

SouthWind

ICE
in the
RIGGING

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SAMPLE OF EDITED TEXT

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2 'LAND TO THE SOUTH'

On 5 February 1775, during the last of three years spent exploring Antarctic seas, James Cook wrote in his journal: 'That there may be a Continent or large tract of land near the Pole, I will not deny. On the contrary I am of the opinion there is, and it is probable that we have seen a part of it. The excessive cold, the many islands and vast floats of ice all tend to prove that there must be land to the South.'

Cook's instincts did not fail him, although it was not until the much later voyages of Dumont d'Urville, Wilkes and Ross that his conjecture was proven correct. His epic Antarctic voyage aboard *HMS Resolution* set the scene for all that was to follow. *Resolution* and the second vessel of Cook's expedition, *HMS Adventure*, were the first ships to cross the Antarctic Circle early in 1773. Cook's three-year circumnavigation of Antarctica lays fair claim to be the greatest Antarctic voyage of all.

The Antarctic travels of *Resolution* and *Adventure* are even more remarkable when seen in the context of the ships' size, construction and motive power. These timber-hulled, square-rigged sailing vessels of around 100 feet (30 metres) in length ventured into unknown waters, deep into the pack ice for weeks at a time, braving errant icebergs and hurricane-force winds. Having once reached beyond the Antarctic Circle with *Adventure*, Cook took *Resolution* even further south – not once but twice – early in 1774.

Around the same time the court of King Louis XVI was showing strong interest in exploring the Southern Hemisphere. Two expeditions early in the 1770s discovered land in the southern Indian Ocean, but such ventures were tainted by the exaggerated, even fraudulent claims of Kerguelen-Trémarec that he had found a southern paradise worthy of investment of significant sums.

But such voyages of discovery, reporting 'limitless' numbers of marine mammals and birds at island landfalls, laid the groundwork for the sudden emergence of a new Antarctic industry in the late 18th century. In coming decades, the hunting of seals for their oil would do much to uncover the mysteries of 'Terra Australis Incognita'.

1771=72: FORTUNE AND GROS VENTRE

MASTERS: Fortune – Yves Joseph de Kerguelen-Trémarec; *Gros Ventre* – Francois Alesno, Comte de Saint-Allouarn

Breton-born Kerguelen-Trémarec commanded an expedition comprising these two French ships into the south Indian Ocean. The voyage included discovery of a group of islands in the south Indian Ocean.

Kerguelen himself can take little credit for the discovery; his ship, *Fortune*, never came within sight of the islands. A landing was made from Gros Ventre under Saint-Allouarn, who took possession for France on 12 February 1772. Kerguelen, having never seen the islands, named them ‘La France Australe’

Kerguelen returned home to a hero’s welcome well ahead of Gros Ventre and gave a glowing, and entirely imaginary, report of his discovery.

1771=72: MASCARIN AND MARQUIS DE CASTRIES

MASTERS: Mascarin – Marc-Joseph Marion du Fresne (second captain Jules Crozet); *Marquis de Castries* – Ambroise-Bernard-Marie du Clesmeure

Sailing in the southern Indian Ocean at the same time as Kerguelen-Tremaréc was another two-ship French expedition seeking the mythical ‘Great South Land’, Terra Australis Incognita, led by Marc-Joseph Marion du Fresne.

About 1000 miles southeast of the Cape of Good Hope, *Mascarin* and *Marquis de Castries* encountered Prince Edward and Marion Islands (previously sighted but wrongly located by the Dutchman Lam over 100 years previously) on 13 January 1772.

Marion de Fresne named the two islands Terre de l’Espérance (Land of Hope) and L’Ile de la Caverne (Cave Island) respectively, but rough weather prevented a landing and nearly caused a collision between the two ships.