Journal of Jacques de Saint-Cricq

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Archives nationales de France, série Marine, 5JJ48

Physical Description

Manuscript: Linen, written in brown ink

Dimensions: 25.8 x 40.4 cm

Contents: 102 numbered manuscript pages, ruled, bound, followed by 37 blank sheets

Period covered

1 Vendémiaire Year IX [23 September 1800] – 18 Frimaire Year XI [9 December 1802]

Comments

Odd-numbered pages are numbered in pencil; even-numbered pages are not numbered

This is a fair copy of his nautical journal, in the form of a continuous narrative, without log tables

Translation

Malcolm Leader

Validation

This translation has not yet been systematically checked against the original French text. The French transcription of this journal is available on the Baudin Legacy web site for cross-checking. Anyone wishing to verify the accuracy of a particular passage of this English translation is invited to contact the Baudin Legacy team (see the web site for contact details).

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Note on the Translation

In general, the translation retains the layout, symbols, abbreviations and underlinings of the original manuscript. The original spellings of French place names and peoplees names are retained, with the current English equivalent in hard brackets where appropriate. In some sentences punctuation has been normalised.

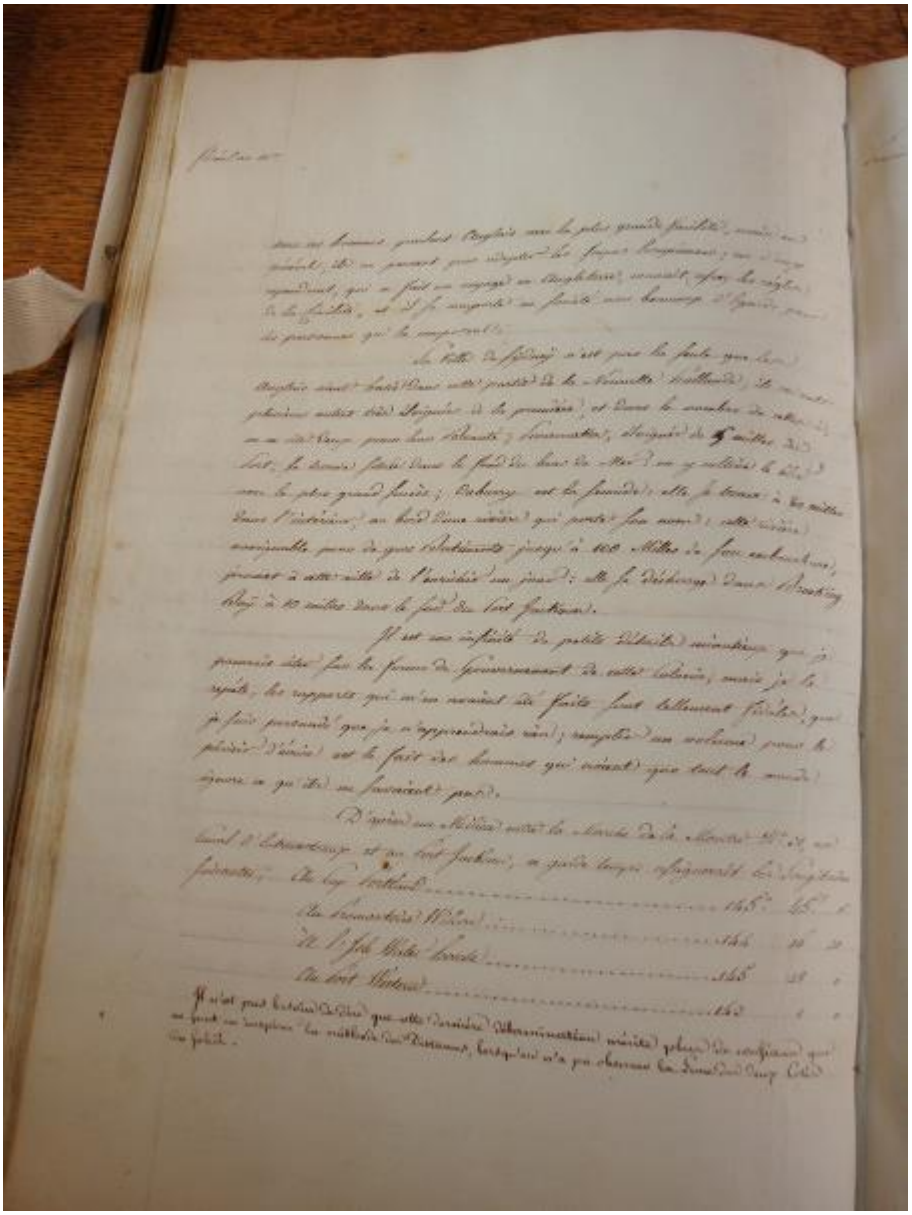
The Gregorian equivalent of each Republican calendar date is provided in square brackets.

The page numbers of the original manuscript are placed within the text in round brackets.

The symbols for the distances (☼□) sun-moon and (*□) star-moon are used by St Cricq when referring to his astronomical observations.

Notes or words in the margins of a page are marked in the text by an asterisk, with the notes or word at the bottom of the page in square brackets.

Sample page of the manuscript



[Cover]

Nº 15
Four red wax seals aligned vertically, with the letter “S” in the middle

[Back]

D Journal of Citizen S. […]icq. [name coverd by label “Marine/5JJ/48”]

[Back Cover]

Four wax seals identical to those on the front cover.

[Title page]

Nº 6

Journal of J. S^{t} Cricq, Sub-Lieutenant
aboard the corvette Le Naturaliste, commanded
by Citizen Hamelin, Commander
Voyage of discovery of Captain Baudin

Preface

A nautical journal is, I believe, the most boring thing in the world both to write and to read. Yet the custom has been to require one from each naval officer during a mission – a custom that is perfectly useless, in my view. The reality is that the ship's log, which is kept by the officers under the Captain's general supervision, contains all the details one might wish to know about navigational aspects of the voyage. The smallest movement is recorded there with the greatest accuracy and it will be more useful to consult than individual journals, which cannot hope to include everything in the log.

I would have wished to confine myself to a purely historical narrative of my voyage, but in order not to stray too far from custom I have included in this record some of the less intricate nautical details.

I have not spent much time on geographical descriptions: they are difficult and in any case cannot provide a clear idea of the coasts that one sets out to describe. I have replaced them, as far as possible, by maps that will reach the Government at the same time as my journal(a) I would like to have been able to produce one for each place we visited, but the astronomical work for which I was responsible on board the *Naturaliste* would have suffered accordingly. This work took up the greater part of my time and, since I still had supplementary naval officer duties to perform, I was able to find very little time for other activities.

I have been able to gather some notes on each of the countries we visited. What I learned from them has been recorded here with the greatest precision. The notes that I wrote myself are strictly accurate, and those that were given to me have been faithfully recopied. Accordingly they seem to me to offer some interest and I pass them on with confidence and a sense of security. The only criticism one might make on this account is that they have been badly written but this would have little impact on me since, like most seamen, I pay very little attention to questions of style.

(a) the small number of maps that I produced have been totally ruined by the rats which infested our cabins, so I am unable to present a single one without starting over again, which is not useful given that they were identical to the maps produced by engineer Faure.

(1)

[Margin] **Vendémiaire, Year 9 [23 September – 22 October 1800]**

I had been on leave in Paris for about a month and a half and, although I had on several occasions heard of the Expedition about to depart under Captain Baudin's command, various reservations had dissuaded me from the idea of becoming a part of it until new considerations in fact made me wish to join. It was by then rather late to obtain the Minister's authorisation to take part in the mission, because all the officers had already been nominated. However Admiral Mazarredo, my uncle, who was in Paris, kindly agreed to my request to seek a place for me on one of the two ships chosen for the Expedition and he was graciously accorded this favour. I was informed about it by a letter from the Minister dated 4th Complementary day of Year 8 [26 September 1800]. I immediately began my preparations and on 3 Vendémiaire Year 9 I left for Le Havre, where the ships were being fitted out.

Prior to departure I already knew several of the expedition's officers, and the anticipated pleasure of being among them no doubt contributed much towards convincing me to make the trip. My only remaining fear was whether I would find my other colleagues just as agreeable company. But when I arrived I was quickly reassured on this point and I found my associates to be of such similar character and education that all seemed to me to augur well for the future.

The fitting out of the two ships intended for this expedition was almost complete when I arrived. One of them, the corvette the *Géographe*, was under the command of Citizen Captain Baudin, head of the Expedition, while the other - the store ship the *Naturaliste*, was under Commander Hamelin. These two ships carried passports from almost every European nation, notably from those with whom France was at war.

Captain Baudin, who arrived from Paris on 6 or 7 Vendémiaire [28 or 29 September 1800] decided that I should sail in the *Naturaliste*, which delighted me since I thereby found myself amongst those colleagues I knew best and who, moreover, were the most cultivated.

At the same time as the Commander, the persons (almost all of them young) joining the expedition as scientists also arrived from Paris. They had been appointed by the National Institute

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to be responsible for different aspects of the natural history of the countries we were about to visit. An astronomer and geographer were thus allocated to each ship, and each was provided with instruments that could be useful for their various tasks.

Delays in receipt of the various provisions coming from Paris led to our missing the tide on the 10th [2 October 1800], which we had planned to use to get under way, so we were obliged to stay in Le Havre for approximately a fortnight more.

The ship's fit-out was inspected on 9 Vendémiaire [1 October 1800] and six months' salary was paid to each person. Meal allowances were also allocated to all those legally entitled to them, covering the same amount of time. For the officers and scientists these were set, by Consular decree, at 4f 10s per day, and each captain was made responsible for provisioning

the wardroom. I do not know exactly why this was so decided, but what is certain is that it later caused the greater part of the changes that took place. I shall explain this further in due course.

It would be hard to imagine anything more agreeable than the harmony between the scientists and us from the very first days of our time together. This mutual pleasure was all the greater in that – as they later admitted to us – the scientists had expected to find that we were brutes, or at best oafish and rough fellows with whom they would find it impossible to live agreeably. For our part, we had for a time feared that we would be unable to get along with men who were in no way prepared for the sort of life lived at sea. But after observing our companions for no more than a few days we were convinced that we would get along very well together.

We congregated each evening in one or another's house and often even entertained each other to dinner. High spirits were always much in evidence, to such an extent that outsiders would have been astonished by the level of cheerfulness displayed by men who were about to leave their country, family and friends for an absence of three or four years.

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But such high spirits were only natural in the circumstances given the rapport between us and our certainty that the time we had already decided to spend away from our families would be spent in very agreeable fashion.

In these meetings we soon acknowledged the high level of scholarship of most of the naturalists, but equally we were soon convinced that they had been wrongly described as scientists, which is a title I believe should be conferred only on a man who is a complete master of all aspects of the science that he studies. I believe that only one of our naturalists, Citizen Michaux, had sufficient qualifications for this title.

The Chinese A-Sam who, on the Consuls' orders, we left in Isle de France [Mauritius], came aboard our ship - where he had an extremely boring time of it for the entire voyage.

Everything was ready for our departure and on 26 Vendémiaire [18 October 1800] we wished to take advantage of the tide to get under way. But we were a little late in setting about it and were unable to clear the pier, where we remained aground for some minutes. We were refloated without any damage thanks both to our own sails, which we laid aback, and to some stout hawsers fore and aft which workers onshore used to tow us off manually. All of this was thankfully done rapidly, as the tide was receding and in a few minutes more it would have been impossible to get us off, which would certainly have caused damage that would have considerably delayed our departure if not prevented it altogether. As soon as we were afloat we worked out into the harbour, waiting for the next day's high tide.

It was thus on the 27th [Vendémiaire 19 October 1800] that we sailed out of the port of Le Havre. All the townsfolk were on the wharves and, in saying goodbye to family members or friends, they all also made wishes for the prosperity of our expedition. I was then

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in a state of some melancholy at the thought of leaving my country for so long, but I was suddenly brought out of it by the sound of musical instruments. I learned that, to celebrate our

departure, several musicians had assembled on a tower close to the water's edge at the port entrance and had waited for us to sail past so they could perform a concert for us. I do not know the person who took on the role of musical director, but it seemed to me that he had chosen his pieces rather badly. After all, who could imagine that the tune "where is there greater happiness than with your family?" would offer much joy to men who were leaving theirs for several years? But that was the piece they played – and perhaps fearing that we had not heard it sufficiently well the first time they repeated it as much as three times.

