out diving operations from Deception Island, spent some time living ashore on Livingstone Island as well as having taken part in a helicopter rescue on Greenwich Island.

5

JOINT SERVICES EXPEDITION TO
ELEPHANT ISLAND - 1970/71

1. EXPEDITION OBJECTIVES

a. Survey

Elephant Island, Clarence Island and Gibbs Island have been photographed from the air, with results held by the Directorate of Overseas Surveys, at a scale of approximately 1:27,000. This group of islands would all feature on the same map sheet at 1:200,000 and, at the end of the year when the three maps of the remainder of the South Shetland Group are published, will comprise the only region in the South Shetland Group remaining unsurveyed. It would therefore be more satisfactory, from the survey point of view, to regard the group as an entity rather than singling out one island for attention.

The aim will be to survey the whole group and to provide sufficient data for a slotted template laydown to be made. Subsequent plotting will be done at the Directorate of Overseas Surveys.

b. Geology

The Shackleton Expedition made a small collection of rocks in 1916. These proved to be of great interest since they were metamorphic rocks and differed from material described previously from the South Shetland Islands. It is now apparent that the rocks comprising the Elephant Island group, which are highly folded with axes nearly parallel to the trend of the Scotia Arc, bear a close relationship to some of those from the South Orkney Islands but are quite distinct from the main South Shetlands Islands group.

It is proposed to carry out general geological mapping and detailed collections for petrographic description throughout the Elephant Island group.

c. Glaciology

The glaciological objectives would be to:

- (1) record ice temperatures at ten metre depths at a series of stations spaced 1,000 feet apart vertically from sea level to the summit.
- (2) record snow accumulation measurements in 2 - 3 metre deep pits on the smoothest and most gently sloping plateau areas at any elevation.
- (3) if time allows, record ice discharge measurements on the Island's principal discharge glacier (seven miles north-east of Cape Lookout).



d. Zoology

The zoological objectives would be to:

- (1) conduct a census of all breeding species of birds, area by area, with particular attention paid to penguins and petrels.
- (2) obtain specified information regarding nesting habits of snow and antarctic petrels and procure a selection of specimens.
- (3) obtain specimens of insects.
- (4) obtain a representative collection, for qualitative analysis, of sea shore biological specimens collected at low tide.
- (5) conduct a census of seal populations (excluding elephant seals).

e. Botany

Nothing is known of the botany of the Elephant Island group apart from identification of two specimens brought back by Shackleton's Expedition. It is proposed that a primary botanical survey should be carried out involving general collections of all plant groups and the preparation of an ecological account of the island's plant communities. ~~The addition of a non-Service specialist in botany will ensure that optimum value is obtained from the survey and any particular problems presented in the field can be the subject of a detailed investigation.~~

*See p. 11.
No such in
party*

f. Search for traces of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition

Whilst at the first encampment at Cape Valentine, Shackleton cached an emergency supply of ten cases of Bovril sledging rations in a secure crevice in the rocks about 25 feet above high water level, by a great detached pillar of basalt (see Annex C, fig 4). The Point Wild camp, which was occupied for 4½ months, was established on a rocky ledge on the site of a combined Chinstrap and Gentoo penguin rookery and would be safe from even the highest tides. A secure food cache was also made about 25 feet above high water level. Contact has been established with the four surviving members of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and the fullest possible information is being obtained.

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that traces of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition's stay may still remain. It is intended to carry out a thorough search for any such traces during the course of the expedition.

g. Cine-Photography

It is proposed to record on 16 mm colour film all aspects of the Expedition during its work on Elephant Island with a view to producing:

- (1) A documentary film in colour for Service use (recruiting etc)
- (2) A film in colour for general television showing.

h. Climbing

While climbing does not feature amongst the main objectives of this Expedition, an elementary knowledge at least will be a pre-requisite for the majority of the members in order to carry out the Expedition tasks. This Expedition will afford an excellent opportunity to demonstrate how climbing ability can be applied to a useful purpose rather than serving as an end to itself. It is anticipated, however, that first ascents of the highest peak (un-named) and other major peaks will be achieved in the course of other work in the programme.

2. TEAM COMPOSITION

The team will consist of fourteen servicemen with surveying, zoology, glaciology, and geology specialisations. In addition, a BAS botanist may be working on the island during the same period. The leader will be Cdr Malcolm Burley RN.

3. DUMPS AND DISEMBARKATION

a. The Expedition members would require to be disembarked by boat or helicopter and stores established in four dumps on Elephant Island. The purpose in distributing dumps is to ensure the fullest possible effort being applied to constructive fieldwork without being sapped by stores replenishment over unnecessarily long distances.

b. Each dump site should be accessible both from the sea by boat and from inland. The ideal would be to cache each dump on snow-free rock at an altitude of at least 500 feet by helicopter. If wind conditions preclude helicopter operations, however, the dumps would need to be established by boat at a lower altitude clear of springs high water level.

c. From the aerial photographs, it would appear that suitable sites exist in the vicinity of Point Wild, Cape Lindsay and two capes in the southern part of the Island as indicated in Annex E and described below:-

Dump A - Cape Lindsay

This would seem to be the best dump site. Photographs indicate a snow free slope rising inland not too steeply from the beach. The beach itself is protected from the prevailing NE winds by two spits projecting out to sea (~~these are more apparent in Annex B than Annex E~~). Frank Wild, Shackleton's second-in-command, wrote in 1923 referring to Cape Lindsay: "The reports of whalers speak of a large bay with safe anchorage where the landing is good." This site also coincides with one of the trig points to be occupied and it is proposed to make this the main base.

Dump B - Point Wild

As one of the points ~~previously occupied~~ on the island, this site has the advantage ~~whereat~~ disembarkation and establishment of a dump can reasonably be assured. A sketch survey of this point was completed in 1916 during the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition's stay (~~Annex C, fig. 2~~). The following description is extracted from J M Wordie's paper read on 20 June, 1921. "Cape Wild is hardly large enough to be called a Cape, being more of the nature of a Point.

