

the shock came they of course started to run as fast as their legs would carry them, but they did not get away quickly enough to reach the deep snow. The pieces of ice rained unmercifully down upon their backs. After a great deal of trouble we laid and fired two other large gunpowder mines, besides some smaller ones, but without much effect. We then began to bore holes for two gun-cotton mines, which were to be fired simultaneously. But when we had got down two and a half drill-lengths the screw broke, and before we could proceed new grooves had to be filed on the other drill before we could use it again. At 12 o'clock at night we knocked off work, after having been at it unceasingly since the morning.

Next day at 6 o'clock the boring was continued. But the ice was so hard and difficult to work at that, although four men were handling the drill, we had to erect a small crane with tackle to hoist the drill out every time it got clogged up. The ice was so thick that it took four drill-lengths (about 20 feet) to make a hole through it. One of the gun-cotton mines was now lowered into the hole, while the other was put beneath the edge of an old channel by means of a long pole. Both mines were fired simultaneously, but only one exploded. We connected the wires, and then the other went off too. But the result was far from answering our expectations. Although the large mines were carried down to a depth of 20 yards where the ice was thin, the resistance was too great for us.

The blasting was now discontinued till June 2d, when during the night the ice opened up along the old lane close to the vessel. First we fired a gun-cotton mine right abaft. It took effect, and split the ice close to the stern. Next we drilled a hole about 16 feet deep right abreast of the ship, and loaded it with 10 prismer, or 330 grammes, of gun-cotton (equivalent to about 30 pounds of ordinary gunpowder); but as I thought it would be too risky to explode a mine of this strength so near the vessel, we first fired a small gunpowder mine of 11 pounds, to see what effect it would have. The result was insignificant, so the large mine was fired. It made things lively indeed! The ship received such a shock that one of the paintings and a rifle fell down on the floor in the