We left port at the same time as an American corvette that had visited France under a flag of truce and was setting sail for Boston, leaving behind in Europe the Commissioners it had brought over. We were thus a trio of ships, armed for war, and could have exterminated a frigate. And the frigate of which I speak below was well informed as to our destination. Here is what happened:

An English frigate, armed with 12-pounders I believe, was cruising off the entrance to the bay. We saw it and immediately headed towards it so we could be inspected, as we were sure that it would have been aware of our peaceful intentions. We were not surprised to see it clear for action as it waited for us, but what astonished us was the English captain's recklessness in hailing the *Géographe* and demanding that it strike its flag, threatening that unless it did so he would open fire and sink it. My view is that this captain was a braggart, who sought to have us believe that he thought we were about to attack him but had nevertheless resolutely waited for us despite our numbers. Consider for a moment the stupidity of such an action! We are closing, under full sail and flying a flag of truce, a vessel that we know to be an enemy frigate: had it been our intention to attack (should hostilities have been permitted) we would have been able to hit him hard, and yet he is the one who threatens to sink us if we do not surrender!

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How could he have thought that we were only closing him in order to surrender? And how could he possibly have made us believe that a frigate could wait back and then have the advantage over three corvettes intent on attacking? Really, the English have a very poor opinion of us! But this is how they usually play, and it would not be long before we saw another one of similar mettle. Oh, what great men! I admire their nobility of soul.

After having shown our passports we got under way again and were not long in losing sight of our beloved country. This moment was certainly a critical one for us, as our thoughts inevitably evoked sadness and regret. However this did not last long; when we thought of the beauty of the voyage ahead our spirits soon revived.

We ran into some strong winds over the two or three days we spent in the English Channel, and during that time we saw several warships that we took to be English and which probably judged us to be the same, since they did not hail us. We had taken leave of the American corvette on the day of our departure and on the 29th she passed us on the opposite tack. The same day we saw Portland, but for several minutes only, during a brief fine patch.

When we had cleared the Channel we found favourable winds but constantly threatening weather, so that we almost became separated from the *Géographe*.

During the trip from France to Ténériffe [Tenerife] we came across several American and Danish ships. Several of the latter, with whom we spoke on 7 Brumaire [29 October 1800] when we were at latitude 36º20', longitude 14º50' , told us they had put out from Malaga and were heading for Hamburg.

On 9 Brumaire [31 October 1800], I had observed latitude 28º50', longitude 16º56' at noon. At 3h00 we came across an English warship, a cutter, cruising in this area. As soon as we had recognised its colours and distinctive markings

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we decided to submit to an inspection, but what a surprise we were in for! The *Géographe* had come abeam of the cutter and was waiting for it to launch its dinghy, but when the Commander saw that the cutter was crowding sail and making directly for us (like the Commander we had hoisted a flag of truce but since we were labouring a lot we had continued our course), the *Géographe* made sail again. But this manoeuvre was probably not to the liking of the English gentlemen, who fired a canon-shot round at our consort (without hitting it however), so that he was obliged to heave to again.

The cutter's conduct was so extraordinary that Captain Baudin signalled us to approach and, although he had decided that he would submit to an inspection, he readied his guns so as to be able to repel any trouble by force of arms. When the enemy saw this he tacked to put some distance between the ships and we continued on our way. We nevertheless were amused at the boasting of this rascal who tacked back towards us when he was about a league astern of us. He followed us at this distance until 11h00 the next morning, when he made up his mind and disappeared.

That same day, 10 Brumaire [1 November 1800], we saw the Grand Canarie [Gran Canaria] and the northern part of Ténériffe [Tenerife]. We remained under shortened sail during the night and the next day, the 11th, at 10h00 in the morning, we dropped anchor off Sainte Croix de Ténériffe [Santa Cruz de Tenerife], mooring SE-NW. We did not fire any salute.

We obtained permission from the Governor to take on some provisions at the island and the same evening we made official calls on the main local personalities.

A Spanish merchant ship was lying in the harbour roads, about to sail under a flag of truce for Gibraltar where it intended to effect a prisoner exchange. This was a good opportunity for us to send early news to our family and friends. We also used the occasion to repatriate to France a number of our ships' company who had been shown to be incapable of making the trip, either because they were ill or because they were not suited to the vocation they had wished to embark upon.

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The Spanish ship got under way on the 15th [6 November 1800] but, just as we were expressing our joy at the speed with which our letters would arrive home, on the 16th [7 November 1800] we saw several of the Spanish passengers return, along with some of our own people who had embarked under the flag of truce. They informed us that the English prisoners, who had no desire to serve any more time on their own nation's warships and who feared nothing so much as a return to a port where they would undoubtedly be assigned to any

available ship, had revolted the day after they had put to sea and had taken over the ship, which they intended to sail to some place where they could be free. They had offered the ship's longboat to any passengers who wished to return to S. te Croix [Santa Cruz] and several had accepted this offer rather than run the risk of being taken to a place perhaps very far away – since the English had not yet decided where they would head. This event annoyed us considerably and it was no better news for those we had put off, since their fate was to be put into hospital while they awaited an opportunity to return home.

I was presented by the Commander to the Governor of the Isles Canaries [Canary Islands], Brigadier Don Pedro Lascau. He had known my uncle previously and showered me with friendship. I was also shown much courtesy by the Harbourmaster, Lieutenant [blank] who, like the Governor, offered me assistance. I declined all such offers.

In Sainte Croix [Santa Cruz] I made the acquaintance of the brothers Murphy and their associate, Mr Cologan. They gave me some notes on production in the Isles Canaries [Canary Islands]. However well known these islands are, I believe that the notes have a place here. These gentlemen responded very willingly to the questions Lieutenant Milius and I put to them on this subject. I will never think of them without regretting not having got to know them better.

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Notes on the Canary Islands, and on Tenerife in particular

Vidonia wine, or [illegible], is the main item of trade in the island of Tenerife. There is also the wine of Malvoisie, but it has become very rare because its high production cost makes it more difficult to sell. The former wine is bought by Americans, Danes, Swedes and Hamburgers - in fact by any neutral vessel from the northern regions - who make a great trade in it during times of war. In peacetime, though, the English take a considerable amount. Tenerife also exports an immense quantity of brandy to Cuba and the province of Venezuela, where it is greatly preferred to the product from Spain. Havana, in particular, favours it especially and large quantities are sold there.

However it is not Tenerife alone that produces this liqueur; the Isles de Palme, de Fer and Lancerotte [La Palma, Ferro and Lanzarote] provide a considerable amount as well. These islands send their production to S.te Croix [Santa Cruz], where it is checked by that city's wine merchants who then arrange its exportation to the colonies mentioned earlier.

Tenerife also produces some silk, some of which is sent to Spain and the rest is manufactured locally. It is made into taffeta garments, ribbons and stockings which are sold in the island itself or in neighbouring islands. Some is also exported to America. Some linen also comes from the island, but in small amounts.

Sorrel used to be an important part of the Canary Islands' trade but it has diminished over recent years, as the English have apparently found another herb for use in dyeing. However some is still exported from time to time.

The island also produces figs, grapes, oranges, lemons, apples and bananas, but these are consumed locally and their export is not even permitted.

Maize is very rare in the island. The market town of Adoze supplies a small quantity of sugar.

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All of Tenerife's trade passes through the ports of Sainte Croix [Santa Cruz] and Orotava [La Orotava]. The former is the only port from which ships are allowed to depart for America, and where vessels from America need to call first when they visit the island. In addition to this, Sainte Croix [Santa Cruz] also has the advantage of handling almost all the Canary Islands' trade with Spain and is the main port of call for almost all national and foreign vessels wishing to take on provisions. In a word, the town is the main entrepot for merchandise entering or leaving the Canary Islands, whose Governor has made it his place of residence.

Cattle, sheep (of a very small breed) goats and pigs are quite common. There are also chickens, turkeys, geese and ducks, but no swans are to be seen and herons are very rare. Some partridges are to be found - larger than those in Europe and with darker plumage - and also some wild pigeons, bluish in colour, and quails. Rabbits are abundant but there are no hares.

There are no wild animals to be wary of on the island, and no reptiles or poisonous insects.

According to a study made over the years 1775 – 1780, it is estimated that some 22,000 casks of wine are produced in a normal year, of which a very large part is consumed locally. Water is scarce and of poor quality.

A volcano erupted on the island in 1788 but only a few traces of this event remain. On the road from Sainte Croix [Santa Cruz] to Pic [Pico del Teide] a grotto has been discovered, containing the remains of the Guanche, wrapped in goatskins and perfectly preserved. The limbs were rarely together, most often having been separated from the trunks.

Gran Canaria

The island of Gran Canaria is the most fertile of all. It is watered by numerous springs and would become a precious colony if agriculture was

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properly encouraged there. It is normally self-sufficient and as a general rule all of the animal and plant products available in Tenerife are to be found there in greater abundance. In some districts there are two corn harvests annually and the same applies to a variety of small and very white bean which most fortunately lasts several years without spoiling. This island does a considerable trade in them.

La Luz is the only trading port in the island and enjoys the same privileges as Santa Cruz. The port of Palma, in the island of that name, is the third one in the Canary Islands to enjoy the same prerogatives as these two.

Ships of 20 to 30 tonnes, which set out to fish on the Barbary Coast, are a part of the Canary Islanders' industry. The inhabitants of this island, who in general are very poor, survive on salted fish and potatoes, which grow there in abundance. Everyday hats are manufactured there.

The Inquisition Tribunal has its Residence on Gran Canaria, but it is very benign and the inhabitants of these islands are not much troubled by it.

In addition to products common to all of the Canary Islands, the island of La Palma produces a lot of sugar, which however does not cover local needs. Vines are successful there and sufficient wine and brandy is produced to enable some to be exported. Almonds are to be found there in abundance, and are traded. It is in this island that silk is manufactured, and factories provide work for large numbers of workers.

Gomera sends some beans, wine and brandy to Tenerife, but the island's remaining production is sufficient only for local consumption. Some deer are to be found there.

Hierro or Ferro, is the most barren of all the Canary Islands. It does not produce enough to be self-sufficient. Some vines exist, producing a little wine and some brandy that is sent to Tenerife, and some figs are also made into a reasonably good brandy.

The beef cattle on this island have a better taste than those of the other islands. Spring water is lacking, or at least is very rare.

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The two islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura generally produce a lot of maize and barley, but as the countryside is not well endowed with fresh water springs and is very sandy, the size of the harvests depends entirely on rainfall. If it is abundant the harvests are superb, but when this does not happen everything perishes. It even happens sometimes that many inhabitants are obliged to seek food in neighbouring islands.

The cotton plant grows very well there. There is also some wine, but the quality is poor and it is turned into brandy.

Camels are common and are used for transport whereas on the other islands horses, cattle, mules and donkeys are used for this work.

Such are the most interesting notes on Canary Islands production. I have transcribed them as they were given to me by Messrs Murphy and Cologan. My gratitude for the kindness they showed me during my stay in Santa Cruz will cease only when I die.

I know of no population poorer than that of Santa Cruz de Tenerife. It is not an exaggeration to say that five sixths of the inhabitants of this town (not counting the garrison) are beggars. Indeed their number is so great that often we did not wish to venture outside for fear of being assailed by them. Moreover they are extremely ill-mannered and went as far as regaling us with all sorts of horrors when they sensed on our part the inevitable refusal caused by their large numbers. The poverty of these beggars is nevertheless entirely voluntary. They could easily earn their living through working, but laziness holds so many attractions for them that they prefer to live in filth rather than provide for themselves through honest labour.

The morning after our arrival we set up our observatory ashore in a house at Belvedére kindly placed at our disposal for this purpose by a rich citizen. For the Mole at Santa Cruz we obtained a latitude

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of 28°28'28" and a longitude of 18°36'2", that is to say the same results as had already had obtained by Messrs Pingré, Borda and other scientists.

We had put into this port for the purpose of taking on provisions for the remainder of the crossing and amongst other things to buy some wine, which we had not been able to obtain in Le Havre due to transport difficulties. Thus we paid very dearly and ended up with a beverage in no way comparable to Bordeaux wine. However, we obtained everything that we might need and set sail for the Isle de France [Mauritius] on **22 Brumaire [13 November 1800]**, after a stay of 11 days in Santa Cruz.

The NE trade winds, which had been blowing for some time, took us at a brisk pace south of the Tropic of Cancer, which we passed on the **24th [Brumaire 15 November 1800]** at a longitude of 21°41' W, and on down to approximately latitude 6° N and longitude 18° W. At that point we were becalmed, although fortunately this was frequently interrupted by squalls which gradually took us out of this area and towards the Equator, which we crossed on **21 Frimaire [12 December 1800]** at a longitude of 24°6' W. On our vessel we did not arrange any of the ceremonies usually observed on board ship when the line is crossed, or even when the Tropics are reached. Too many persons would have been subjected to the initiation and we were afraid that disagreements might arise.

Having arrived at this point we encountered winds from ESE and SE, which took us south of the Tropic of Capricorn during the night of **8 Nivose [29 December 1800]**, at a longitude of 26°12' W.