It consists at the northern end of a rocky knob, 95 feet in height, called Penguin Hill, joined to the mainland by a level spit of rocks and shingle resting on a solid rock basement; the level part of the Cape is almost exactly 100 yards in length, the breadth not quite 40 yards. At its south end, there is a small slope of dead ice which at one time was part of the Furness Glacier, and is today not entirely separate; it thus offers an easy and practicable way of getting on to the glacier." A further advantage of this site is that it also coincides with one of the trig points to be occupied and the dump will simplify logistic problems in working over the eastern part of the Island.

Dump C

From photographs, the site for this dump would seem very suitable and easy of access from sea and inland. Establishment of a dump here will simplify logistic problems in working in the south-east part of the island and particularly on the island's principal discharge glacier which is adjacent (paragraph 4(c)(iii) refers). It will also be the nearest dump to dump B, 14 miles to the north-east.

Dump D

Once more, this site appears suitable and easy of access from sea and inland. Work in the south-west of the Island will be conducted from this base which will also serve as a useful intermediate dump between A and C.

2. Frank Wild remarked in 1922 that whilst ashore at Cape Lookout, the main part of the Island seemed to be much more accessible than it was from Cape Wild. If either dump C or dump D should prove unsuitable, this area might prove a suitable alternative. Under any circumstances, should it not prove practicable to establish all projected dumps, it would still be feasible to disembark team and stores and carry out a full programme using a reduced number of bases although the attendant logistic problems may well detract from the scope of the work undertaken.

4. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

In the course of the season, the services of HMS ENDURANCE and her helicopters would be needed for a period of some three weeks in furtherance of the survey task. On completion of expedition work in March, the members and stores would require to be re-embarked from Elephant Island.

5. PROGRAMME

The travelling arrangements have yet to be finalised but it is currently planned for the team to leave UK in November and arrive Port Stanley via Montevideo and MV DARWIN in the early part of December to connect with HMS ENDURANCE for embarking to Elephant Island. The expedition expect to leave Elephant Island in March 1974. The intention is to have a shakedown period of three or four days upon arrival in the Falklands. Stores and equipment for the expedition will be transported from the UK by ENDURANCE.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

It is proposed to establish a radio link at the main Expedition Base Camp on Elephant Island to maintain periodic contact with HMS ENDURANCE and/or Stanley radio, in addition to local communication with detached parties. It is anticipated that the radio will be operated from Dump D for the duration of the Expedition.

Subsistence to difficulties in accommodation here.

10th August 1970.

7
10

4

Thank you for your letter of the 12th of June which I received on my return here on the 1st of August from an assignment which had taken me to London from the 13th of June. As debriefing, and catching up, has taken all my time since getting back I will confine myself to brief comments only in this letter.

The position regarding arrival dates is noted. I expect to be acting as Governor at the material time.

The need for a camping out period is noted and should present no difficulties. I will take an early opportunity of discussing the matter with Capt. Leicester, O.C. the Marines Unit here.

The idea of a public account of the activities of the 1964/65 Expedition is attractive. However I wonder if you would consider, in the interests of any such talk reaching the widest possible Islands audience, converting it into a broadcast? While this *also* means that the impact made by colour slides is lost it means that the majority of the population of the colony would hear the talk and that, committed to tape, it could be repeated in future - a procedure which is frequently followed here. The demand for the repetition, particularly in our winter months, of previously broadcast material of interest is always present. It would probably be necessary to reduce the length of the talk to 30 minutes in these circumstances. Perhaps you would consider whether this would be possible.

I look forward very much to meeting you and hearing your plans. Meanwhile Sir Cosmo will, I know, be glad to know of your message of good wishes which I will pass to him and Lady Haskard at a convenient opportunity.

(J.A. Jones)

Commander M.E. Durrell, M.B.E.,
H.M.S. SULTAN,
Gosport,
Hampshire,
PO12 3BE.
FA

S/C Remind for my further action with O/C. Manning & with Mr. Reine.

7/12/8

See 15

by 17.8.70.

18th August, 1970.

I have recently received a letter from Commander M.K. Burley, R.N., about the Joint Services Expedition of which he is to be the leader, to the Elephant Island group between December 1970 and April 1971.

The party consists of fourteen officers and ~~several~~ Other Ranks from all three Services. They are expected to arrive on H.M.S. Endurance at the end of November and it is expected that the Ship and the Expedition will be in Stanley for some four days. Commander Burley is keen for the members of the expedition to have the opportunity of spending some three days (two nights) camping out and checking that tents, cooking equipment and so on are on the top line. I should be grateful for your suggestions regarding the best way in which to meet Commander Burley's requirements. When you have had the opportunity to consider the matter please get in touch with me by telephone.

(J.A. JONES)
COLONIAL SECRETARY

Officer Commanding,
Naval Party 8901,
Moody Brook,
Stanley.

ARA.

8
8

18th August, 1970.

I have recently received a letter from Commander M.K. Burley, R.N., about the Joint Services Expedition of which he is to be the leader, to the Elephant Island group between December 1970 and April 1971.

The party consists of fourteen officers and several Other Ranks from all three Services. They are expected to arrive on H.M.S. Endurance at the end of November and it is expected that the Ship and the Expedition will be in Stanley for some four days. Commander Burley has suggested that while he is in Stanley it might be of considerable interest if he was able to give a lecture, illustrated with colour slides, of the 1964/65 Joint Services Expedition to South Georgia. In replying to Commander Burley I have suggested that he might consider instead giving a broadcast, in the interests of his talk reaching the widest possible audience. Commander Burley will in due course be letting me know his reaction to this proposal and when he has done so I will get in touch with you again. Meanwhile you will wish to note the possibility of this broadcast.

(J.A. JONES)
COLONIAL SECRETARY

Mr C.T. Reive,
Broadcasting Studio,
Stanley.

ARA.

