

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08260-0 - A Journal of a Voyage Round the World, in His Majesty's Ship Endeavour:
In the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, and 1771; Undertaken in Pursuit of Natural Knowledge, at the
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Anonymous

Excerpt

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A

J O U R N A L

O F A

VOYAGE round the WORLD.

IN the beginning of the year 1768, the British ambassador at Madrid applied to the court of Spain for the grant of a passport to a ship designed for California, to observe the transit of Venus, which was promised, with a provision that the astronomer should be a member of the Romish church, and an Italian gentleman was consequently engaged for the undertaking; but the passport when demanded was refused by the Spanish ministry, who alledged that it was repugnant to the policy of government to admit foreigners into their American ports, unless driven there by necessity; but especially those who by their profession would be fitted to make such observations as might facilitate the approaches and descents of their enemies at any future war with Great Britain.

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It was then determined to dispatch the Italian gentleman to Hudson's Bay, and a ship of four hundred tons burthen was purchased for the voyage by order of the government. This ship was named the Endeavour, and, according to the original plan, was to have been navigated by a master, a second master, a mate, two mid ship men, and thirty seamen, who were engaged for the service, and orders were at the same time issued from the navy-office to equip her for the undertaking; and early in the month of May warrants were granted to the first and second masters, but recalled the following day, the plan of her voyage having been altered. But on the 27th of the same month the ship was again put in commission, and her compliment augmented to seventy men; an application was likewise made for a number of marines, but without success.

On the 21st of July she fell down to Greenwich, and the next morning to the Galleons, where we received on board six guns, being four-pounders, together with twelve swivels, and gunner's stores, &c. On the evening of the 30th we anchored at Gravesend, and the next morning proceeded towards the Downs, where we arrived on the 3d of August, and on the same day failed for Plymouth, where we came to anchor on the 14th, and

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and were ordered to receive on board twelve marines, and three additional seamen; which, with Mr. Green the observer, and his servant, together with Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, and their attendants, who were considered as supernumeraries, encreased our number to ninety-six souls. We likewise received four additional carriage-guns, and, having made several beneficial alterations, were on the 20th of the same month ready for sea, but the wind blowing fresh at S. W. we were detained until the 25th, when it changing to N. N. W. we put to sea at four o'clock in the afternoon. The wind however soon became and continued south-westerly until the 2d of September, when it changed to the northward; and at half past five in the morning we discovered the land, bearing S. S. W. and at ten we distinguished Cape Ortugal, bearing S. E. by E. half E. and distant seven leagues. The winds were fresh but variable until the 4th, when at eight o'clock, A. M. we discovered Cape Finisterre, bearing S. W. by S. at ten leagues distance.

From this time nothing remarkable occurred until the 12th, when at six in the morning we saw Puerto Santo at N. W. half N. and about nine leagues distant; and at seven we discovered the island of Madeira at W. by N. the Deserters appearing at the same time W. by S. half

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S. At eight the same evening the ship came to anchor with her best bower in twenty-two fathom water. At five the next morning we weighed anchor to approach nearer the shore, but the wind and tide being unfavourable, drove us farther distant, and soon after we received two shots from the Loo Fort, the commandant imagining it was our intention to depart from the island without making the usual reports; and by this transaction he forfeited the compliment of a salute, usually paid by foreign ships of war to all fortifications. At length however we anchored again in fifteen fathom water; and the British consul soon after waited on the governor to complain of the indignity we had received, for which an apology was made, and the consul was assured that the officer who had misbehaved should ask pardon of Captain Cooke if he required it, but this was declined.

This town of Fonchial is the capital of the island, and gives name to the bay within which it is situated. It is defended by a wall, and four or five bastions towards the bay, and has two gates. Its streets are narrow and ill-paved, but the houses are high. The inhabitants are computed to be seven or eight thousand in number, but among these there are but few gentlemen who are not
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in trade, the greater part being shop-keepers, who vend imported goods. The town contains two hospitals, one of which is appropriated for Lepers, and the other for the general reception of the inferior people, who want either medical or chirurgical assistance. It likewise contains a large Franciscan college, and a spacious cathedral, but its churches in general are very inelegant. Here are likewise two convents, one of which I visited several times, the abbesses behaving with great complaisance, and appearing to be the most agreeable of the sisterhood, among which I did not observe one who could pretend to more than a very moderate share of beauty. Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander likewise made them a visit, and were asked many ludicrous questions, as, When it would thunder and rain? Where they might find a spring of fresh water within the walls of their convent? and others equally pregnant with credulous simplicity; for they had conceived an opinion that these gentlemen were possessed of something like magical or supernatural knowledge.

Here is also a British factory, which consists of a consul, vice-consul, and twenty-two merchants, from which number ten are selected, and four of these are annually chosen by rotation, to direct the business of the factory

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in conjunction with the consul; they all however pay equal shares of the taxes imposed for defraying the expences of the factory, of which the greatest part is incurred in maintaining an hospital, with its physician, surgeon, &c. To the eastward of Fonchial is a smaller town, called Santa Cruz; these two are the only towns on the island.