On **19 Frimaire [10 December 1800]**, at 4h00 in the morning, with the weather overcast and misty and with intermittent rain periods, a waterspout passed alongside the ship. According to Citizen Freycinet, who was on watch at the time, it was moving from north to south. It was shaped like a cut-off cone, with the upper part - the larger - disappearing into a very thick fog not far above sea level. The appearance of this waterspout was accompanied by a noise similar to a violent wind blowing through the leaf-laden branches of a large tree. Considerable rain,

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stormy weather, lightning on the horizon and wind direction changes all closely followed the passage of this waterspout, which blew itself out several miles to leeward.

On the 11th of the same month **[2 December 1800]** we sighted a three-masted warship, which I think was the same one we noticed the day before we sighted the Cape of Good Hope, and which seemed to us to be standing in for the bay.

After having endured all sorts of difficulties we finally rounded the Cape of Good Hope on the morning of **15 Pluviose [4 February 1801]**, standing off about 15 or 18 leagues. The weather, which was misty with some squalls, gave us only glimpses of the shore and we were unable to take good bearings to rectify our position. We did get a bearing on Table Mountain but it was too doubtful for us to put much faith in it. On the 4th of the same month **[24 January 1801]** we had passed below the Paris meridian, 35°41' S.

At about 50 leagues from the southern tip of the island of Madagascar we experienced a violent blow which left us with some minor damage. We became separated from the *Géographe*, but found it again the next day. Finally, after a crossing that had lasted five deadly months, we sighted the coast of Isle of France on **23 Ventose [14 March 1801]** and next evening we dropped anchor at the port entrance.

The next day, the **25th [16 March 1801]**, an officer from the port accompanied by two pilots approached in a boat. When he was within gunshot he asked several questions to make sure that we were French and to enquire about our reasons for visiting the island. We satisfied his curiosity and he then came on board and left a pilot with us. We learned that, despite our flags of truce and our manoeuvres the previous day, and more particularly because we had not sent up any reconnaissance signals (we had none with us), we had been taken for enemies and for that reason everyone was under arms. They had apparently even been on the point of opening fire on us. Consequently, following the advice given to us we displayed a signal which, reassuring the colonists that we were French, should

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have dispelled any fears that might have been held about us. Concern on this score was then replaced by anxiety on other subjects, but it did not last very long. We soon received the health inspection and a visit from a Committee of the Colonial Assembly which, after having satisfied itself that we were not on any mission relating to Isle de France itself, allowed the pilot to take us into port, and some hours later we were given permission to go ashore.

The inhabitants of Isle de France quickly became aware of the close unity existing between those on board and, interpreting that in our favour, they all rushed to offer us their services. It was a matter of who would make the greatest show of friendship, and within a very short time we made a great number of acquaintances.

We set up our observatory onshore and I continued to assist the astronomer Bernier, whose work I had shared throughout the voyage up to that date. As a number of changes took place, of which I will speak shortly, which led to Citizen Bernier's transfer to the *Géographe*, I was designated to replace him on our ship so far as astronomical observations were concerned.

A large number of naturalists from both ships decided to abandon the voyage and to remain in Isle de France. Their decision arose from a combination of the parsimonious manner in which they had been fed by the captains, the paucity of resources for the future, various problems that according to them they had with the expedition leaders, and finally a letter from the Minister to Captain Baudin concerning the behaviour expected of him in respect of persons under his command, in which they found a number of issues to complain about. Amongst this group were Citizens Michaux, Bory St Vincent and Milbert, each of them learned in their discipline, and Citizen Bissy, who had embarked on the *Géographe* as an astronomer.

Some naval officers from both ships including Citizen Bonnié, our First Lieutenant, also remained in the colony due to ill health. But they would no doubt have continued the voyage

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out of a sense of duty had it not been for the disgust that the aforementioned letter from the Minister of Marine evoked in us. I would not have allowed myself to indulge in any comment on the letter, even though it is full of nonsense. I reiterate that out of respect for Ministerial authority I would have kept my mouth shut if M. Forfait had not so forgotten himself as to insult the officers, in particular. I know of no-one who has the right to take this liberty and each man, no matter how lowly his station, has a natural and inalienable right to defend himself and his honour when he has been offended. I make use of this right with no fear that I will ever be blamed for doing so.

Amongst other recommendations made by the Minister to the Commander there is a directive (couched in reasonable terms, admittedly) to ensure that we do not get drunk, and …but that is already too much, and nothing is more revolting for men of honour than such a statement. I leave to M. Forfait the shame of having dictated it, but I solemnly declare that the honour of the officers who left the Expedition in Isle de France was in no way tarnished by their action – which incidentally I and many others would have emulated had it not been for our keen desire to continue our learning.

I found the situation in Isle de France very different from what I had expected. All the reports given to me, and everything I had read on the subject, had made me imagine a flourishing country. I had of course been informed about the troubles that had disturbed the colony, but I had been assured that it had retained its natural glory all through the long period of troubles. But instead of wealth I found amongst most of the population the greatest poverty and a total lack of basic items. Given the absence of support from metropolitan France these people could rely only on themselves for the defence of their dilapidated properties and of a country which France should demonstrate the greatest interest in retaining.

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Unfortunately, the colonists were not united (and this at a time that was all the more critical in that there were rumours of an English attack) but rather divided into three groups. The first, and admittedly the largest, had decided upon the most vigorous resistance. Those in the second group, on the contrary, were inclined to surrender at the first challenge on the excuse that this was the only way to preserve their properties. And finally the third group included those waverers who, always unsure of which course of action to take, were waiting to see the size of any attacking force before committing themselves.

However they all agreed on one particular point, which was that the law on the freedom of slaves made them tremble. Had it been applied they would all have suffered the same fate as, in their time, the unfortunate inhabitants of Santo Domingo and Guadeloupe; that is to say they would have been completely ruined and perhaps even about to be massacred. In this respect each person's individual interest coalesced with his neighbour's and, while they might have been divided on other issues, they were united on this one. Accordingly they had not only prevented the law from being implemented but had even succeeded in leaving their slaves in complete ignorance about it: had they known, the slaves would certainly have revolted in order to obtain the freedom they were being denied.

The colonists of Isle de France are sincerely attached to metropolitan France and it is certain that only the prospect of their complete ruin made them oppose some of the measures that were dismantling the old regime in the colonies. This monetary interest aside, they want nothing more than to please the Mother Country. How many men, governed by the same

motive, would not have done the same thing? As for me, I admit that I cannot disapprove of what they have done. I do not fear being charged with inhumanity by daring to oppose the philanthropic system that has suddenly sprung up in France. One cannot suddenly change a people's habits without introducing an evil greater than the good one was trying to do. Moreover slavery has always been necessary and I

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know of no government that has been brought down by it.

It was their fear concerning the government's intentions on this matter that explained the surprising precautions taken by the Isle de France colonists prior to agreeing to port entry for any vessel, especially one from Europe. This situation also explains the considerable exports from Isle de France over several years. And finally, these fears explain the repatriation of all the officials despatched by the government to this country.

The only troops in the island consisted of liberated blacks, who were paid for by the colony itself and acted only on orders from authorities recognised by it. They were given responsibility for guarding some forts, and acted as local police.

I will not go into minute details about the way in which slaves are treated. I will confine myself to saying that, whatever Bernardin de St Pierre might wish to have us believe, they are in general treated with great kindness, which is not surprising because it is in their owners' interests to do everything possible to ensure that they keep their slaves. If, by daily punishment, they were to shorten the lives of their workers, the replacement they would be obliged to make would only diminish their revenue. Moreover, when one of the colonists tyrannises his slaves the others know how to force him to divest himself of them, and prevent him from buying any more.

In my view the only way to preserve this colony for France is to defer introducing a law that could only destroy it completely. Should deferral occur the inhabitants, who as I have already said retain the greatest attachment to metropolitan France, would cease their insubordination and, having no fears about the turn of events, would make their country flourish again through trade. But if France, adhering strictly to its philanthropic principles, decides to use force to make itself obeyed, then we will soon be lamenting the loss of a colony that was of the greatest importance to us as a port of call and

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entrepot, and as the key to trade with the Indies.

The purpose of our stay in Isle de France was to complete our stock of a year's worth of provisions in order to continue our voyage. But it was only with a great deal of difficulty that we succeeded in obtaining what we required.

We stayed in port for about a month and a half and during this time we lost a large number of crew members through desertion, but fortunately some of them were replaced by men taken indiscriminately from the ships in which they had been embarked.

On 5 Floréal [25 April 1801] we hoisted our flags and set sail for Leeuwin Land, on the western coast of New Holland. The Isle de France colonists truly regretted our departure, and it is no less true that we can count amongst our happy days the ones we spent in this country.

The crossing from Isle de France to New Holland offered nothing interesting. However, as I considered that my mission only began as from our departure from that island I resolved to begin to provide daily information on our general progress. It is thus here, only, that my Navigation Journal begins.

It was flat calm on the day of our departure from ten o'clock in the morning, when we were lying ESE-WNW with the Horn of Brabant, until eleven o'clock in the evening when, the wind having freshened from ESE, we steered close to the wind on a port tack.

6th [Floréal 26 April 1801] Fine weather, wind from SE, course SSW. At noon I observed 21º16' latitude and 54º51' longitude.

We lost sight of land at seven thirty in the morning.

7th [Floréal 27 April 1801] Moderate breeze from E, course SSE. At noon I observed 22º40' latitude and 55º47' longitude.

8th [Floréal 28 April 1801] Same weather. At noon I observed 23º51' latitude

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and 55º30' longitude. Course was signalled SE.

9th [Floréal 29 April 1801] Wind from SE, course SSW. At noon I observed 24º59' latitude and 56º5' longitude.

10th [Floréal 30 April 1801] Same wind, cloudy weather. On a starboard tack. It rained almost all day.

11th [Floréal 1 May 1801] The weather fined up and the breeze veered to a moderate easterly again. At noon I observed 27º24' latitude and 56º longitude. The wind having shifted to NNE during the night, we set a course SE.

12th [Floréal 2 May 1801] Fine weather, fresh breeze from NNE. The Commander signalled a course ESE. At noon I observed 28º34' latitude and 57º58' longitude.

13th [Floréal 3 May 1801] Same weather. At noon I observed 28º51' latitude and 60º35' longitude by the chronometers - 60º3' by lunar distance observation.

14th [Floréal 4 May 1801] Fresh breeze from SSE. At noon I observed 29º09' latitude and 63º27' longitude by the chronometers - 62º58' by lunar distance observation.

15th [Floréal 5 May 1801] Fine weather, headwinds. At noon I observed 28º54' latitude and 64º51' longitude.

16th [Floréal 6 May 1801] Wind veered ESE and we immediately tacked to port.

17th [Floréal 7 May 1801] Fresh breeze from E, course SSE.

18th [Floréal 8 May 1801] The wind veered back NE and we resumed our course.

19th [Floréal 9 May 1801] Cloudy weather, strong wind during the night.

20th [Floréal 10 May 1801] Strong wind from N, continuous rain.

21st [Floréal 11 May 1801] Wind even stronger and we were obliged to house the topgallant masts. We lost sight of the *Géographe* during the night but joined up with it again the next day.

22nd [Floréal 12 May 1801] Easy weather, wind from SSW. At noon I observed

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33º41' latitude and 77º18' longitude. Course was signalled E¼SE.

23rd [Floréal 13 May 1801] Fine weather. At noon I observed 33º32' latitude and 79º45' longitude.

24th [Floréal 14 May 1801] The wind, which had been N, veered SSW during the night.

25th [Floréal 15 May 1801] Fresh breeze from S. At noon I observed 33º19' latitude and 85º20' longitude.

Citizen Faure, to whom the marine chronometers had been entrusted because of my other sea duties, forgot to wind them up.

26. [Floréal 16 May 1801] Calm. I went on board the *Géographe* in order to compare the chronometers. To guard against the risk that they would both be forgotten at the same time I kept no. 31, entrusting No. 38 to the engineer-geographer.

27th [Floréal 17 May 1801] Cloudy weather, wind from NNE. Course was ordered ESE.

28th [Floréal 18 May 1801] Same weather, same course.

29th [Floréal 19 May 1801] Weather finer, fresh breeze from N. We saw two enormous whales.

30th [Floréal 20 May 1801] Wind from NNE. The Commander signalled course E.

1st Prairial [21 May 1801] The wind, which veered SE in the morning, returned to NE at 6h00 in the evening.

2nd [Prairial 22 May 1801] Fine weather, wind from WNW, on course.

3rd [Prairial 23 May 1801] At noon I observed 34º24' latitude and 107º40' longitude. The Commander ordered us to bend the cables to the anchor rings.

4th [Prairial 24 May 1801] Fine weather, wind from SSE. We

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took soundings every two hours during the night, but had no ground with 200 fathoms.

5th [Prairial 25 May 1801] Wind from NE, course E. At noon I observed 33º50' latitude and 108º45' longitude, by [lunar distance] to Antares.