See 18

Whe On return of file, check with App.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

SENT

WAP 15142-821 584578/790938 500 pds 12/68 Grp.782

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
	R		1450Z	18.6.70

To FM STANLEY
TO LONDON

X/622/70 WHAT ARE TO BE THE SURVEYS COMMITMENTS (IF ANY) WITH REGARDS TO ELEPHANT ISLAND PARTY AND RADIO COMMUNICATION SCHEDULES OR LOGISTICS ASSISTANCE FROM STANLEY PLEASE=

ECJC/-

0799/70 R 0937Z 23/6/70

FROM LONDON

TO STANLEY

AS/126/3 X/622/70 WE HAVE NOT BEEN ASKED TO UNDERTAKE ANY COMMITMENT. I DO NOT EXPECT LOGISTIC DEMANDS EXCEPT IN EMERGENCY. IT WOULD BE WISE TO ALLOW FOR A RE ULAR SCHED AND I EXPECT THEY WILL JOIN IN THE WEATHER SCHEDS. AM ASKING THEM WHAT IF ANYTHING IS EXPECTED.

VEF/AM

0879/70 4 0959Z 10/7/70

FROM LONDON

TO STANLEY

AS/126/3 X/622/70 ELEPHANT ISLAND PARTY PLAN TO BE SELF SUPPORTING. THEY PROPOSE TO RESTRICT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS TO ENDURANCE AND PARTICIPATION GOONSHOW IF NECESSARY. THEY ARE NOT PLANNING PROPER MET REPORTING BUT INTEND SENDING OBS TO ENDURANCE PERHAPS ONLY ONCE WEEKLY.

LATTER SEEMS WEAK TO ME AND I GUESS IT MAY AMOUNT TO MORE.

VEF/AM

1029/70 R 0948Z 20/8/70

FROM LONDON

TO STANLEY

AS/126/3 FOLLOWING INFO ON JOINT SERVICE EXPEDITION ELEPHANT IS. RADIO GEAR 1 X 122 TYPE LONG RANGE CW SET
1 X A13 TYPE HF MANPACKS.

SKEDS BETWEEN ELEPHANT AND ENDURANCE ONE PER WEEK (NO TIME AS YET). EXPEDITION TX ON 3720 AND RX ON 4067 MHZ. ENDURANCE KEEPING LISTENING WATCH 1800-1830 LOCAL TIME ELEPHANT I.

EXPEDITION WILL MONITOR GOON SHOW ON 4067 BUT MAY NOT TRANSMIT.

TRIALS BEING CARRIED OUT BTWN SHIP AND SHORE DURING SEPT.

WILL SUPPLY FUTHER INFO IF U INTERESTED, WHEN AVAILABLE.

BJP/AM

Ref. J. Spilman. am interested

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
	R		1325Z	21.8.70

To FM STANLEY
TO LONDON

X/831/70 1029/AS/126/3 THANKYOU. AM INTERESTED=

ECJC/-

Bu

10/1/69

10.

21st September

70

Joint Services Expedition to Elephant Island Group

I shall be grateful if you will now let me have, in writing, your proposals regarding the question raised in my letter of the 18th of August. You have mentioned to me orally that there is no problem, but it would be useful to have precise and detailed arrangements decided upon now so that I can communicate them in advance to Commander Burley.

(J. A. Jones)
Colonial Secretary

Officer Commanding,
Naval Party 8901,
Moody Brook,
Stanley.

*1/11 The sketch book to me pl.
JP/49*

D/1/69

22nd September

70

With reference to your letter of the 12th June about the Joint Services Expedition and to my reply of the 10th August, I shall be grateful if you will bear in mind that I shall be glad if half your members will come to a cocktail party at Sullivan House on Saturday the 28th November and half on Tuesday the 1st December. I leave it entirely to you how you divide them up between the two dates. Of course, this is on the assumption that the present plan for "Endurance" to arrive here on the 28th November and leave on the 2nd December is implemented.

(J. A. Jones)
Colonial Secretary

Commander M.K. Burley, M.B.E.
H.M.S. SULLIVAN,
Gosport,
Hampshire,
PO12 3BY

D/11/69. 12



Officer Commanding Royal Marines
Naval Party 8901
c/o BFPO Ships

RM/Falk/10

23rd September 1970

Colonial Secretary's Office
Stanley
Falkland Islands.

JOINT SERVICES EXPEDITION TO ELEPHANT ISLAND.

Ref: Your letter D/1/69 dated 26th Sept 1970.

1. There are two fairly accessible areas which would be useful to Cdr Burley whilst in Stanley:-
 - a. The saddle between the Two Sisters; this is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Moody Brook with a track leading to the foot of the hill, leaving a 300 ft climb to a good windy camping site.
 - b. Mount Kent, a smallish spur just below the summit, $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Moody Brook. There is a track half way leaving a 4 mile walk with a climb of about 1000 ft to a more isolated and less level camping site.
2. Both these two locations should, weather permitting provide reasonable areas to test equipment. Mount Kent provides a bleaker outlook but can only be reached on foot. This might suit Cdr Burley better.
3. We will be only too pleased to provide radio's for communications and transport to and from the camp. We can also supply normal service stores, rations, spare tenting, cookers etc if required and the occasional hot meal. Due to limitations in size we are unable to accommodate the team.

See 13

(H.W. LEICESTER)
Captain RM.

2nd October

2

12

Please refer to paragraph 3 of your letter of the 12th June, in which you said that during the four day stay in Stanley of H.M.S. "Endurance" at the end of November/beginning of December you were keen for the members of the Expedition to have the opportunity of camping out and checking equipment.

Leicester, the Officer Commanding the Marine Unit here suggests that one of the following two fairly accessible areas might suit your purpose.

(1) The saddle between the Two Sisters. This is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Moody Brook where the Marine Unit is situated, with a track leading to the foot of the hill where there is a 300 ft. climb to a good windy camping site.

(2) Mount Kent - a smallish spur just below the summit $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Moody Brook. There is a track halfway leaving a 4 mile walk with a climb of about 1,000 ft. to a more isolated and less level camping site.

Both these locations should, weather permitting, provide reasonable areas for testing equipment. Mount Kent provides a bleaker outlook but can only be reached on foot. For that reason it may suit your purposes better.