The governor, whose salary and perquisites amount to near eleven hundred pounds sterling per annum, resides at his seat about half a mile distant from Fonchial; there is however a castle for his residence in town, which is defended by several cannon towards the bay, and is separated by a high wall from the town itself.

An Officer constantly attends at Fonchial to receive the compliments of Foreigners in the governor's behalf, who declines them personally.

On our first arrival the British consul solicited permission for Mr. Banks, Dr. Solander, and their attendants to visit the country; but the governor would permit no more than two of them to go abroad at a time; until afterwards, being more particularly informed of their errand, he gave them full liberty to pursue their researches

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VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD. 7

researches at pleasure, and paid them a visit in person, and was entertained with electrical and other philosophical experiments.

The island of Madeira was discovered in the year 1419, by the Portuguese fleet under the command of John Gonzales Zareo Trifan Vaz & Perello, who was sent out to attempt the passage of Cape Bajador the year after the discovery of the island of Puerto Santo.

It is situated in latitude $32^{\circ} 33' 33''$, and longitude $16^{\circ} 49' 45''$ West from London; the variation by several observations was found to have decreased westerly $15^{\circ} 30'$, the dipping-needle being $77^{\circ} 18'$. The best anchoring ground is near the Loo Castle, in twenty, twenty-five, or thirty fathom, the East side of the bay being hard, rocky ground. The island is computed to contain sixty thousand inhabitants; its longest extent is between N.E. and S.W. It rises very high, and terminates in a peak, called Pico Rucco, which is five thousand and sixty-eight feet in height. The land rises by very unequal elevations from the sea, and forms a ridge which is frequently interrupted by chasms of unequal depths; these extend almost the whole length of the island. This inequality of the surface of the ground has made it necessary

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cessary to extend the roads in serpentine windings, to avoid those deep gullies which have formed themselves in almost every part, of which the most considerable run in pretty strait directions towards the sea, and are commonly charged with large streams of water; but these in approaching the sea are gradually diminished by the peasants, who are allowed to draw off certain quantities of water by small ditches, according to the size of their vineyards, which are to be watered thereby.

The island produces six kinds of grapes, viz. the Malmsey, two black, and three white kinds. It is the skin of the black grapes that tinges the wines of Madeira, the juice itself being white; hence the difference of colour in these wines arises from the different proportions in which the black and white grapes are mixed. It is commonly reported that no distilled spirit is added to these wines, but I have been well assured of the contrary, and have seen the spirit used for that purpose. The best Madeira is sold at twenty-six pounds per pipe; the worst kind, which is made on the North side, is sold for thirteen pounds; this is the contract wine, and is the same which is drunk by the common people. The Madeira imported into Great Britain is sold at twenty-three pounds per pipe; there are two inferior sorts which

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which bear the name of Madeira, one of which is sold at eighteen, and the other at sixteen pounds. All these wines improve greatly by sea voyages; and of this the inhabitants are so well convinced, that almost all the wines designed for their own consumption are sent several times to sea.

The Malmsey is a most excellent wine, and is sold at forty pounds per pipe. It is generally computed by the merchants, that the quantity of wine produced in Madeira is between thirty and thirty-five thousand pipes annually, of which ten thousand are exported to Great Britain and her colonies.

Six ships are permitted to sail from hence to Brazil every year loaded with wine. I saw no carriages during our stay at Madeira, but was told of a sedan kept by an English gentleman. We found the longitude of Puerto Santo by observation, $16^{\circ} 56' W.$ and its latitude $33^{\circ} 00' N.$

September 19. The wind changing to E. S. E. we weighed anchor and stood to sea. The weather continuing favourable, on the 22d we saw the islands of Salvages, S. S. W. half W. distant eight miles; they are

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two small uninhabited islands, situated between Madeira and the Canaries. The 23d we reached the trade-winds, then at N. E. and the same day we discovered the Peak of Teneriffe, the largest of the Canary islands, being forty-five miles in length. The Peak, according to Dr. Halley, is two miles and a quarter in height; but by Dr. Heberden it is computed at fifteen thousand three hundred and ninety-five feet; in clear weather it may be seen thirty-seven leagues at sea. This island produces wine, fruits, and cattle; its chief town is called Laguna. September 24, we sailed between the Grand Canaries and Teneriffe, the trade-wind blowing fresh with a thick haze. At this time we observed many things rusting and moulding. On the 27th the wind and sea continuing favourable, we began to serve the ship's crew with wine and four kroust. On the 28th several land birds were discovered, of which we caught two, nearly resembling the yellow water-wagtail. The 29th, at eleven A. M. we saw the island of Bona Vista, at N. 48° W. and distant eleven miles. October 2d we perceived a current setting E. S. E. and W. N. W. From this time nothing remarkable occurred, until the 7th, when the winds became variable from South to West, with frequent showers of rain. This day we caught two swallows and several marine animals.