6th [Prairial 26 May 1801] Very slight winds.

7th [Prairial 27 May 1801] We sighted the coast of Leeuwin Land at daybreak and at noon we were standing off it 22 miles. Soundings gave us 93 fathoms, bottom of white sand mixed with broken shells. At that time I observed 34º24' latitude and 111º58' longitude, by [lunar distance] to Antares.

I have already said that this crossing held little of interest. We had remained between the 28th and 34th parallels south for most of the time and had had the constant company of a great number of birds of the petrel family, together with some albatrosses, but the latter left us at about 85º longitude.

8th [Prairial 28 May 1801] After lying to during the night we made sail and coasted north. What we saw was sandy, arid terrain that did not hold out much hope of natural history discoveries. However from time to time we noticed some areas with reasonable vegetation, a great relief for eyes that were quite wearied from observing the enormous sand cliffs along the coast. I would not have been surprised to find this area uninhabited, but the fires we saw in the evening on different parts of the shore left no room for doubt on this score.

9th [Prairial 29 May 1801] We continued northwards and at noon, as we were lying east and west of Cape Leeuwin, I determined its position to be 34º7'50" latitude and 112º26' longitude. Two other headlands, rather more remarkable than Cape Leeuwin, are to be found to the south (at 34º12' lat., 112º38' long.) and to the north (at 33º52' lat., 112º22' long.). This coast does not have any significant bays. We stood close into shore as we followed the coast and saw reefs only close into the shoreline, not out to sea. The coast lies NNW-SSE. We sighted many whales.

10th [Prairial 30 May 1801] Wind from SE. We discovered a bay, or more

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accurately a sizeable gulf, which was named Geographe Bay. It lies immediately to the east of the northern headland and has an opening some 40 miles wide. It is very safe and offers excellent anchorages. Its depth, which is some 25-30 fathoms in the middle, decreases gradually towards the shore and a ship could anchor almost anywhere at about 2 miles offshore. It offers shelter against any wind, from north through south to west, and has an abundant supply of fish. The middle of the bay is at 33º15' latitude and 112º57' longitude, according to several lunar distance observations.

Several persons, notably Citizen Lieutenant Milius the quartermaster officer, thought they saw a rock outside the gulf, heavily pounded by the surf. But they were most likely mistaken and had merely seen some tidal waves. Whatever it was, its position would have been 33º20' latitude and 111º49' longitude. These tidal waves were to be seen every day near where we were and we considered that they were the cause of the large discrepancies that we noted several times, although at anchor, between the morning and evening longitude readings as given by the marine chronometers.

We dropped anchor in the evening near the southern headland of the gulf, in 20 fathoms over a bottom off muddy sand, 2 miles offshore.

An expedition went ashore on the **11th [Prairial 31 May 1801]** and discovered a tree whose bark was streaked with fragrant gum. The gum melts easily and could be used instead of dry pitch in an emergency. The naturalists were very satisfied with this discovery. No inhabitants were seen.

12th [Prairial 1 June 1801] We got under way to try to stand further into the bay, but only succeeded in doing so on the **14th [3 June 1801]**. We then went ashore and spread out to explore several areas.

Each time we did so we saw some of the country's native inhabitants but it was not possible to get close to them. They motioned threateningly towards us and disdainfully refused our gifts. One of them, an old man with a white beard, left the group,

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climbed up on a high point and began to speak forcefully and with dignity. We interpreted his gestures to mean that he wished us to leave him in peace in his own home, and that he needed nothing. He pointed towards our ships, probably to encourage us to return to them. Several persons in the party wanted to surround the small hill on which the old man was standing but he became aware of this and, being more agile than any of them, was already far away by the time they realised he had gone.

Once, however, as I was walking on the beach I saw two of these shy inhabitants not far away, engaged in studying me. As I wished to avoid intimidating them I ordered those with me to stand still and went forward towards them alone, holding some small presents that I wanted to give to them. They waited for me for some moments and I was already thinking the interview would be a success when I saw them decide to make off. I stepped forward quickly at this point and cut off their path. One of them then returned to the beach and lay down face-first. I approached and, recognizing her to be a pregnant woman, easily assessed that not feeling able to run as quickly as I, she had decided to retreat. I found her in a position in which she seemed to be pleading for mercy, when in fact my only wish was to help her. She was naked except for a skin bag worn on her shoulders as a sort of knapsack. It contained some roots and shells, but soon it contained greater riches than these. After having tried in vain to raise the poor woman's spirits, I placed my presents in her bag and left her alone. Had I stayed any longer, I think that she may well have died from fear in my arms.

This woman seemed to me to be about 35 years old. Her skin, yellowish but tending towards black, was sunburned. Her short hair was tied up and seemed to me to have been cut. She

carried a long stick with fire-hardened ends, but it seems to me that its only use was as something to lean on.

The gulf natives, and there are many of them, if the considerable number of fires we saw each day along the entire shoreline is any guide, are of a very dark colour. They all

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go naked except for the knapsack mentioned earlier or a full skin that they wear as a sort of coat. Their weapons consist of a spear and a club with lacelike decoration, and they seemed to us as brave as they were fierce. We found several of their huts, built from tree branches and only able to accommodate two people at most. But, judging from the various traces we saw it seems to us that they often sleep under trees. They first light a large fire under the chosen tree, and when it has burnt down they lie in the ashes while they are still warm.

These people eat roots, celery, wild chicory, shellfish and fish. Whilst I cannot confirm it, some charred bones that I found led me to believe that they also eat four-legged animals. They have domestic dogs which, except for the tail, are a little like our foxes. One day, in ponds not far from the shore, I found evidence of small-scale fishing activity, with the remnants of shell hooks scattered about.

Almost all trees have been burned at the base and some even in the higher branches, but vegetation growth has not been halted.

Several natural history discoveries were made during this stopover. Birds, in particular, are very diverse. We saw some black swans, but were unable to approach them.

I came across some small wells dug by the natives, from which they drink by means of a celery branch. They are nothing more than holes about two feet deep, dug in the sand only 200 paces from the seashore but much higher than sea level.

A lagoon discovered near the sea was the cause of a regrettable incident. The Commander sent several boats to attempt to find the mouth of what was thought to be a river. And indeed the opening from

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this lagoon to the sea was located but it was impossible for the smallest dinghy to navigate it very far upstream. This led several persons to declare that it was only a coastal inlet, whereas others felt it was possibly a river. Whatever the case, the expedition, which did not throw any light at all on this question, resulted in the loss of the *Géographe*'s longboat, which was dumped on to the shore and in no time at all was so submerged and filled with sand that it took much work to rescue it. We went at it hard and would have been able to get it free had not a violent blow forced us to abandon it. In the various trips made by our boats to bring everyone back on board we lost one of our men, who drowned.

19th [Prairial 8 June 1801] Strong NW winds became a furious gale that lasted four days and placed us in serious danger. However we emerged without damage and on the morning of the 22nd we rounded the bay's Northern headland.

This blow resulted in our separation from the *Géographe*.

The first rendezvous was at the Swan River near Rottnest Island and we headed immediately for it, which was probably a serious error. Had we cruised for 48 hours or so in the area where we had become separated, as is normal in such cases, there is no doubt we would have considerably shortened that separation.

22nd [Prairial 11 June 1801] After having rounded the northern headland we stood out to sea to wait out the blow.

23rd [Prairial 12 June 1801] We headed back inshore but came no closer than 24 miles, and stood out to sea again at night.

24th [Prairial 13 June 1801] Quite fine weather, wind from W – WNW. We stood in for the shore. At noon we were at 31º 38' latitude, 111º 48' longitude and we set a course to make 31º 24', the latitude given for Rottnest Island on French maps. But when we reached that point, and as we could see forty or so

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miles ahead without any sign of an island 6 miles off the mainland, we changed tacked and headed south again to look for it at the latitude given for it on a handwritten Dutch map that we had.

25th [Prairial 14 June 1801] Fine weather, westerly wind. We sighted Rottnest Island bearing SSE and immediately set course for it. We came up to it quickly and, at 10 miles, we dropped anchor in the western part, in 9 fathoms over a bottom of fine, very white sand.

Rottnest Island is situated at 31º 58' latitude and 112º 2' longitude, according to several lunar distance observations that I made during our stay. It is situated approximately 18 miles off the mainland but another island of about the same size as Rottnest lies between the two, to which we gave the name Isle aux Ours Marins [Fur Seal Island] because of the large number of these animals we found there. There is nothing stranger, in my experience, than the gait of these amphibious creatures. When they wish to walk they lift themselves up on their hind flippers and then let themselves fall heavily on their front part; the movement can best be compared to the pitching of a ship. On the way up the movement is slow, but equally it is very fast on the way down. For this reason we contrived to prevent the downwards movements and were then able to club the creatures very easily. Their meat is good to eat but is heavy and not easily digested. Their fat makes oil that is reasonable to eat when fresh, but which after some time can only be used for fuel.

Several travellers, including Saint-Allouarn, have painted a very rosy picture of a stay on Rottnest Island. However in my view no stopover is more dangerous, from the point of view of anchorages, and none less useful given the few resources to be found there. So far as the former question is concerned the seabed, uniformly composed of shifting sand, yields at the least effort so the slightest breeze is enough to make a ship drag its anchor.

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If that breeze happens to be in the NW quarter the ship is obliged to make sail or run the risk of going aground on the chain of reefs linking Rottnest and Fur Seal Islands. So if a ship – ours, for example – that swims badly and makes a lot of leeway were to be subject to a NW blow it would certainly be in great danger because its only recourse would be to tack - the large areas of shallows between Fur Seal Island and the mainland make the channel impassable on that side. In these circumstances, all that it would take to send a ship to certain doom would be for the current to be against it.

As for resources, I consider that the only things that can be relied on during a stopover here are wood, which is readily available, fish, which is reasonably abundant and of which much can be salted, and finally fur seal meat. There are many petrels, pelicans and other seabirds, while onshore there are a number of red partridges and crows (much smaller than those in Europe, but excellent to eat).

Our large boat, commanded by Citizen Sub-Lieutenant Hérisson, went upstream on the Swan River a distance of some 54 miles (18 leagues) from the mouth. At that point he had still not found any fresh water (except in some rocks near the river), but he noted that the water was only just brackish on the ebb tide. According to his report it seems the river is not navigable, but he claims it could become so reasonably cheaply. It would be necessary to remove a rocky bar on the seabed at the river mouth, and to then to dig a channel several leagues long leading to what then becomes a wide lagoon which could be turned into an excellent port. But what would be the point of such expenditure? And what would be the use of a settlement in this part of the world?

In line with this officer's opinion, and also from what I have seen myself, I am inclined to think that this river has two openings to the sea. Hérisson sighted a channel some leagues away from the one he was in, heading off in the direction where some days beforehand I thought I had seen a river mouth. Moreover it seems inconceivable that such a large expanse of water could pass through such a small opening without causing much stronger currents than the ones

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we had encountered. Whatever the situation, the opening we explored bears 5° south-east from Rottnest Island, from which point the river heads in a north-easterly direction for its entire course, as far as we followed it.

One day Citizen Hérisson heard howls that he assumed to come from a wild beast, but he had no wish to satisfy his curiosity on this score by getting closer to their source. This officer remarked that, as had been noted at Geographe Bay, most of the trees had been burned around their base. He added that there are some fine vantage points inland and he believes that the soil, which is not as sandy there as along the coast, would be excellent for vegetation. A number of very delicate black swans were killed in the river. Many are to be seen there.

During this time Citizen Milius, who was in the longboat and had been forced ashore by very rough seas, put to good use the short time available while the boat was being repaired, by visiting the interior. On one of his trips he saw two Aboriginal huts but was unable to meet any of the natives themselves. These huts were built in much the same way as those in the Bay and at the entrance he found some hardwood spears, with fire-hardened tips. Some distance away, near a large fireplace, were the remains of a meal prepared by the natives.

Noticing amongst these remains a sort of chestnut common in this part of the world, he concluded that the nuts would be good to eat. He collected several and on his return on board had them cooked, eating some himself and distributing others to the crew – who almost all became ill. They produced the effect of a violent emetic. We saw some kangaroos.

During the day Citizen Milius, who was without any water, decided to dig a hole some two feet deep on the seashore itself and he found fresh water, though it was below sea level. This discovery inspired him to do some further research but it was all to no avail as we were unable to discover any spring in the vicinity.

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In other events our small boat, which had run aground on Rottnest Island, had to stay there for several days. Citizen Freycinet, who was in command, found nothing interesting there other than a piece of worked wood that he recognised as coming from the bitts of a 200-300 tonne ship. It seemed to him that this piece of wood had not very long been wedged in the rock where he found it. However, despite a vigorous search he found no other signs.