Captain Leicester has informed me that he will be pleased to provide radios for communication and transport to and from the camp. He can also supply normal service stores, rations, spare tenting, cookers and so on, if required, and the occasional hot meal. Due to limitations in size he will, however, be unable to accommodate your team.

(J. A. Jones)
Ag. Governor

Commander M.K. Burley, M.B.E.
H.M.S. SULTAN
Gosport,
Hampshire,
PO12 3BY

1/11 Like back to me please.
J 2/11

64

17/13/10

Note OZ asked to provide further copy: also two copies
of my signal in reply.

17/13/10



1227/70 R 1506Z 12/10/70
FROM LONDON
TO STANLEY

AS/126/3 COL SEC/COMMANDER BURLEY YOUR LETTER D/1/69 OF
22 SEP RECEIVED BUT NOT LETTER OF 10 AUG. REQUEST GIST OF LATTER
BE TRANSMITTED SY TELEX. MEMBERS ACCEPT WITH PLEASURE YOUR KIND
INVITATIONS ON 28 NOV AND 1 DEC.
EH/AM

See p. 16

D/1/69

15

14th October

70

2
As a result of our recent exchange of signals I am sending you a copy of my letter of the 10th of August which evidently went missing.

6

(J. A. Jones)
As. Governor

Commander H.K. Burley, R.D.N.,
H.M.S. SULTAN,
Gosport,
Hampshire,
PO12 5BY

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDSSENT

W/ P2809 5/61

16

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
	R		1209Z	14.10.70

FM STANLEY

TO LONDON

p. 14

X/998/70 YOUR 1227/AS/126/3 OAG/COMMANDER BURLEY.

MY LETTER OF 10TH AUGUST INDICATED OC MARINES WOULD BE CONSULTED RE CAMPING PLANS. RESULTS THIS CONSULTATION CONTAINED MY LETTER OF 2ND OCTOBER BEING DESPATCHED 15TH OCTOBER. MY LETTER 10TH AUGUST ALSO PROPOSED 30 MINUTE BROADCAST IN PLACE OF ILLUSTRATED LECTURE AS FORMER WOULD REACH WIDER AUDIENCE. AM REPEATING MY LETTER 10TH AUGUST TO YOU BY 15TH OCTOBER MAIL=

JJ/

Time

FOR COMM CEN/SIGNALS USE.

10/23/0

17

PRECEDENCE-ACTION		PRECEDENCE-INFO		DATE-TIME GROUP		MESSAGE INSTRUCTIONS	
ROUTINE		DEFERRED		220830Z OCT			
FROM CENTURION				PREFIX GR			
TO NP 8901 (FOR COL SEC)				SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			
INFO				ORIGINATOR'S NUMBER DIG			
				CCG			
				SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS			
REQUEST YOU PASS FOLLOWING		TO COLONIAL SECRETARY STANLEY FI.				5	
QUOTE BROADCAST AGREED WITH		PLEASURE WMP YOUR INVITATIONS UNQUOTE				10	
CROSS		SIGNED BURLEY				15	
						20	
						25	
WRITE						30	
						35	
						40	
						45	
						50	
PAGE.....OF.....PAGES		REFERS TO MESSAGE		DRAFTER'S NAME		OFFICE	
		CLASSIFIED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				TEL. No.	
						22 OCT 1970	
FOR OPFRS USE		DATE		TIME		SYSTEM OPERATOR	
R						D	
						RELEASING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE	
						RANK	

D/1/69

18

24th October

70

To: Director of Broadcasting,

From: Acting Colonial Secretary,

STANLEY

u.f.s. S.P.T.

Copy to: S.P.T.

Broadcast by Commander M.K. Burley, M.B.E., R.N.

8

Please refer to my letter No. D/1/69 of the 18th of August which forecast the possibility of a broadcast being made by Commander Burley, R.N., leader of the Elephant Island group Joint Services Expedition.

2. Confirmation has now been received from Commander Burley that he is prepared to make the broadcast which is expected to be of a duration of 20 to 30 minutes.

3. Commander Burley is expected to arrive on the 23th November and to leave on the 2nd December. You will need to establish early contact with him as his time will be very fully occupied. In these circumstances I expect that his talk will have to be taped.

(H.L. Bond)
for ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY

A.C.P.

Please take following action in connection with this file, returning file to me on Monday, 23.11.70:

- (1) Remind Reive of p. 18. It is now confirmed 'Endurance' will arrive at 0830 on 28. 11. 70.
- (2) Perhaps Reive will wish to give some publicity, in advance, to Capt. Burkey's broadcast? Alternatively a mention in a Newsletter, particularly by W Clapp, might be even more suitable.
- (3) Contact Capt. Leicester on the direct line from my CSO office to crosscheck that he has anything in hand regarding the matter to which p. 12 refers. (I assume that any communication about this with 'Endurance' will be between Leicester & Burkey.) (? Do any loose ends occur to you as being tying up in connection with this matter of testing the Expedition's equipment. ? Local landowner reactions, e.g. — though I would have expected Leicester would have taken care of that).

M 20/11

y.g.

I have discussed P19 (1) & (2) with
D/Broadcasting & he is making all arrangements

2. Capt Lucrest shows this morning &
discussed (3). He confirms all is in hand
& he is contacting the managers of Fitzroy & Green
Patch, the farms controlling two sides of Estancia
Montana areas, for clearance. Both these
managers are helpful persons & I anticipate
no difficulties in this connection. I thought
at first that the hills might be involved but they
will only require to use the public roadway through
his leased land.

3. I can think of no other problems.

26.11.70

07/11 You were going to provide me with a copy of the answer which
has sent to this. Please let me have this copy telegram back
at the same time.

y/e. my mistake. I thought you were reminding me
about copies for BAT file. BAT file is up to date.
More copies you require.

