



News Release

For Immediate Release

Government of Nunavut discovers Franklin artifact

IQALUIT, Nunavut (September 8, 2014) - The Government of Nunavut (GN) archaeology team made the first discoveries of the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition on September 1.

An iron fitting from a Royal Navy ship, identified as part of a boat-launching davit, and bearing two broad arrows was found on an island in the southern search area. A wooden object, possibly a plug for a deck hawse, the iron pipe through which the ship's chain cable would descend into the chain locker below, was also discovered.

These findings are important because the iron fitting is certainly from one of the Franklin shipwrecks. This is the first discovery of its kind in the area in modern times. This discovery is consistent with, and supports, 19th century Inuit oral testimony describing a shipwreck to the south of King William Island.

"This discovery is an excellent example of the teamwork between the Government of Nunavut, the Government of Canada and private partners, who have been sharing resources and expertise in the search for the Franklin wrecks since 2008," said Peter Taptuna, Premier of Nunavut. "Congratulations to Nunavut's archaeological team for uncovering this important element of our territory's history."

"On behalf of our Government, I congratulate the Government of Nunavut on this remarkable archaeological discovery that will contribute to the search for the most sought after shipwrecks in Canadian history, if not the world," said the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Environment and Minister responsible for Parks Canada. "This discovery is the result of an unprecedented partnership, announced by our Government earlier this year, between many levels of government and private sector partners. This is the largest search effort for the lost Franklin ships – an expedition that laid the foundations of Canada's Arctic sovereignty nearly 200 years ago."

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The discovery has not changed the focus of the GN's 2014 activities, including important survey and mapping work at several locations on King William Island, and the reburial of human remains from members of the Franklin Expedition that were collected in 2013 for analysis.

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