We noticed that a salt water lake, not connected to the sea except by an underground channel, was ringed with fossils of various sorts, leading us to believe that the water had acquired, through filtration, the property of fossilising everything that had been there for some time. We also saw a kangaroo there, and killed it.

We found no fresh water on either of the two islands of which I have just been speaking. Given the sandy nature of the soil this came as no surprise.

29th [Prairial 18 June 1801] We sighted a three-masted ship which we took to be the *Géographe*. We were extremely happy and contemplated our reunion with joy, but we were not destined to see each other again quite so soon… The ship disappeared and we waited for it in vain.

We have since learned that the ship was indeed the *Géographe*, but as the Commander had not imagined we would already be at the rendezvous he had thought it pointless to proceed there and had preferred to make for Shark Bay from where, after a stopover, he carried on to the island of Timor.

It seems to me that on this occasion Captain Baudin made an error of judgment since, while he may not have thought that we could already have reached the rendezvous, he should not have concluded that we would not make it there at all. Thus everything conspired to prolong this cruel separation! … It was fortunate, though, that when we did not come across the Commander at Shark Bay we were prevented by lack of water from returning south to look for him, there were fears he might have been shipwrecked down there.

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9th [Messidor 28 June 1801] Moderate easterly breeze, cloudy weather; we got under way for Shark Bay and surveyed almost all the coast. I drew two maps of this area, but even though I was very careful in this work my preference goes to the handwritten Dutch map of which I spoke earlier and which I recognised as being extremely accurate. It was prepared by men who had stood in a lot closer to shore than we did; it places the Houtman Abrolhos group too

close to the mainland, but this error is of little consequence. At any event, my map will be of use for the longitudes, as they are not on the Dutch map.

10th [Messidor 29 June 1801] Fine weather, light winds variable from SE to SSW. We stood in for the shore. It was lined with reefs, some of which extended well out to sea. Enormous sandy cliffs were the only pleasant sights, and we saw no trees at all.

At noon I observed 31º10' latitude and 111º25' longitude. In the evening we passed two small wooded islands, marked on the Dutch map of the Eendracht coast. They are lined with reefs, which are pounded by heavy surf. In general, everything we had seen since Rottnest Island was very dangerous to approach.

11th [Messidor 30 June 1801] Wind from the north; we stood out to sea.

12th [Messidor 1July 1801] Quite fine weather, but we were held up by wind from WNW which prevented our making headway except if we were a long way out to sea – a situation that Captain Hamelin wished to avoid.

At noon, when we were at 30º39' latitude, we sighted a remarkable rocky outcrop atop a cliff rising steeply from the shore to a considerable height. A little to its north was a small bay flanked by densely-wooded low-lying land that made quite a pleasant sight, and certainly a striking contrast to the terrible aridity of the surrounding land.

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13th [Messidor 2 July 1801] Cloudy weather, with some squalls. We lay to during the night and remained that way all day on the **14th [3 July 1801]**.

15th [Messidor 4 July 1801] Better weather, with wind WSW. We made sail and stood inshore, but not being within sight of it by evening we shortened sail during the night.

16th [Messidor 5 July 1801] Wind from NNW, course NNE; again we were not within sight of land.

At noon I observed 31º2' latitude, 109º45' longitude, although lunar distance calculation gave me 111º24'. I had warned Captain Hamelin as early as Rottnest Island that chronometer No. 31 was working irregularly since the big blow we had experienced, and that No. 38 was considerably out. I had not been wrong in this, as I verified at Shark Bay, so I will refrain from noting the observations I made from this day up until our arrival off the sheltered bay of Dirk Hartog Island.

17th [Messidor 6 July 1801] We sighted land early in the day and had made our way back to the rocky outcrop when the wind freshened considerably and forced us out to sea again.

18th [Messidor 7 July 1801] Wind in squalls, course NNW. We lay to at night.

19th [Messidor 8 July 1801] The weather fined up, and with wind at SSW we made sail on a course NNE and ENE. At noon I observed 29º55' latitude and at two o'clock we sighted the Houtman Abrolhos group which we skirted out to sea, sailing close-hauled.

At eight o'clock in the evening we hove to for the night approximately thirty miles off a very high coast, quite remarkable because of its many hills almost all of which were table-shaped.

20th [Messidor 9 July 1801] Fine weather, wind from the east; we made sail and proceeded along a shore which seemed quite safe to us, with steep cliffs and inlets. At five o'clock in the evening we sighted an island that I placed within the immense Abrolhos group. At noon I observed 24º51' latitude [sic]. We hove to at night.

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21st [Messidor 10 July 1801] Fine weather, moderate breeze from NE; we saw land only in the distance.

22nd [Messidor 11 July 1801] Cloudy weather; we tacked in order to make way.

23rd [Messidor 12 July 1801] Rain, wind from NNE, variable to WSW; we stood out to sea.

24th [Messidor 13 July 1801] Calm, continuous rain.

25th [Messidor 14 July 1801] We sighted land at 4h00 in the evening, and with wind from SSW we set a course NNW.

26th [Messidor 15 July 1801] Fine weather, moderate breeze from SW; we stood into shore and then sailed alongshore, standing off about 9 miles.

27th [Messidor 16 July 1801] At eight o'clock in the morning we were abeam of the South Passage/Blind Strait at Shark Bay, and after having sailed along the entire western shore of Dirk Hartog Island we dropped anchor at 7h00 in the evening in the anchorage bearing that name, in 18 fathoms of water over a muddy bottom. We had entered by the channel between the NW tip of Dirk Hartog Island and the SW part of the Dorre Island. The former is situated at 25º38'39" latitude, 111º3' longitude, and the latter at 25º18' latitude, 111º9' longitude, which in no way corresponds to the map of Shark Bay drawn by Citizen Sub-Lieutenant Freycinet, who in fact did not visit the NW part of Dirk Hartog Island, nor the SW part of Dorre Island, and who consequently may have erred in determining their position. Nevertheless this officer's work deserves the greatest praise since he has perfectly surveyed the entire interior of this bay, and has rectified some glaring errors which even the Dutch had made on the map I was praising earlier.

After some time at this anchorage, where we changed moorings several times, Captain Hamelin called the officers together on **9 Thermidor [28 July 1801]** and asked for our opinions on what he should do. When he had listened to the various viewpoints it was decided that we would wait for

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the *Géographe* until we had just sufficient water for our next stage. Consequently, during the projected absence of our pinnace, it was agreed that the longboat would be repaired and refitted on a beach that had already been discovered on the northern part of the mainland, which all previous navigators who had visited had taken for an island and had named Middle

Island, and which is no more than a headland jutting quite a distance out to sea and joined to the mainland by a narrow strip of land.

Like the rest of Eendrachts Land, Dirk Hartog Island, which is some twenty leagues long, is composed of very sandy soil. It is covered with low but very thick vegetation, which however did not impress our botanists. Conchology is the only area of natural history to have made any valuable contribution there, but even in this case the shells are not as beautiful as one would expect after having read Dampier's account. Rabbits, which according to Dampier are abundant, are nothing more than a very small species of kangaroo, and in any case we saw very few of them.

Two of our young sailors, who stayed on the island for 15 or 20 days, captured the only turtle they saw there. There are probably many of them during the laying season.

We found, buried in the sand beside a rotted post, a plaque or more exactly a large, flattened pewter plate on which was recorded, in Dutch, the visit of the vessel Eendracht. We reset the plaque on a new post, and left a second one beside it on which was inscribed the names of the two ships and captains of our expedition, with the date of our visit to this harbour.

I am the only ship's officer to have visited Dorre Island, and even then I only went as far as the SW headland. What I saw led me to believe that this island is only a rock which the time has gradually enlarged. Indeed, how else could one describe this enormous mass of rocks piled on top of one another in very regular layers which gradually diminish in height and number as they reach the shore where, at 20

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paces from the edge, the water is 18 fathoms deep. A ring of reefs, off to the SW, is probably about 4 miles long.

One of the *Géographe*'s boats, which had landed at this same spot several days before us, had found many kangaroos there. They must have killed them all, because I did not see a single one in this dreadfully arid place.

We dropped anchor on **16 Thermidor [4 August 1801]** off the beach where we planned to repair the longboat, and were making preparations to do this when, on the **17th [Thermidor 5 August 1801]**, we saw thick smoke onshore. Some thought it came from a volcano, but there seemed little evidence for this view. Its source nevertheless needed to be identified and consequently I was ordered to proceed ashore, accompanied by mineralogist Bailly.

At that stage we still thought that this piece of land was an island and for that reason we had not considered that it might be inhabited. We preferred to think that our ship's pinnace had stopped here and that the crew had lit a large fire so we could see them.

I got under way and headed towards the smoke in question. When I arrived onshore I came across a sand bar preventing me from beaching the boat but, rather than waste time looking for an easy place to land I preferred to jump overboard and make for the shore. We were only 25 paces from the beach when nine natives emerged from behind a small rise and stood there so we could see them. They were unarmed at that moment but, as I continued towards shore making friendly gestures towards them, they picked up their spears and wooden sabres and,

letting out piercing cries, rushed forward in a single line to the water's edge, where they stopped. I did likewise, and recommended the greatest prudence to the men under my command. On leaving the ship I had been so far from expecting the encounter I was about to make that I had not brought along any trinkets that might have dazzled these New Hollanders. Had I taken this precaution I would not have hesitated a single moment to approach them, alone and unarmed, in order to distribute my

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gifts. As it was I had nothing, but I needed nevertheless to make a decision.

I did not want to retreat, and in order to avoid some action that would have cost the lives of several of these unfortunate people I used the only means open to me. I gave strict orders for them not to be fired upon except if I judged it to be necessary and then continued forward, making even greater gestures of friendship. This moment was undoubtedly the most critical of all, since when the natives saw me so close they started shouting again, motioning threateningly towards me and advancing so that soon we were only six or eight paces apart. At that point, seeing that all my efforts were in vain, I fired a shot over their heads. The spark from the hammer and the noise of the shot produced the effect I had anticipated and, after a moment's hesitation, the startled natives fled.

Having so fortunately avoided this action I arrived onshore unimpeded, and after repeating my orders I made my way towards the fires (which were indeed what we had seen from the ship) that had been lit about a gunshot's distance from the shore. But seeing the natives assembled there, I decided not to go any further.

These natives appeared to have the same skin colour as those in Geographe Bay. They were entirely naked and seemed to me well built. The beach was covered with their footprints, some of which were so small that I assume they were those of a child about three or four years old. I also noted some dog paw prints, and assume that the natives have domestic animals.

It was on that same beach, about a mile from where I had met the natives, that we beached the longboat for repairs and set up an observatory. I was given the task of regulating the marine chronometers. I decided to visit the spot where I had seen the fires, and I ascertained that they had only stayed there for a few hours. Nevertheless the fishing must have been successful, since I found the remains of many abandoned skate fish.

It seems that this area has been inhabited for a very long time, or at least there are grounds for believing so, because we saw some huts so old

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that the tree trunks from which they were made crumbled to sawdust at the lightest touch. Some spears ringed by fossilised shells that I found in rocks near the beach helped to confirm this view.

After my first meeting with the natives we encountered them only once more. However it is probable that they stayed in the general area, or perhaps left it only briefly. The fright that I had given them was certainly the reason for their brief disappearance.

During our excursions inland we saw some of their huts. They are constructed in the same way as those in Geographe Bay, namely with tree branches and leaves, but are grouped together in small villages. Most were newly built and yet the necklaces and mirrors we had left there at the beginning, and which were still there when we left, proved that the natives had not returned. In fact it seems that here, as in the Bay, the natives do not always stay in their houses. We found beds everywhere, made similarly to those I have already mentioned and which seem to suit them well, that is to say they are found under close-set trees, where beforehand, they had made a point of having a large fire.

So far as I could determine from the remains I found near their fireplaces, the natives eat four-legged animals, shellfish and fish, but not fruit.

Shark Bay is a valuable port of call, from all points of view. In addition to the great advantage of being a safe harbour due to the good seabed, the shelter it affords and the space available for manoeuvring should a ship be forced to get under way quickly, provisions of many sorts are available. Fish of all varieties are abundant and there is good hunting for both birds and animals. There are many species of one four-legged animal, all either a little smaller or a little larger than our rabbits, except for one species of which we saw only tracks but which appears to be about the size of a mule. However dogs are required for hunting and since we had none we were unable to kill any of the larger animals, even though we sighted many,

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as they hide in bushes where it is impossible to follow them.

Proportionately there are fewer species of birds than of quadrupeds. For supply purposes it is best to rely on the sea bird species. Land species are very small and are good mainly for display in an ornithological collection; they would be unsuitable at a table except if they were served in large quantity.

During one excursion which he undertook, engineer-geographer Faure discovered an island where turtles were abundant, and he filled the boat with them. Captain Hamelin named this place the Isle d'Auteuil [Auteuil Island].