V

S. P. R. P.
14-11-70



1323/70 PRIORITY 1244Z 13/11/70
FROM LONDON
TO STANLEY

AS/161/2 AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH LEE AT FCC, THE FOLLOWING IS THE
OFFICIAL VIEW. IN VIEW OF FACT THAT NAVAL EXPEDITION HAS HAD
TWO SOUVENIR ENVELOPES PRINTED AND THAT BAT STAMPS HAVE ALREADY BEEN
PURCHASED AND ARE AFFIXED, POST OFFICE MAY BE OPENED IF LOCAL
AUTHORITIES ARE PREPARED TO AUTHORISE. HOWEVER, THE POST OFFICE
MUST BE EFFECTIVE IN THAT STAMPS ARE MADE AVAILABLE FOR BONA FIDE
POSTAL PURPOSES IF THE NEED ARISES. IN VIEW OF THE COMPARATIVELY
TRIVIAL NATURE OF THE EXPEDITION AND THE VERY SHORT TIME IN WHICH
THE POST OFFICE WILL BE REQUIRED TO PERATE, A SPECIAL ELEPHANT
ISLAND FRANK IS NOT CONSIDERED JUSTIFIED. THE SOUTH SHETLANDS
FRANK WAS USED FOR MANY YEARS AT DECEPTION ISLAND AND AT
ADMIRALTY BAY AND THIS SHOULD BE ISSUED TO THE EXPEDITION. WOULD
YOU PLEASE LET US KNOW WHAT IS REQUIRED, IF ANYTHING, BY WAY OF
ADDITIONAL DATING DIES. ASSUME THAT YOU WOULD NEED THE YEAR 1971.
PLEASE CONFIRM SOONEST WHETHER YOU CONSIDER THIS COURSE ACCEPTABLE.
EXPEDITION LEAVES ON SUNDAY AND WE WILL HAVE TO CONFIRM TO BURLEY
WHAT ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE.

FOR YOUR INFOR, EXPEDITION HAS PREPARED TWO SOUVENIR ENVELOPES,
THE FIRST TO BE FRANKED IN 'BFPO' ON LEAVING UK. THE DESIGN IS
RED 'HMS ENDURANCE' WITH DETAILED RIGGING IN BLACK ON LIGHT BLUE
BACKGROUND, SHIP BESET. THE SECOND ENVELOPE IS SHACKLETONS
'ENDURANCE' BESET IN HUMMOCKY ICE DONE IN BLACK AND WHITE ON SEPIA
BACKGROUND WITH STYLISED HEAD OF SHACKLETON IN TOP LEFT HAND CORNER.
SECOND SOUVENIR ENVELOPE HAS ALREADY BEEN STAMPED WITH BAT 4D STAMP.
ENPS/AM

See BAT file and
or file.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDSSENT

Wt. 19 5/61

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
	PRIORITY		1530Z	13.11.70
To	FM STANLEY			
	TO LONDON			

X/1109/70 1393/AS/181/2. IN VIEW OF ANTICIPATED ADVERSE EFFECT OF PROPOSAL ON BOTH TERRITORY AND COLONY'S PHILATELIC IMAGE IT IS REGRETTED LOCAL AUTHORITIES NOT PREPARED AUTHORISE ELEPHANT ISLAND POST OFFICE. HOWEVER THERE WOULD BE NO OBJECTION TO PREPARED COVERS BEING CANCELLED AT AN ESTABLISHED BAT POST OFFICE NOR TO THE USE OF A RUBBER STAMP CACHET PROVIDED IT NEITHER RESEMBLES A POSTAL FRANK NOR IN ANY WAY DEFACES THE POSTAGE STAMP=

ECJC/-

Time

23

1399/70 R 1443Z 16/11/70

FROM LONDON

TO STANLEY

AS/181/2 FURTHER OUR RECENT CORRESPONDENCE RE ELEPHANT ISLAND POST OFFICE. BURLEY HAS £2,800 COVERS, AS MY LAST SENTENCE, 1393/70, WHICH HE REQUIRES TO BE FRANKED. I SUGGEST THESE BE DONE AT SIGNY ISLAND AS SHACKLETON PASSED SOUTH ORKNEYS EN ROUTE FOR SOUTH GEORGIA. I GATHER THAT BURLEY REQUIRES THESE TO BE DONE FOR SPECIFIC DATE, PERHAPS YOU COULD TALK TO HIM ABOUT THIS AND MAKE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS.

THE SPONSORS OF THIS PROJECT ARE STAMP PUBLICITY (WORTHING) LTD. AND IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BURLEY TO SEE THAT THESE COVERS ARE RETURNED TO THIS FIRM. THE ORIGINAL PLAN WAS THAT THEY SHOULD BE BROUGHT BACK TO UK ON HMS ENDURANCE, BUT IN VIEW OF WHAT LOOKS TO BE AN UNPREDICTABLE SEASON THIS MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE DUE TO COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS BETWEEN BAS SHIPS AND HMS ENDURANCE. ALL THIS IS A FRIGHTFUL NUISANCE BECAUSE IT WAS SPRUNG ON US WITHOUT CONSULTATION. IF WE HAD BEEN CONTACTED NO DOUBT BUSINESS WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH TIDIER. OUR FIRST INDICATION OF THIS WAS 28TH OCTOBER, EVEN THEN, WE GOT GARBLED VERSIONS OF WHAT WAS REALLY TO HAPPEN. WILL LEAVE THIS IN YOUR CAPABLE HANDS. MANY THANKS.
EMPS/AM

*SPT. To see pp. 21-3 & return file to no exhibit.
4.E. Thank you ① 24/11/70. J.P. 24/11*

24
Note of discussion with Bueby on "Endurance" on 28.11.70.

Bueby will make his recording on the afternoon of Tuesday, 1 December.

2 The Expedition will test equipment over the week-end (29.11 - 1.12.) at Mount Low. Logistic support by DC NP 8902.

Note 2 The Expedition sailed ex-Stanley on "Endurance" at 0830 on Wednesday, 2.12.70, & is not returning to Stanley. J 28/11
J 2/12

P.A.

