Maritime Exploration

This series includes accounts, by eye-witnesses and contemporaries, of voyages by Europeans to the Americas, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific during the colonial period. Driven by the military and commercial interests of powers including Britain, France and the Netherlands, particularly the East India Companies, these expeditions brought back a wealth of information on climate, natural resources, topography, and distant civilisations. Their detailed observations provide fascinating historical data for climatologists, ecologists and anthropologists, and the accounts of the mariners’ experiences on their long and dangerous voyages are full of human interest.

Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty’s Ships Adventure and Beagle

In the years leading up to Charles Darwin’s famous voyage on the Beagle, the ship and its captain Robert Fitzroy (1805–65) had participated in an expedition to the desolate southern coast of South America. Volume 1 of this three-volume work, published in 1839, describes that 1826–30 expedition, while Volumes 2 and 3 cover the second voyage. Compiled by Robert Fitzroy (1805–65), captain of the Beagle from 1828, Volume 1 is based on the journals of Phillip Parker King (1791–56), the expedition’s commander, whose account of his earlier survey of Australia is also reissued. Tasked with surveying the coast from Montevideo to Cape Horn and north to Chiloé, and ‘collecting and preserving specimens of … natural history’, the expedition spent its first two field seasons around Tierra del Fuego, enduring hunger, scurvy and severe weather. It reached Chiloé in 1829, and returned to England a year later.
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Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty’s Ships Adventure and Beagle

Volume 1: Proceedings of the First Expedition, 1826–1830

Charles Darwin, Robert Fitzroy and Phillip Parker King
VOYAGES

OF THE

ADVENTURE AND BEAGLE.

VOLUME I.
NARRATIVE

OF THE

SURVEYING VOYAGES

OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS

ADVENTURE AND BEAGLE,

BETWEEN

THE YEARS 1826 AND 1836,

DESCRIBING THEIR

EXAMINATION OF THE SOUTHERN SHORES

OF

SOUTH AMERICA,

AND

THE BEAGLE'S CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE GLOBE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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VOLUME I.

PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE FIRST EXPEDITION,

1826—1830,

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

CAPTAIN P. PARKER KING,

R.N., F.R.S.
TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL OF MINTO, G.C.B.,
FIRST LORD COMMISSIONER
OF THE
ADMIRALTY.

MY LORD:

I have the honour of dedicating to your lordship, as Head of the Naval Service, this narrative of the Surveying Voyages of the Adventure and Beagle, between the years 1826 and 1836.

Originated by the Board of Admiralty, over which Viscount Melville presided, these voyages have been carried on, since 1830, under his lordship’s successors in office.

Captain King has authorized me to lay the results of the Expedition which he commanded, from 1826 to 1830, before your lordship, united to those of the Beagle’s subsequent voyages.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,
Your lordship’s obedient servant,

ROBERT FITZROY.
P R E F A C E.

In this Work, the result of nine years' voyaging, partly on coasts little known, an attempt has been made to combine giving general information with the paramount object—that of fulfilling a duty to the Admiralty, for the benefit of Seamen.

Details, purely technical, have been avoided in the narrative more than I could have wished; but some are added in the Appendix to each volume: and in a nautical memoir, drawn up for the Admiralty, those which are here omitted will be found.

There are a few words used frequently in the following pages, which may not at first sight be familiar to every reader, therefore I need hardly apologize for saying that, although the great Portuguese navigator's name was Magalhaens—it is generally pronounced as if written Magellan:—that the natives of Tierra del Fuego are commonly called Fuegians;—and that Chiloe is thus accented for reasons given in page 384 of the second volume.

In the absence of Captain King, who has entrusted to me the care of publishing his share of this work, I may have overlooked errors which he would have detected. Being hurried, and unwell, while attending to the printing of his volume, I was not able to do it justice.
PREFACE.

It may be a subject of regret, that no paper on the Botany of Tierra del Fuego is appended to the first volume. Captain King took great pains in forming and preserving a botanical collection, aided by a person embarked solely for that purpose. He placed this collection in the British Museum, and was led to expect that a first-rate botanist would have examined and described it; but he has been disappointed.

In conclusion, I beg to remind the reader, that the work is unavoidably of a rambling and very mixed character; that some parts may be wholly uninteresting to most readers, though, perhaps, not devoid of interest to all; and that its publication arises solely from a sense of duty.

ROBERT FITZ-ROY.