When turtles are added to the resources already mentioned, Shark Bay can be seen to be very useful to navigators. It is true that we did not find any fresh water there, but Citizen Freycinet assumes there are two rivers in the bight and it is likely that if they were to be found one would also locate fresh water, since I cannot believe that the area’s inhabitants use only salt water.

The observatory’s location was at 25º35'5" latitude and 111º36'6" longitude, according to the mean of more than 60 lunar distance observations I had taken. These observations enabled me to set the chronometers and also to assign new longitudes to the various places I had mapped after leaving Rottnest Island. I found 52º30'0” inclination by the magnetic needle, and 5º58' NW variation.

On **15 Fructidor [2 September 1801]** there remained only enough water to get us to Timor and, as agreed on the 9th of the previous month, we prepared to get under way. During this time we used the longboat to take on wood.

17th [4 September 1801] We got under way at 10h00 in the morning, with a moderate breeze from SSW, and left the bay at the same point we entered. We set a course north as soon as we had doubled the Dorre Islands, and lost sight of land at four o'clock.

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18th [Fructidor 5 September 1801] Fine weather, moderate breeze from SE; we crossed the Tropic at noon exactly, at 110º46' longitude.

19th [Fructidor 6 September 1801] Wind from SE to ESE, course N¼NE. At noon I observed 20º44' latitude.

20th [Fructidor 7 September 1801] Fine weather, same wind, course NE¼E. At noon I observed 18º38' latitude, 112º12' longitude.

21th [Fructidor 8 September 1801] Light breeze from SSE, course ENE: we continued this way until the **25th [12 September 1801]** when, having observed 14º30' latitude and 117º34' longitude at noon, we were very close to the point that Dampier had marked with danger signs. Accordingly we hove to for the night and took soundings every hour, though without finding ground with a 120 fathom line.

26th [Fructidor 9 September 1801] We made sail to the NE at daybreak, with wind from ESE. By noon, reading of 13º7' latitude and 118º26' longitude we had passed the rocks just mentioned.

27th [Fructidor 10 September 1801] We followed the same course, with the same wind.

28th [Fructidor 11 September 1801] We sighted land at 9h00 in the morning and by noon we were very close. Several persons, including notably Captain Hamelin, considered that it was the small Savu Island. Whatever the truth, this was a small uninhabited rock, on which we saw a few bushes; it is situated at 10º44' latitude and 119º27' longitude.

During the night we sighted more land which the next day we recognised as the Greater Savu Island. We entered the channel between it and the small Benzoard Island, which is some 6 miles away and essentially part of the same land mass.

Greater Savu, which is situated at 10º34' latitude and 119º48' longitude, is some 24 miles from the small island that we assume is Lesser Savu. It is densely populated and the Dutch have a small settlement there. Its coast offers a very pleasant aspect and men like us, who had just endured a long stay in the grim New Holland landscape, could not

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get enough of its beauty. We regretted intensely that we were unable to take our ease under the coconut trees, banana palms and palm trees that we saw.

The western part of this island, along which we coasted not far offshore, so that we did not need the glass to pick out Malay people on the beach, is very safe, or at least we saw no sign

of danger, even in the narrow channel. We sounded several times and had no ground at 30 fathoms.

30th [Fructidor 17 September 1801] Fine weather, wind from SE, course ENE. We had the same weather until the 3rd complementary day, when we sighted land at daybreak. We soon recognised the islands of Simao and Roti and the next morning we entered Kupang Bay, dropping anchor about a mile offshore and alongside the *Géographe*, which had been there for a month and was having a new longboat built.

The day after our arrival we went to see the Commander and paid an official call on the Dutch governor. We found the former to be ill and confined to bed for most of the time. In fact he only recovered some days after having put to sea again.

The governor, M. Lofstett, had made three houses available to Captain Baudin, one for himself, one for the officers and naturalists and one for use as a hospital. One was made available to our Captain and us as well, but as the number of our sick increased we were soon given a place in the fort for use as a hospital.

I took the chronometers to the observatory set up by the astronomer Bernier, also in the fort, and reset them according to the astronomical clock. I observed 10º9'50" latitude South and 121º49'46" longitude East (according to the mean of 80 or more lunar distance observations), or 121º48'31" (according to an observation by Jupiter's second satellite). I found 55º32' magnetic needle inclination.

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During this port visit, which lasted 53 days, we lost several of our crew to dysentery, and indeed we lost several others to the same illness later, at sea, notably Citizen Le Villain, the naturalist, who died on **1 Nivose [22 December 1801**]. The *Géographe*, which also lost some men, also had to grieve the death of the naturalist Riédlé. This respected man was greatly regretted by all of us. He was buried beside the English botanist Mr Nelson, who had died in Kupang during the visit by Captain Bligh, and the Commander had a tomb built, with an inscription. Both ships lost several men through desertion.

Commander Sainte Croix Le Bas, second-in-command on the *Géographe*, remained at Kupang through illness and Citizen Sub-Lieutenant Picquet, from the same ship, who had had some problems with Captain Baudin, left for Batavia on a Dutch Company brig.

On **4 Brumaire [26 October 1801]** the two ships were inspected and Captain Baudin announced the promotion of several officers and midshipmen. These promotions were dated 28 Vendémiaire, Year 10.

Citizen Lieutenant Milius was promoted to Commander.

Citizen Sub-Lieutenants Henry Freycinet, Louis Freycinet and I received our commissions as lieutenants; and Citizen Engineer Ronsard, who had sub-lieutenant rank, was promoted to lieutenant.

Citizen Midshipmen Bonnefoy, Moreau and Ransonnet were promoted to sub-lieutenant. And finally Citizen Midshipmen (second class) Brüe, Duvaldailly and Bougainville were promoted

to midshipmen first class and were replaced by helmsmen Mouroard, Debrévedan and Degouhier.

My notes on Timor are sparse but I have transcribed below, together with my own , some of the notes kindly given to me by the botanist Citizen Leschenault, who spoke Malay

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What follow are notes copied, often inaccurately, from
M. Leschenault's journal
[signed] Louis Freycinet

and thus had taken fuller notes on this country.

Kupang harbour is extensive, with three entrances two of which are very busy. The first, very narrow and lying north-south, is Simao Strait. The second, wider and to the west of the town, passes between Simao and a small sandy island named Kera by the Malays. It is tree-covered and uninhabited. The third entrance is between this small island and the Timor mainland, but it is dangerous.

Kupang is in the NW SW part of Timor. The Concord fort, built by the Dutch, is situated on a rock overlooking the town and a small river flows by at its base. When the tide is in the very largest ships can enter the river, making disembarkation uncomplicated. With a little expenditure it could be easily be made into a convenient and safe port.

The river divides the town into two parts, but they are connected by a bridge. On one side are the fort, Governor's and Dutch doctor's residences, etc. The Chinese quarter is on the other side, near the sea. Malays live in the rest of the town.

The town has a pleasant enough aspect. The main streets are shaded by mango and banyan fig trees, or multipliers as they are called because all of their branches produce tubers that hang down and would take root if they were not cut off. This strange tree is approximately the same size as a walnut tree. It produces numerous figs which provide food for a large species of bat. Its cracked trunk provides shelter for a large grey and red-speckled lizard, called a Jeko by the local inhabitants because of the unpleasant sound it makes and which could be rendered by this word if pronounced strongly from the back of the throat.

The houses lining the main streets are quite handsome. They belong to the richest citizens.

When the English took the Dutch fort some four months ago their harassment and excesses forced a number of families to flee, either to Batavia or into the island hinterland. These latter appealed for help to the local Malays, who massacred some of the English and forced

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journal

the others to leave quickly. But, like people everywhere who, having taken revenge on behalf of their countrymen then proceed to commit the greatest atrocities, the Malays committed

excesses to which they believed their victory entitled them. They pillaged and ransacked houses belonging to private individuals, and some houses have not been rebuilt.

Since that time the inhabitants of Kupang have been very worried. As soon as they see a European ship they run to arms until they can ascertain its intentions. Our own conduct taught them that, unlike the English, not all Europeans are their enemies. They detest the English as much as they seem disposed to love the French.

We were able to witness the hatred felt by the Malays towards the English nation. During our stay in this harbour one of their frigates (in fact the French ship La Virginie, which they had taken from us during the war and on which Captain Bergeret had won everlasting fame), which was cruising in the vicinity, got wind of the fact that two French ships were moored off Kupang. It came in to see for itself and, if possible, to take us. As soon as the Malays heard this news many of them, fully armed, congregated and demonstrated great anger. Several said that if they had the good luck to kill some of the English they would eat their heads. However, as one of our boats went over to the frigate and showed the passports that we had from the English Government, it departed and calm returned, much to the annoyance of the Malays who would have been very happy to drink their enemies' blood.

The next day we had further occasion to judge their aversion to Great Britain. A sailor from the La Virginie had taken advantage of the darkness of night to jump overboard and swim to the small island of Kera, more than 6 miles from Kupang. After having rested there some time, this intrepid individual plunged back into the water and swam over to our ship. Despite the precautions we took to keep his presence a secret from the Malays, they learned of it and for several days they looked for this unfortunate in order to kill him. There was no way to avoid this event other than by keeping him on board.

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journal

The Malay is suspicious but courageous, and very attached to his customs. He would have great difficulty tolerating a master who opposed his habits and treated him too harshly. He is lazy and without ambition and for this reason has readily tolerated Dutch rule, which requires nothing from him by way of direct taxation or forced labour except when some extraordinary works need to be completed and the slaves attached to the fort are insufficient for the job. Then the kings, who depend on the Company, supply a number of men who are neither paid nor even fed during the construction work. However this right is used only sparingly.

Moreover the king actually receives a portion of rice and arak for each man, but whether he passes it on to the men he employs is very doubtful.

In Timor and the surrounding islands five "major" and about fifteen "minor" kings depend on and pay tribute to the Company. The former are, firstly the Raïa Amari, residing some one league's distance from Kupang; the Emperor or Quesser Amarasi at about a day's distance from the town; the Raïa of Kupang, who does not live there: he resides for part of the year in Poula Simao, a small island of which he is also the sovereign and for the other part of the year he stays in a house about half a league out of the town; a Raïa of Solor, who is a Muslim; and finally a Raïa of Sabul.

As their mark of distinction, these five Raïas carry canes with golden pommels engraved with the Company's coat of arms. The Malays described these kings as Raïa Rotang Mas, or Kings with the Golden Cane. The "minor" kings carry canes with silver pommels, also engraved with the Company's coat of arms.

However all these Raïas have only very limited authority, which moreover can be restricted at will by the Dutch Governor who always assumes a tone of authority vis-à-vis these potentates. He attempts to intimidate them by his air of majesty whenever they approach.

The Malays seemed to me to be very attached to their kings, but they do not afford them marks of respect similar to the ones which so concern

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journal

other people of India. I went to see several of them and always found them surrounded by their subjects, sitting beside them and appearing to be more companions than masters. A calico robe is all that distinguishes them when they leave their houses. They are then followed by a number of their subjects and by several slaves, some of whom carry a parasol above their head with the others carrying sacks of betel and weapons. I have come across several of these kings walking, along with their subjects; however most of them are carried in chairs.

The kings who depend on the Company are obliged to offer to it an annual gift of a certain quantity of sandalwood (which is abundant in Timor and in Solor) and of wax, slaves and horses. In return they receive some guns, a very limited quantity of powder, some knives, sabres and various trinkets from Europe. It is clear that this exchange is very much to the benefit of the Dutch.

A brig takes all these offerings to Batavia every year. The sandalwood is sold to the Chinese who extract from it a highly prized oil. They also use the wood to make various statues and furniture, and also burn some of it as incense in their temples. It varies in price according to its size but in general in Timor it is worth between 7 and 20, and even sometimes 30 piastres per bundle (125 pounds on the gold measure). We are told that it sells for at least double that in Canton.

The Company is not the only trader in Timor. Several Chinese junks arrive towards the end of the NW monsoon season to buy wax (which is of good quality and available in woods in the interior), slaves (who are worth between 20 and 50 piastres), sandalwood and birds' nests (nests of Java swallow, hirundo esculenta). The nests are of two kinds: one is made entirely from mucilaginous substances and is highly prized by the Chinese whereas the other, which has assorted vegetable matter mixed in, is not used. The Chinese also buy sea cucumbers, which are fished on the Sabul bank, shark fins and horses.

The birds' nests, sea cucumbers and shark fins have the reputation of being powerful aphrodisiacs. The Chinese use them as a sort of universal remedy and also to make

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journal

jellies which they consider delicious to eat.

The Company charges an excise of 4% on goods exported and 6% on imports. It has also reserved the right to license individuals to retail arak, meat and candles and to run gaming houses. It sells these privileges, and the Chinese are almost always the successful buyers.

