



STORIES FROM THE SEA

EXPLORATION OBJECTS



'THEY FORGED THE LAST LINKS WITH THEIR LIVES: SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S MEN DYING BY THEIR BOAT DURING THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE EXPEDITION'

Date made

1895

Object ref.

BHC1273

Credit

National Maritime
Museum, Greenwich,
London

Artist / maker

William Thomas Smith

Description

This is the best-known painting inspired by the 50th anniversary of the departure of Sir John Franklin's doomed Arctic expedition from Britain in 1845. The 'last links' refer to the claim that Franklin completed the discovery of a new North-West Passage route through the Arctic islands before Robert McClure did so in 1850, during his search for Franklin. The painting is based on a search expedition's find of a boat in Erebus Bay containing human remains, including the apparent last survivor.

However, since the expedition had also found evidence that Franklin died in 1847, before the expedition abandoned its ships, the figures shown are all anonymous,

Questions

Look carefully at the painting and describe it.

What happened before this picture was painted?



Supported using public funding by



ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