25

①

NNNN

ZCZC 16 GXRH1

HMS ENDURANCE 443/437 8 0900 PART 10F 2

GOVERNOR FI

UNCLAS ROUTINE 072359Z DEC FROM HMS ENDURANCE TO CINCF
INFO MODUK NAVY FOCAS GOVERNOR FALKLAND ISLANDS
LEQ/FFD/KME ELEPANT ISLAND STOP

NUMBER ONE . SUMMARY OF EVENTS AS FOLLOWS 8 FRIDAY 4TH .

ARRIVE IN PERFECT WEATHER RECCE ALL PLANNED TRIG POINTS
ON NE AND SE COASTS OF

PAGE2/50

EI AND W COAST OF CLARENCE ISLAND (CLI) . LANDED TWO TONS
JSE STORES EAST END OF EI AND THREE MAN JSE CLIMBING TEAM
ON CLI . FULL GALE BY SUNSET . SATURDAY 5TH . UNSUCCESSFUL
RECCE OF TRIG POINTS ON GIBBS GROUP OF ISLANDS DUE TO HIGH
AND

PAGE3/50

FLUKY WINDS AND SHIP MOVEMENT . TWO HOURS LATER FOUND SAFE
ANCHORAGE IN LEE UNDER CLIFFS BELOW JSE MAIN CAMP DISEMBARKED
ELEVEN TONS OF STORES INCLUDING HUT TO CAMP SITE THEN REMAINED
AT ANCHOR OVERNIGHT . SUNDAY 6TH . LANDING OF LAST TWO DUMPS
OF STORES ON WEST COAST EI

(2)

26

FRUSTRATED BY WEATHER , BUT LATER CDR BURLEY . FIVE MEMBERS
JSE AND FOUR MR PO'S OF SHIPS DETACHMENT LANDED AT MAIN
CAMP . DURING EVENING FIVE TRIG STATION PARTIES OF TWO MEN EACH
(JSE AND ENDURANCE) LANDED ON EI AND CLI . ICY WINDS OF 55
KNOTS REPORTED

PAGE 5/50

FROM JSE MAIN CAMP AS THEY PREPARED FOR FIRST NIGHT ASHORE .
SHIP SPENT NIGHT SOUNDING IN UNCHARTED WATERS . MONDAY 7TH
 . EVENTUALLY LANDED THREE TONS JSE STORES IN TWO DUMPS ON
WEST COAST OF EI . RECDE OF TRIG STATION FRUSTRATED BY
BAD VISIBILITY WHICH HAS SINCE BECOME

PAGE 6/50

FOG . 2 . DISEMBARKATION OF JSE AND THEIR STORES NOW COMPLETE
AND TO SCHEDULE . TASKS OF ENDURANCE UNTIL DEPARTURE FROM
AREA ON 1ST JAN WILL BE (A) MOVEMENT AND SUPORT OF TRIG
POINT SURVEY PARTIES AGGEN ON TRIANGULATION OF ALL ISLANDS
IN EI AREA . (B)

27

(3)
ZCZC 17/GXRH1

HMS ENDURANCE 443/437 8 0900

PAGE7/50 PART 2 OF 2

GOVERNOR F1

SURVEY SOUNDING OF LARGE AREAS OF UNCHARTED WATER AROUND ISLANDS . 3 . MAIN IMPRESSIONS SO FAR ARE (A) THE RUGGED PRACTEDUR OF EI AND CLI BOTH OF WHICH ARE VERY MOUNTAINOUS AND ALMOST COMPLETELY ICE CLAD WITH MANY ENORMOUS GLACIERS UP TO 4 MILES WIDE AND 350 FEET

PAGE8/50

HIGH AT THE COAST . THE VIEWS DURING THE FEW CLEAR AND SUNNY HOURS RIVAL THE BEST IN THE ALPS . (B) THE WEATHER WHICH CHANGES HOURLY AND WHICH IN FOUR DAYS HAS INCLUDED EVERY VARIATION EXCEPT BLIZZARD . TEMPERATURES BETWEEN 2 AND 5 DEGREES CENTIGRADE . (C) THE

PAGE9/36

APPARENT ABUNDANCE OF PENGUINS SEAL AND SEA BIRDS (D) ADMIRATION FOR JSE WHO HAVE MANY DIFFCULT ~~XXX~~ RASKS IN ARDUOUS CONDITIONS AHEAD OF THEM . 4 . ENDURANCE KBX 042327Z AND LEQ/KBX 061640Z ALSO REFER .

NOV 17/1970

HMS ENDURANCE 447/457 8 0300

PAGE TWO PART 2 OF 2

y. 6.

From f. 25 for inf. pl.

§

GOVERNOR 21

9.12.70.

1/2

T. 4.

SURVEY SOUNDING OF LARGE AREAS OF UNCHARTED WATER AROUND ISLANDS. 3. MAIN IMPRESSIONS SO FAR ARE (A) THE RUDDY

2 They have typed copy for 0625 (with a) and almost completely ice clad with many enormous glaciers

at 5H 10 copy, which should be marked for 0625, sent up be sent down to the loose in box).

9/11/2

copy sent to G.H. today.

§

11.12.70.

HIGH AT THE COAST. THE VIEWS DURING THE FIRM CLEAR AND SUNNY HOURS RIVAL THE BEST IN THE ALPS. (B) THE WEATHER WHICH CHANGES HOURLY AND WHICH IN FOUR DAYS HAS INCLUDED EVERY VARIATION EXCEPT BLIZZARD. TEMPERATURES BETWEEN 2 AND 5 DEGREES CENTIGRADE. (C) THE

15.1

END PAGE

APPARENT ABUNDANCE OF PENGUINS SEAL AND SEA BIRDS (D) ADMIRATION FOR THE WHO HAVE MANY DIFFICULT TASKS IN ARDUOUS CONDITIONS AHEAD OF THEM. 4. ENDURANCE KIX GASSYS AND LEQKEX 061602 ALSO REFER.

DECODE.

TELEGRAM.