London, March 1839.
INTRODUCTION.

In 1825, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty directed two ships to be prepared for a Survey of the Southern Coasts of South America; and in May, of the following year, the Adventure and the Beagle were lying in Plymouth Sound, ready to carry the orders of their Lordships into execution.

These vessels were well provided with every necessary, and every comfort, which the liberality and kindness of the Admiralty, Navy Board, and officers of the Dock-yards, could cause to be furnished.

On board the Adventure, a roomy ship, of 330 tons burthen, without guns,* lightly though strongly rigged, and very strongly built, were—

PHILLIP PARKER KING, Commander and Surveyor, Senior Officer of the Expedition.

J. Cooke ............... Lieutenant.
B. Ainsworth .......... Master.
J. Tarn ................. Surgeon.

* Excepting one for signals.
INTRODUCTION.

G. Rowlett .......... Purser.
R. H. Sholl .......... Mate.
J. C. Wickham .......... Mate.
J. F. Brand .......... Mate.
T. Graves .......... Mate and Assistant Surveyor.
G. Harrison ....... Mate.
E. Williams .......... Second Master.
J. Park .............. Assistant Surgeon.
W. W. Wilson ...... Midshipman.
A. Millar .......... Master's Assistant.
A. Mellersh ....... Volunteer 1st Class.
J. Russell .......... Volunteer 2d Class.
G. Hodgskin ....... Clerk.
J. Anderson ........ Botanical Collector.

Gunner—Boatswain—and Carpenter.

Serjeant and fourteen Marines; and about forty Seamen and Boys.

In the Beagle, a well-built little vessel, of 235 tons, rigged as a barque, and carrying six guns, were—

Pringle Stokes ...... Commander and Surveyor.
E. Hawes .......... Lieutenant.
W. G. Skyring ...... Lieut. and Assist. Surveyor.
S. S. Flinn .......... Master.
E. Bowen .......... Surgeon.
J. Atrill .......... Purser.
J. Kirke .......... Mate.
B. Bynoe .......... Assistant Surgeon.
J. L. Stokes .......... Midshipman.
R. F. Lunie .......... Volunteer 1st Class.
W. Jones .......... Volunteer 2d Class.
J. MacDouall ........ Clerk.

Carpenter.

Serjeant and nine Marines; and about forty Seamen and Boys.
INTRODUCTION.

In the course of the voyage, several changes occurred among the officers, which it may be well to mention here.

In September, 1826, Lieutenant Hawes invalided: and was succeeded by Mr. R. H. Sholl, the senior mate in the Expedition.

In February, 1827, Mr. Ainsworth was unfortunately drowned; and, in his place, Mr. Williams acted, until superseded by Mr. S. S. Flinn, of the Beagle.

Lieutenant Cooke invalided in June, 1827; and was succeeded by Mr. J. C. Wickham.

In the same month Mr. Graves received information of his promotion to the rank of Lieutenant.

Between May and December, 1827, Mr. Bowen and Mr. Atrill invalided; besides Messrs. Lunie, Jones, and Macdouall: Mr. W. Mogg joined the Beagle, as acting Purser; and Mr. D. Braily, as volunteer of the second class.

Mr. Bynoe acted as Surgeon of the Beagle, after Mr. Bowen left, until December, 1828.

In August, 1828, Captain Stokes’s lamented vacancy was temporarily filled by Lieutenant Skyring; whose place was taken by Mr. Brand.

Mr. Flinn was then removed to the Adventure; and Mr. A. Millar put into his place.
INTRODUCTION.

In December, 1828, the Commander-in-chief of the Station (Sir Robert Waller Otway) superseded the temporary arrangements of Captain King, and appointed a commander, lieutenant, master, and surgeon to the Beagle. Mr. Brand then invalided, and the lists of officers stood thus—

Adventu re (1828-30).

PHILLIP PARKER KING, Commander and Surveyor, Senior Officer of the Expedition.

J. C. Wickham .... Lieutenant.
S. S. Flinn ........ Master.
J. Tarn ............ Surgeon.
G. Rowlett ........ Purser.
G. Harrison ........ Mate.
W. W. Wilson ....... Mate.
E. Williams ........ Second Master.
J. Park ............ Assistant Surgeon.
A. Mellersh ......... Midshipman.
A. Millar .... Master’s Assistant.
J. Russell ............ Volunteer 2d Class.
G. Hodgskin ........ Clerk.
J. Anderson .... Botanical Collector.