The Malays are exempt from all personal taxation; only the Chinese pay a small amount. Taken together, these taxes and rights amount to an annual revenue of 7-8,000 piastres for the Company, which is used to pay the various employees and troops. When the Dutch wish to embark on some useful undertaking they invite contributions from rich citizens. This is a voluntary contribution and the amount depends on individual generosity.

There are very few white people working for the Company in Timor. The garrison is composed of Malays from the island of Java, and none of them is worth the very weakest native of Timor.

The Company has two ports, one at Kupang and the other on Savu Island. Heading up the latter is a Frenchman who has been in the Dutch service for 32 years. These posts are not very demanding and are useful as honourable retirement positions for faithful servants, who settle differences between the kings, administer justice and generally look after the Company's interests. But their decisions are not irreversible and the Governor of Kupang is able to annul or ratify them as he sees fit.

Stealing is punishable by beating with a cane, administered to the backside. Anyone who has been found guilty becomes a Company slave.

Some Malays are Christians and in the fort there is a temple with a Malay minister.

To date the island of Timor has held little interest except for the Dutch, who have taken possession of it, but if Europeans establish large settlements on the east coast of New Holland this island will become a valuable stopover due to the ample provisions to be had there.

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journal

They are quite substantial, as will be seen shortly.

The Malay houses in Timor are single-storied and almost all of similar design. Those belonging to the rich normally have a front courtyard bounded by trees. Two open galleries, with roofs supported by posts, make up the front and back of the house. They are often several steps up from ground level and at each end there is a room used as a shop. Three rooms, with the central one being the largest, make up the inside of the house.

The gallery at the front of the house is the main room, used for receiving visitors, eating and for the family to gather. Consequently it is the most decorated part of the house, if one counts as decoration some varnished or gilded cane lounge chairs, two stools placed beside the entrance, one or several lanterns suspended from the ceiling, etc. However the walls are

carefully whitewashed and great cleanliness prevails in the furnishing, rather than great elegance.

The central room has cane lounges all around, covered with mats. That is where siesta is taken. The owners sleep in the side rooms, their beds made of three-inch thick mattresses filled with kapok, a mat and several small cushions, 18 inches long with a diameter of 4 inches, arranged as best suits the individual. They also have muslin mosquito nets.

The rear gallery is for domestic tasks. It opens on to a courtyard containing the kitchens and slave quarters. These are bamboo huts covered with palm leaves. The main house is built of bricks up to a height of 4 or 5 feet only, with the rest being wooden planks. In general the houses are covered with concave tiles that come from Batavia, as do the large clay squares used for decoration. Tile and pottery factories could be established on Timor: Citizen Depuch reports having found a large deposit of clay soil near Kupang, ready to be worked.

Such are the homes of almost all of the local bourgeois. Their

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journal

life is as simple as the roof under which they live. While the head of the house looks after his business his wife and children, squatting on mats surrounded by their slaves, amuse themselves in different ways or prepare tobacco leaves, which are chewed along with betel. The leaves are cut into very thin strips, and then rolled. On the whole the Malays avoid anything that might be tiring. The heat, plus their natural laziness, means that they cannot stand anything fatiguing. They are skilful at producing various small works in rice straw or palm leaves, but these trifles require patience rather than occupying the mind.

They bathe two or three times a day, eat three meals and sleep during the afternoon heat. For the rest of the time they chew a mixture of palm nuts, betel, tobacco and Gambert, to which they add prepared lime.

The evening is the time for visiting. Tea and coffee are drunk and guests leave very late at night. During these visits slaves sing in chorus, accompanied by the Malay drum and the Chinese gong.

Everyone who is to any extent rich is involved in trade. While they attempt to discover what you desire, so they can charge an appropriately high price for it, they never seem to pay much attention to what you have to offer, even though it might be something they require. No doubt the Dutch gave them some useful lessons, from which they have profited.

The best trade items to bring to Kupang are iron, rope, grappling hooks for their boats, large fixed-blade knives, sabre blades, guns, carpenter's chisels, saws and glass pellets, but all in small quantities.

When they are inside their own houses, men wear short trousers and a loincloth which covers them from the waist to their calves. On top of that they wear a short calico housecoat. Their hair, which is always plastered with coconut oil, is worn pulled back and tied behind. When

they go out (I am speaking here of rich people) they dress in the European fashion and normally wear gold or silver buttons on their clothes.

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journals

Women's clothing is very simple and similar to that of Chinese women. Their hair, which they oil like the men, is worn in a chignon brushed in a spiral and kept in place by gold or sometimes diamond-headed hairpins or by a mother-of-pearl comb, normally decorated with gold or silver. They wear full-length loincloths around the waist and, over that, a sort of muslin or calico gown which goes from the neck to mid-calf level. This gown, which opens to the front, is kept closed at the breast by gold pins. On the left shoulder they wear a red handkerchief, to a corner of which is attached a silver chain carrying the keys to their chest, which for them is a mark of luxury almost as great as the care they take in decorating their betel nut boxes, which are usually very beautiful. They never go out without these boxes, which are carried by one of the numerous slaves who follow them everywhere. The handkerchief is used only to wipe their lips if they have become reddened by saliva mixed with betel juice.

The Malays claim that their extravagant chewing of this mixture fully protects them from toothaches. They also like the smell that it gives to their breath. Thus men, women and children all use it with great liberality. It costs little and even slaves are able to indulge in the habit. Their lips and teeth are constantly black and it is surprising that they remain in good shape despite the corrosive nature of the lime that is mixed in with the betel. It is no less surprising, no doubt, that the constant salivation induced by this process does not cause the chest ailments that it seems so designed to provoke.

The ladies of Timor go barefoot inside their houses but when they venture out for a celebration or an official visit they wear stockings and high-heeled shoes. As they are unused to wearing shoes they walk in a difficult and clumsy way and consequently they remove these awkward pieces of finery as soon as possible.

They adorn their hair with sweet-smelling

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journals

jasmine flowers. It is a great sign of friendship to pick and offer someone a garland of these flowers. In some circumstances the women wear silk clothes with gold brocade, or else brocaded muslin. They add gold necklaces, bracelets, earrings and rings.

The well-off private citizens are almost all of mixed race. Their colour, less dark than other Malays, is close to that of the peoples of southern Europe. The women are quite beautiful and almost all have lovely eyes which contribute greatly to enlivening their faces, whose brown tones are never heightened by rouge. They have small feet despite their habit of walking without shoes.

As in all the countries of India, boiled rice replaces bread for the inhabitants of Timor. The food eaten by rich people is quite refined, but too spicy to suit Europeans. Their usual drink is cold tea, unsugared, or simply pure water, after it has been boiled, however.

The conditions in which slaves live are not very harsh, because rich people have a great number of them and consequently they are not overburdened with work. A single man can have up to fifty slaves just to work inside his house, with more working outside growing rice or corn, looking after buffalo herds or at any other job required by the owner's particular property holdings.

Madame Van-Este, the widow of the last-but-one Governor of Kupang (he who welcomed, with all the ceremony that he merited, the unfortunate Captain Bligh following the taking of the English ship The Bounty), had more than 2,000 slaves. Monsieur Tilman, who was the leader of the Malay bourgeois and also Madame Van Este's brother, and Monsieur Joannès, a rich citizen and former Company Secretary, also had a great number of them. I take this opportunity to express my thanks to these two gentlemen; they received those amongst us who paid them a visit most graciously and with much consideration. In particular I was very touched by the courtesy shown to me by M. Tilman, and I will also always remember with much

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gratitude the kindness shown to me by the Governor and especially Monsieur Guesler, the Company Secretary.

The areas suitable for rice cultivation belong to private individuals. The soil needs water from the streams and not all places are suitable. But for corn growing people are free to send their slaves to work wherever they choose, so that the first person to choose a particular plot is able to sow the corn and to harvest it. The land is not reseeded immediately after a first crop, so each year new land is cleared. Despite this system there are never arguments between individuals over their plots. There is sufficient uncultivated land for everyone to be able to choose what they like.

In Kupang there are a considerable number of Chinese. They are, almost without exception, involved in retail trade. They have retained the dress of their nation and are easily recognisable by their long pants, large jackets or cabayes, slippers, the long plait of hair that they allow to grow on the top of their otherwise shaved heads, and finally the particular appearance typical of people from that nation. Here they are similar to the Jews in Europe: same greed for profit, same trade trickery and same harshness towards unfortunate people. The Malays detest them royally as they cheat them out of money and goods. The Dutch have a similar attitude, although they are happy enough to see Chinese people establish themselves in the country because they can be made to pay for its upkeep. In general the Chinese have that indefinable physical trait that inspires suspicion and disgust from the very first meeting.

The common Malay people and the slaves wear their hair brushed up and tied on the top by a handkerchief which they knot and roll up in different ways. Their wear a loincloth from just above the waist to the knees and have another piece of cotton cloth which they carry on their shoulders and put on if it rains or if they are cold. In addition, on their left shoulder they carry

a bag made from a handkerchief with its corners attached to pearl shell or to the bottom part of shell of the topshell variety, and this bag

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Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journals

contains their betel leaves and nuts, etc. They wear ivory or silver rings on their arms. The number of rings is not fixed, but can sometimes be very considerable. They also wear rings on their legs but this is less common, probably due to the difficulty they would cause for walking. They normally go barefoot but sometimes, only for a long trip, they wear a sort of sandal made from palm leaves, woven or tied to their feet by strings made with strands from the same palm leaf.

The women wear their hair brushed up at the back and kept in place by a comb made out of horn, wood or shell. They wear a loincloth which attaches just above the breasts (this has the effect of making them droop and become flabby at an early age) and comes down to mid-calf level. Sometimes, particularly inside, the women go bare-breasted. Some women wear bracelets and glass necklaces as decoration and others, especially dancers, wear copper ankle rings.

They all grease their hair with coconut oil and perfume it with foul-smelling tree-leaves, giving it a revolting odour. But they bathe frequently and are exceptionally clean, both as regards their person and in their huts, which are made from bamboo and covered with straw or palm leaves. They sleep on simple mats spread on a platform made from bamboo pieces joined together. Their food consists of rice, pork, poultry and pieces of buffalo meat that have been cut into strips, smoked and dried in the sun. A few mats and some earthenware or coconut vases make up their furniture. In addition they have buckets made out of a single palm leaf, which contain 10-12 pints of water. With these very few riches, the Malay is happy. Having absolutely no ambition all he needs to satisfy are his physical needs, and these are few in a climate where nature is so generous. Does he have a little rice? A small piece of cloth? A few betel leaves and nuts? If so, he is happy, does not worry about the future and is able to devote himself to his favourite passion, which is rest.

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[Marginal note] **Brumaire, Year X [23 October – 21 November 1801]**

Notes copied from M. Leschenault's journals

[Marginal note] Timor, power of the Dutch

Not all of the island of Timor is under Dutch rule. Only about 20,000 Timorese recognise Dutch sovereignty, and amongst these there are some 6,000 warriors who, at the first sign of trouble, gather up their arms and rush to the spot they have been told about. The Company relies a lot on them for the defence of its settlement.

Malay weapons consist of a sabre with a wooden hilt and scabbard, short, but good, a bow and arrow and a gun that the local Raïja (who is the weapons custodian) only distributes to each man if an attack is imminent.

The Portuguese have a small settlement in the SE NW of the island, in a small town named Dili. This part of the island has the reputation of being as unhealthy as Batavia.

Kupang is situated in a reasonably healthy climate, but the rainy season, which lasts from October to April, usually brings with it some dangerous diseases, especially when the month of September has been very hot. The Malays have no doctors, midwives or even surgeons, but among them are some people called souanguis, who set themselves up as sorcerers. People turn to them for illnesses of all kinds, and Malays regard them with veneration tinged with fear. They firmly believe that these men know about powders able to make you drowsy, or blind you temporarily, or take away your appetite, etc. They told us with the greatest seriousness that if they were to spread some of the powder around a house, everyone inside would be put into a deep sleep, and that they could then enter and steal, murder, rape, in short, commit any unspeakable act with total impunity and in complete safety, because anyone else who wished to enter the house would also fall asleep. One day after I had been robbed by some Malays who had entered via a window I was regaled with these ridiculous stories and some people were angry that I did not believe them, so that in order to calm down the most intense among them I was obliged to pretend that I believed what they were saying; people who are well brought up have, like others, this miserable opinion;

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they are therefore continually in fear of the souanguis, whom it would not take much for them to worship, in order to beg them not to do them harm.

This ridiculous prejudice is the only one of this sort that is generally encountered among the people of Kupang. I am aware that some profess the Catholic faith, but most have no religion at all.

I had forgotten to note that, at two days' distance from Kupang there is a river where gold dust is to be had. The Dutch have made fruitless efforts to win over the Emperor of the district where the river is located, but he has no wish to come under their control. He limits himself to exchanging his wealth with the Company.