28

From H.M.S. ENDURANCE

To GOVERNOR FAULKLAND ISLANDS

Despatched : 31st December 1970 Time : 1200

Received : 19 Time :

R310200Z From Endurance to C-in-C WF info Moduk Navy Focas Admiralty London S.W.1

Elephant Island sitrep number three (and final) covering period 18 through 30th December. Main tasks -

(A) completion Gibbs Island group triangulation
(B) extension of triangulation from King George Island to Gibbs Island (76 miles) via Bridgeman Island by observed triangle and measured distance.

2. Off to good start after receipt 17 bags Christmas mail collected from Esperanza Base (Argentinian) on 18th. Reasonable weather allowed completion (A) above 19th by 21st siting of two - man survey teams completed on Bridgeman (Lieut Cdr Campbell and PO Elton) and Melville (JSE). Former one large cinder with no shelter except by digging hole in top with pick axe and placing tent and gear within but survived two days force 8 - 9 winds and blizzard. Latter snow peak comfortable except team in white out six days out of nine.

3. Endurance absent from area 22nd to noon Christmas day on Yacht British Steel business, then in Potter Cove King Island until a.m. 27th.

4. Recovered Bridgeman 27th and Gibbs 28th Melville team trapped in low cloud but brought out with gear late p.m. 29th by Lieutenant Norman and five RM detachemt after 1000 ft climb in 5 yard visibility.

5. Task one (B) above and Endurance participation in Elephant Island area survey now completed except assistance to JSE in March 1971 to measure some heights for accurate interpretation of air photographs.

6. Today 30th Closed Point Wild, site of Endurance ships company home April to August 1916 and obtained photo coverage on perfect sunny day. Then final liaison with JSE main base. Now proceeding Maxwell Harbour King George Island for liaison with Russian and Chilian bases until 010115 locat Jan before departure to Punta Arenas.

7. Ships company in good heart after rewarding month. Weather has been our ally

28

DECODE.

TELEGRAM SENT.

From SECRETARY OF STATE to GOVERNOR

Despatched: 31/3/71

Time: 1705Z

Received:

Time:

From Leader Joint Services Expedition, Elephant Island to H.E. Governor, Falkland Isl

Very many thanks for your kind message which is much appreciated by us all. We are grateful for this opportunity to make a small contribution to Antarctic research and have derived great enjoyment and satisfaction from this venture. Your flagship has done us proud and great regret is that we are not visiting the Falkland Islands again to say farewell.

Our good wishes go to you and Mrs. Lewis for enjoyable stay in the Falkland Islands.

BURLEY

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten initials]

[Handwritten mark]

To Elephant Island in wake of Shackleton

AN icy reception awaits fourteen British officers and men this autumn on the storm-tossed and unchartered shores of Elephant Island off continental Antarctica.

The men — all hand-picked scientific and polar enthusiasts from the three Armed Services — will constitute the Joint Services Expedition which will explore and survey the remote island, described as "one of the dwindling number of unexplored areas in the world."

This will be the most ambitious expedition mounted on a joint Service basis for at least a quarter of a century.

The leader of the expedition, Comdr. Malcolm Burley, and his 13 men, will spend five months on Elephant Island which is about the size of the Isle of Wight and forms part of the South Shetland group. No joint Service expedition has ventured so far south before.

Mountainous

The first of the few recorded landings on the beaches of Elephant Island, which is mountainous and covered with a permanent ice cap (the highest peak is about the height of Snowdon), was in April, 1916, by Sir Ernest Shackleton and the survivors of his Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

They reached sanctuary on Elephant Island in three boats after their expedition ship, the *Endurance*, had been crushed and sunk in the pack ice in the Weddell Sea.

The expedition remained marooned on a small spit for over four months while Shackleton and five companions made their epic 600-mile sea passage in an open boat to South Georgia for help.

The current expedition members will fly to South America in November where they will embark in the Royal Navy's new ice patrol ship, HMS *Endurance*, for passage to Elephant Island.

Namesake

HMS *Endurance*, namesake of Shackleton's famous ship, will have embarked the expedition's stores at Portsmouth before sailing south to carry out her own polar duties. The team will return to Britain in the *Endurance* in April, 1971.

In addition to their scientific work the expedition will search for traces remaining of the occupation by Shackleton's expedition of over 50 years ago.

Comdr. Burley is one of the Royal Navy's most experienced polar explorers and mountaineers. He is already familiar with the South Shetland Islands having taken part in a helicopter rescue and led diving operations there a few years ago.

In 1964-65 he led a combined Services expedition to South Georgia and two years earlier, led the first ascent of Mount Liotard in the Antarctic. He was engaged in Arctic expeditions in 1958, 1959 and 1961.

Specialists

He is supported by a team composed of four Naval officers and one rating, five military officers, two Royal Air Force officers and a flight sergeant. All are specialists in some relevant scientific study.

Four zoologists in the team will carry out a census of various species of birds in the area, especially penguins and petrels, gather information on nesting habits of snow and Antarctic petrels, obtain specimens of birds and insects, obtain a collection, for qualitative analysis, of sea shore biological specimens, and conduct a census of the seal population.

The expedition zoologist is Lt. Comdr. Chris Furze (34), who is stationed at the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon. He teaches marine engineering to Naval officer graduates.

Specialising in mammology on the island will be Lt. John Hunt, who is serving in the nuclear-powered *Polaris* submarine HMS *Resolution*.