Gunner—Boatswain—and Carpenter.

Sergeant and fourteen Marines: and about fifty* Seamen and Boys.

Beagle (1828-30).

ROBERT FITZROY ... Commander and Surveyor.
W. G. Skyring ...... Lieut. and Assist. Surveyor.
J. Kempe .............. Lieutenant.
M. Murray ............... Master.

Twelve additional seamen having been ordered, by the Admiralty, for the Adelaide schooner.
INTRODUCTION.

J. Wilson .............. Surgeon.
W. Mogg ................ (Acting) Purser.
J. Kirke .......... Mate.
B. Byne .............. Assistant Surgeon.
J. L. Stokes .......... Midshipman.
J. May ................ Carpenter.
D. Brailly ............ Volunteer 2d Class.
J. Megget ............ Clerk.

Serjeant and nine Marines: and about forty Seamen and Boys.

In June, 1829, Lieutenant Mitchell joined the Adventure; and in February, 1830, Mr. A. Millar died very suddenly:—and very much regretted.

The following Instructions were given to the Senior Officer of the Expedition.

"By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

"Whereas we think it that an accurate Survey should be made of the Southern Coasts of the Peninsula of South America, from the southern entrance of the River Plata, round to Chiloe; and of Tierra del Fuego; and whereas we have been induced to repose confidence in you, from your conduct of the Surveys in New Holland; we have placed you in the command of His Majesty’s Surveying Vessel the Adventure; and we have directed Captain Stokes, of His Majesty’s Surveying Vessel the Beagle, to follow your orders.

"Both these vessels are provided with all the
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means which are necessary for the complete execution of the object above-mentioned, and for the health and comfort of their Ships’ Companies. You are also furnished with all the information, we at present possess, of the ports which you are to survey; and nine Government Chronometers have been embarked in the Adventure, and three in the Beagle, for the better determination of the Longitudes.

"You are therefore hereby required and directed, as soon as both vessels shall be in all respects ready, to put to sea with them; and on your way to your ulterior destination, you are to make, or call at, the following places, successively; namely; Madeira: Teneriffe: the northern point of St. Antonio, and the anchorage at St. Jago; both in the Cape Verd Islands: the Island of Trinidad, in the Southern Atlantic: and Rio de Janeiro: for the purpose of ascertaining the differences of the longitudes of those several places.

"At Rio de Janeiro, you will receive any supplies you may require; and make with the Commander-in-chief, on that Station, such arrangements as may tend to facilitate your receiving further supplies, in the course of your Expedition.

"After which, you are to proceed to the entrance of the River Plata, to ascertain the longitudes of the Cape Santa Maria, and Monte Video: you are then to proceed to survey the Coasts, Islands, and Straits; from Cape St. Antonio, at the south side
INTRODUCTION

of the River Plata, to Chiloe; on the west coast of America; in such manner and order, as the state of the season, the information you may have received, or other circumstances, may induce you to adopt.

"You are to continue on this service until it shall be completed; taking every opportunity to communicate to our Secretary, and the Commander-in-Chief, your proceedings: and also, whenever you may be able to form any judgment of it, where the Commander-in-Chief, or our Secretary, may be able to communicate with you.

"In addition to any arrangements made with the Admiral, for recruiting your stores, and provisions; you are, of course, at liberty to take all other means, which may be within your reach, for that essential purpose.

"You are to avail yourself of every opportunity of collecting and preserving Specimens of such objects of Natural History as may be new, rare, or interesting; and you are to instruct Captain Stokes, and all the other Officers, to use their best diligence in increasing the Collections in each ship: the whole of which must be understood to belong to the Public.

"In the event of any irreparable accident happening to either of the two vessels, you are to cause the officers and crew of the disabled vessel to be
removed into the other, and with her, singly, to proceed in prosecution of the service, or return to England, according as circumstances shall appear to require; understanding that the officers and crews of both vessels are hereby authorized, and required, to continue to perform their duties, according to their respective ranks and stations, on board either vessel to which they may be so removed. Should, unfortunately, your own vessel be the one disabled, you are in that case to take the command of the Beagle: and, in the event of any fatal accident happening to yourself; Captain Stokes is hereby authorized to take the command of the Expedition; either on board the Adventure, or Beagle, as he may prefer; placing the officer of the Expedition who may then be next in seniority to him, in command of the second vessel: also, in the event of your inability, by sickness or otherwise, at any period of this service, to continue to carry the Instructions into execution, you are to transfer them to Captain Stokes, or to the surviving officer then next in command to you, who is hereby required to execute them, in the best manner he can, for the attainment of the object in view.

‘When you shall have completed the service, or shall, from any cause, be induced to give it up; you will return to Spithead with all convenient expedition; and report your arrival, and proceedings, to our Secretary, for our information.
INTRODUCTION.

“Whilst on the South American Station, you are to consider yourself under the command of the Admiral of that Station; to whom we have expressed our desire that he should not interfere with these orders, except under peculiar necessity.

“Given under our hands the 16th of May 1826.
(Signed) ‘MELVILLE.
‘G. COCKBURN.

“To Phillip P. King, Esq., Commander of His Majesty’s Surveying Vessel Adventure, at Plymouth.

“By command of their Lordships.
(Signed) ‘J. W. CROKER.”

On the 22d of May, 1826, the Adventure and Beagle sailed from Plymouth; and, in their way to Rio de Janeiro, called successively at Madeira, Teneriffe, and St. Jago.

Unfavourable weather prevented a boat being sent ashore at the northern part of San Antonio; but observations were made in Terrafal Bay, on the south-west side of the island: and, after crossing the Equator, the Trade-wind hung so much to the southward, that Trinidad could not be approached without a sacrifice of time, which, it was considered, might be prejudicial to more important objects of the Expedition.

Both ships anchored at Rio de Janeiro on the
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10th of August, and remained there until the 2d of October, when they sailed to the River Plata.

In Maldonado,* their anchors were dropped on the 13th of the same month; and, till the 12th of November, each vessel was employed on the north side of the river, between Cape St. Mary and Monte Video.

* On the north side of the river Plata.
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**Note.**—The loose Plates are to be folded into pockets in the covers of the volumes.
ERRATA ET CORRIGENDA.

Page 76, line 4 from bottom, for lying, read lying.
116, line 1, for Beagle, read Beagle.
125, line 17, insert narrow, before and.
164, line 23, instead of the, read our.
174, line 6, for out, read out.
193, line 3, for have, read had.
203, (Note) line 2 from bottom, for they, read he.
259, line 9, for was, read were.
255, line 8, after day, insert a colon instead of a comma.
273, line 11, after as well, insert as.
301, line 23, for Lieutenant, read Lieutenant.
348, line 2, for Skyring and Graves, again took with them, read Lieutenant Skyring again took with him.
411, line 2, delete the.
437, line 16, for continue, read continue.
   line 19, for with, read with.
465, line 11, for Santa Catalina, read Santa Catalina.
473, line 17, after which is, insert a.
481, bottom line, for 53. 32. 30, read 53. 35. 30.
485, line 7, for positions, read 53. 31. 51.
   bottom line, for 11. 51, read 3. 96.
493, line 9, for Northern, read Southern.
499, line 4 from bottom, for 46. 09, read 40. 39; and for 46. 50, read 40. 05.
540, line 6, for 60°, read 60°.
549, line 6, for 38. 59, read 36. 10.
609, line 9, for 54. 30. 00, read 54. 05. 20; and for 73. 1. 30, read 73. 25. 30.
525, for Variation, read Dip.

MAMMalia.
299, line 8, for Harau, read Harau.
301, line 6, for Keroda, read Kerodon.

BIRDS.
539, line 1, for Dumérd, read Dumérd.
   line 7, for Medugio, read Milpaipo.
   line 10, for Sparrow's, read Sparrow's.
533, line 16, delete Spix.
   bottom line, for Sylvia, read Sylvia, and in next page the same.
534, line 12, deli Puteo, Veilloc.
   line 10 from bottom, for Sparrow's, read Sparrow's.
576, line 9 from bottom, for Struthio, read Struthio.
   line 6 from bottom, for viscous, read viscous.
527, line 14, for Totanus, read Totanus.
518, line 5, for subdes, read subdea.
   lower lines, where Hematopeus occurs, read Hematopeus.
540, last line, for mesopus, read mesopus; and for paro, read paro.
541, last line, for Cantarothet, read Cantarothet.
   line 3 from bottom, for ad, read ad.
545, line 13, for gravellina, read gravellina.

SHELLS.
543, last line, for brachystern, read brachystern; for Pustachoni, read Pustachoni.