Doctor

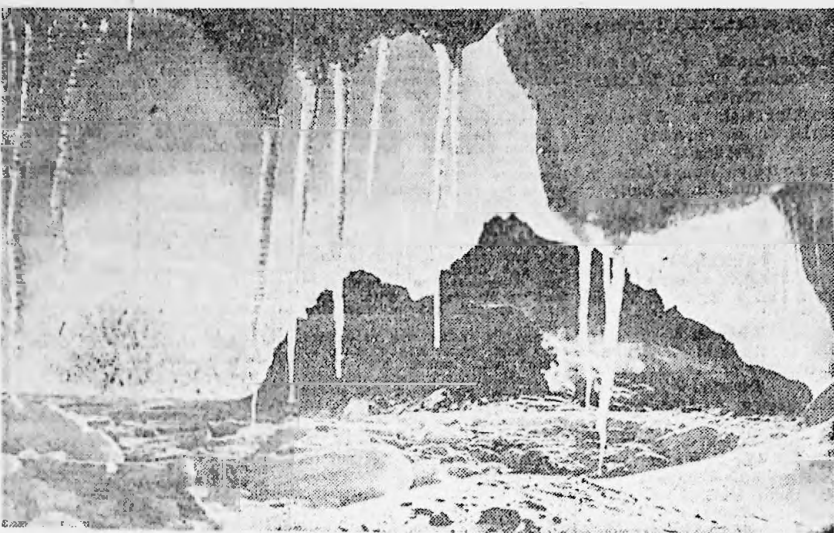
The expedition's doctor, Surgeon Lt. Roger Wells (25), of the Royal Marine Barracks, Eastney, will also conduct research on sea shore biology and terrestrial invertebrate zoology.

Completing the zoological section is ornithologist Flt. Sgt. George Bruce (34), the full-time leader of the mountain rescue team at the Royal Air Force Station, Kinloss. He is a parachute jumping instructor with 454 jumps to his record.

Elephant Island has never been fully surveyed, although aerial reconnaissance has provided the bare outline of the coast. The expedition supported by HMS *Endurance* for three weeks, will survey the island and once it has been correctly positioned the Navy's Hydrographic Department will be able to progress a programme of hydrography and charting.

The expedition surveyors are Capt. John Elder, Royal Engineers, Lt. Tony Rackham, R.N. (23), Flt.-Lt. Harry Patrick (26) and Flt.-Lt. Gordon Jacobs, Royal Air Force Regiment.

Capt. Elder holds an appointment at the School of Military Survey, Lt. Rackham



Looking out to sea from an ice cave at Point Wild on the north coast of Elephant Island where Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition was marooned in 1916. The pack ice surrounding the island was largely responsible for delays in rescue which was eventually achieved at the fourth attempt.



The leader of the 1970-71 Joint Service Expedition to Elephant Island—Comdr. Malcolm Burley.

is a qualified hydrographer in the Navy's Hydrographic Service and is at present first lieutenant of the survey ship HMS *Enterprise*.

Flt.-Lt. Patrick is a navigation instructor at the Royal Air Force Advanced Navigation School, Sladishall. Flt.-Lt. Jacobs commands the Station Regiment Flight at the Royal Air Force Station, Kinloss, and is a member of the station's mountain rescue team.

The Shackleton expedition made a small collection of rocks on the island in 1916 and these proved to be of considerable scientific interest, as it became apparent that the rocks comprising the Elephant Island group are quite distinct from those of the rest of the South Shetland group.

It is intended to carry out general geological mapping and this work will be handled by Lt. Richard Roxburgh, of the Army Air Corps, who is at present attached to the 16th Parachute Brigade.

He will work with C.P.O. David Burkitt (26), who is stationed at the Royal Naval Air Station, Lossiemouth, and was a member of the Royal Navy's ski team in 1963.

Glaciers

The glaciological objectives of the expedition will be to record ice temperatures, record snow accumulation measurements and gather ice discharge data on the island's principal glacier.

This work will be carried out by an Army Reserve Officer, Lt. Robert O'Brien, of the Royal Signals. He is a research assistant in polar geomorphology at Dundee University.

Assisting him will be Lt. Crispin Agnew, of the 1st battalion, Royal Highland Fusiliers, who has considerable climbing experience, particularly in Greenland.

Little is known of the botany of the Elephant Island group, apart from identification of two specimens brought back by Shackleton's expedition.

A primary botanical survey will be carried out involving collections of all plant

groups and the preparation of an ecological account of the island's plant communities.

This work will mainly concern Lt. Edward Waishaw (25), of the 25th Light Regiment, Royal Artillery. He is a gun commander and has taken part in expeditions to Greenland and Spitzbergen.

In five years he has taken part in four major expeditions which have taken him to 10 different countries.

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that traces of the old Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition's stay on Elephant Island may still remain. A thorough search will be made for such evidence.

While at his first camp at Cape Valentine, Shackleton cached an emergency supply of 10 cases of sledging rations in a secure crevice in the rocks above high water level.

Contact has been established with the three surviving members of Shackleton's expedition and they have given the leader valuable directions.

While climbing does not feature among the main objectives of the expedition it is anticipated that first ascents will be attempted on the highest peaks of the island, at present unnamed.

A 16 mm. colour film depicting all aspects of the expedition's activities will be made and this may be shown on television on return to Britain.

The South Shetland Islands were discovered in 1819 by Capt. William Smith after his ship, the brig *Williams*, had been blown off course to the south while trading round Cape Horn.

Elephant Island was first sighted the following year. The name of the island was originally Sea Elephant Island, derived from the island's dense population of these seals.

Landings

Shackleton's was the first recorded landing on the island in 1916. Other recorded landings occurred in 1922 when small parties were landed on the beaches from the expedition ship *Quest*, and also about

10 years ago when a small scientific party from the British Antarctic Survey landed briefly, during a forenoon, to undertake a short period of gravimetric observations.

The only other known landings were on Point Wild in 1966 when a helicopter from HMS *Protector* and a small party from the Chilean ship *Piloto Pardo* paid brief calls to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the evacuation of Shackleton's expedition.

Apart from unrecorded landings by early sealers and whalers, and of those mentioned above, Elephant Island remains unexplored. No one has ventured inland from the beaches due to the formidable mountainous and glacier-covered terrain.

Terrain

It is understandable that Shackleton's expedition should deem it prudent to conserve its resources for survival in its parlous predicament in 1916 by keeping to the beach.

But it is nevertheless a striking illustration of the difficult and forbidding aspect of the island terrain that an expedition of such a calibre should have been deterred from undertaking any degree of exploration and research into the interior during its enforced stay.

The 1970-71 British Joint Services Expedition will have unique and outstanding opportunities for scientific research.

The work undertaken by these young men from the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force, should represent a real and valuable contribution to Antarctic research.