Polygamy is not practised amongst the Malays of Timor. I am not aware that there are any particular ceremonies for the celebration of marriage, only a gathering at the groom's house if his means allow this. Far from being jealous of their wives, lower-class Malays are on the contrary the first to prostitute them if they can see some benefit in doing so. They often brought them to us and would have allowed us to have our way with them in return for the gift of some trinkets from Europe, which they are very keen on, or even for one piastre which they would accept from anyone who, not having any presents to give, accepted to pay this price for spending some moments with these heroines, who were always ready to fly off into new arms when some recompense was promised.

As is to be expected none of us was allowed to go and find happiness in the arms of these unfortunates. Nevertheless, whether because of a long period of privation or simply to satisfy a need arising out of habit, a number did not refuse the charms offered, although in some cases their health suffered afterwards.

Things are very different in the case of the wives and daughters of the rich. Kept in check by a thin veil of propriety, they do not indulge in any of these blameworthy and revolting excesses. As in France and everywhere else, they only know how to show compassion for any harm they might have caused. Have they injured anyone? And has it been brought to their attention? If so, they are always prepared to attempt to remedy the injury

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Notes drawn from M. Leschenault's journals

they have caused, and perhaps they might even end up taking away all of the harm.

They are quite lustful, as signalled by the liveliness of their very expressive eyes, and above all they love with great passion. They cannot bear to be separated for a single moment from the object of their affection and they use all of their charms to keep him close by. When some meeting has been agreed between two lovers and when for some reason they have been unable to keep the agreement, the one who has been detained sends to the other partner, as a sign of his distress, a chewed betel leaf. The recipient can then have no doubt as to the other's devotion, and she shows her joy by sending back a similar leaf, also chewed.

From the very earliest age children are allowed to run about on simple, well spread mats, and yet they walk at an early age and rarely have any accidents. For the most part the women breast-feed their own children and it is only in unusual circumstances that this duty is passed to others; and even then a slave of the household is given the job if possible so that the mother, or relatives, can keep continuous watch over the child.

The Malays have a great love of music. The most common instruments are the harp, the guitar and the violin, but the ladies, or rich men, are the only ones to play them. The instruments of the common people are a simple bamboo flute, which they make themselves and which they play by blowing through the end, and another very disagreeable instrument.

When a private citizen has a house built each of his friends offers him a tree for planting in the courtyard. The lower branches have been removed and there are just enough upper branches to hold the gifts which the friend is presenting to the new homeowner. These are cotton cloth and Indies handkerchiefs, more or less fine according to the means of the person offering them. The fabrics are attached to the branches of the tree and flutter in the wind like flags; they are not taken down until the next day.

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Notes drawn from M. Leschenault's journals

In the evening everyone gathers in the new house, where a party has been prepared (I attended one of them). Music is provided by means of a Chinese gong (a sort of metal percussion instrument, struck with a pad), and with drums. Local people gathered outside dance to the sound of these instruments. I know of no more disagreeable music, it resembles more a terrible din than anything else, but the Malays are passionate about it.

Celebrations, of whatever kind, always take place at night because the great heat would make them unbearable during the day. Various sorts of amusements are offered, the old people play cards, some smoke or chew betel while others run to each of the different places where there is dancing. Finally, at two o'clock in the morning a large supper is served and then everyone leaves.

Buffaloes and horses are wild, since the locals have not yet been able to tame them. The former are particularly vicious and move very quickly when they run. Those destined to be eaten are brought to Kupang, very tightly trussed up, by orang houtans or wild men (who indeed live in the jungle) who catch them by means of nets or other sorts of traps. These men have no idea of civilisation and their lives are almost the same as those of the animals they hunt. They would be very much feared if they had firearms and it is expressly forbidden to give them any, even in exchange for the buffaloes and deer that they have captured. The only reason they have not attacked property belonging to individuals in Kupang is because they know their spears are no match for the citizens' guns.

Horses (of which the Malays have broken in some, but not many) are small and very fast. They can only be taken by means of traps, and sell for four piastres each.

Timor has chickens, which I have been told are wild, and monkeys which, like the buffaloes and the horses, always go about in large groups. One day I went hunting monkeys and it was impossible for me to shoot any, which perhaps was lucky for me because several days earlier Citizen Lesueur, who had shot one, was almost felled by stones thrown at him by the others. He was very happy to find safety in retreat.

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Such is the information I have been able to obtain on the island of Timor. It would have been very little without the assistance provided to me by Citizen Leschenault, a very learned young man with whom I have established close relations. He was assigned as a botanist on the *Géographe* and circumstances conspired to have him change ship during our stay in Kupang. Monsieur Guesler, the Dutchman who was Company Secretary and of whom I have already spoken, was also of great assistance to me, and it is due to his kindness that I know some of what I have said about Timor.

In Timor we took on board a few tonnes of rice, poultry, sheep, goats and pigs and also checked all of our ships' rigging. With everything ready for getting under way we weighed anchor on **22 Brumaire [13 November 1801]** and set sail for Van Diemen's Land, by way of the south coast of New Holland.

We left through the large NW channel, with a light breeze from SSE. Soon after, however, the wind veered WNW, varying as far as SW, so we sailed close-hauled on a port tack. We lost sight of land at nightfall.

23rd [Brumaire 14 November 1801] Reasonably fine weather, wind ESE, we changed tack and set a course south. We sighted the island of Simao, and more land far in the distance, very high and capped with a very tall peak. I cannot say whether it was part of Simao or of Timor, but it was probably the latter. At noon I observed 10º44' latitude. Our bosun's mate, Savary, died from dysentery at one o'clock in the afternoon.

24th [Brumaire 15 November 1801] Calm until evening, then with the breeze freshening from ESE we set a course SSW.

25th [Brumaire 16 November 1801] Very light airs from ESE. The Commander signalled the death of one of the crew on his ship.

At noon we sighted Greater Savu Island and the small Benzoare Island. A bearing that I took at 4h00, compared to that I had taken earlier, on **29 Fructidor [16 September 1801]**, at almost the same position, showed a difference of only

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one minute in the longitude I had ascribed to this island when I had seen it for the first time. This similarity in results seems to add credibility to the longitudes I established for the fort at Kupang and for the headland in Shark Bay where our observatory had been set up.

26th [Brumaire 17 November 1801] Moderate breeze from SE, course SSW. We sighted, ahead, a small island that we took to be New Savu, and we coasted very close by it. At noon I observed 11º6' latitude. Soon afterwards, we lost sight of land.

27th [Brumaire 18 November 1801] A crewmember died on board the *Géographe*. We learned that there many more were ill on that ship than on ours.

We were continually frustrated by the wind and were obliged to continue tacking until **4 Frimaire [25 November 1801]** when, being at 15º43' latitude, 117º58' longitude, we were only 30 miles off the NW coast of New Holland, according to the maps.

Hubert Marie, an assistant gunner, died at eight o'clock in the morning, following a high fever. The Chief Surgeon had for some time noted that this man had an accumulation in his liver, which he attributed to a fall that this unfortunate sailor had suffered at Shark Bay. An autopsy was carried out on the body the same day, and confirmed Citizen Bellefin's hypothesis.

At eight o'clock we had no ground with a line of 70 fathoms.

5th [Frimaire 26 November 1801] We had the misfortune of losing another man, named Ives Le Bourru, who died of dysentery, accompanied by a high fever.

At noon I observed 16º14' latitude, with 118º6' longitude by the chronometers and 118º12' by lunar distance observation. According to the maps this would put us several leagues inland, but since we had not sighted land by six o'clock in the evening we stood out to sea.

6th [Frimaire 27 November 1801] Wind from SW, course WNW. At 8h00 in the morning I observed 117º53' longitude by the chronometers and 118º2' by lunar distance observation. At the time we were at 16º14' latitude.

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7th [Frimaire 28 November 1801] Wind from SW, course WNW. At noon I observed 15º29' latitude, with 116º50' longitude by the chronometers and 117º21' by lunar distance observation.

8th [Frimaire 29 November 1801] Wind from SW, same course. At 9h00 I observed 116º10' longitude by the chronometers and 116º25' by lunar distance observation. At the time we were at 15º3' latitude.

9th [Frimaire 30 November 1801] Wind from SW; we tacked to starboard until one o'clock in the afternoon when, the wind having veered to the south, we set a course SSW. At noon I observed 15º9' and 115º26'.

10th [Frimaire 1 December 1801] Wind S-SSW, port tack. We communicated with the *Géographe* and learned that their sick were doing better. Our own, except for one, were out of danger.

11th [Frimaire 2 December 1801] Fine weather, moderate breeze from S – SSE. At noon I observed 15º9' latitude and 113º31' longitude by chronometer No. 38. It had stopped, without having suffered any accident, some days prior to our departure from Kupang but I had got it going again and since then it had kept perfectly in time with No. 31. I had forgotten to wind the latter the day before, **10 Frimaire [1 December 1801]** and I was obliged to synchronise it with No. 38 the next day. They continued to keep similar time for a while more, but since Citizen Faure had once again forgotten to wind No. 38 it began to work differently, giving incorrect longitudes. As for No. 31, it was set so that the same difference as had previously existed between it and the *Géographe*'s chronometers was maintained afterwards.

12th [Frimaire 3 December 1801] Same weather and wind. At noon I observed 15º5' latitude and 112º40'. The weather clouded over during the evening and there was a fresh breeze during the night.

13th [Frimaire 4 December 1801] Overcast sky, wind SSE, sea rough, course SW.

14th [Frimaire 5 December 1801] Same weather, wind S, course WSW. At noon I observed 15º46' latitude and 109º15' longitude.

We had the same weather until the **24th [Frimaire 15 December 1801]**. That day, following a request by our chief surgeon, doctors L'Haridon and Perron came over [from the *Géographe*] to examine Citizen Le Villain, who was ill with dysentery. They

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informed us that two days previously the *Géographe*'s chief sailmaker had died. The two doctors found Citizen Le Villain very low, and indeed the young man died on **1 Nivose [22 December 1801]**, at 10h00 in the evening.

We were continually frustrated during the early days of the month of Nivose, and very surprised to experience violent cold periods, even when it was sunny. On the **9th [Nivose 30 December 1801]** I observed 32º11' latitude, with 108º57' longitude by the chronometers and 109º9' by lunar distance observation. This was about where we sighted some albatrosses and petrels. I noted, as had Vancouver, that the number and varieties of birds in the latter family

increase as one approaches the coast of New Holland, in proportion to the strength of the wind. I believe that Cape pigeons, in particular, are a certain indicator of bad weather and the satanic petrel, called the storm bird, loses its nickname in this part of the world as it is seen during the very finest of weather, under the purest of skies.

12th [Nivose 2 January 1802] Fine weather, wind from SSW; the Commander signalled a course SE. At noon I observed 34º5' and 107º39'.

13th [Nivose 3 January 1802] Moderate breeze from SW. At noon I observed 34º10' and 108º24' longitude Strong wind during the night.

14th [Nivose 4 January 1802] Fair weather, strong breeze from W-NW; we bore away to the east before the wind at 4h00 in the morning. At noon I observed 35º13' latitude and 111º42' longitude, that is to say 16' to the east and 1º5' to the south of Cape Leeuwin. Towards evening the course was signalled SE.

15th [Nivose 5 January 1802] Squally weather, strong wind from WSW, still on course. At noon I observed 36º23' and 114º42'.

16th [Nivose 6 January 1802] Fine weather, strong breeze from the same quarter. At noon I observed 37º41' and 117º34'.

17th [Nivose 7 January 1802] Same weather. course SE. At noon I observed 39º19' and 120º28'. It rained a lot.

18th [Nivose 8 January 1802] Squally weather, with hail. At noon I observed 41º9' and 123º32'.

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19th [Nivose 9 January 1802] Cloudy weather with some squalls, strong wind from W. At noon I observed 127º55' longitude. We observed enormous clumps of seaweed passing by the ship.

20th [Nivose 10 January 1802] Very cool weather, wind from WNW, still on course. At noon I observed 43º latitude, with 132º1' longitude by the chronometers and 132º8' by lunar distance observation. The Commander signalled a course E¼SE.

21st [Nivose 11 January 1802] Overcast weather with squalls, wind from NW. The Commander signalled a course E¼NE.

22nd [Nivose 12 January 1802] Fine weather, wind from W. At noon I observed 43º36' latitude, with 140º46' longitude by the chronometers and 140º48' by lunar distance observation.

We hove to at 10h00 in the evening.

23rd [Nivose 13 January 1802] Squally weather, wind from SW; we sighted land at 4h00 in the morning and stood in for it. At 7h00 we were abeam of South West Cape, and a solar angle reading that I took at that time showed its longitude to be 142º58' rather than 143º38' as

has been ascribed to it elsewhere. It is difficult to understand how my lunar distance observations had always agreed with chronometer No. 31 and also with the *Géographe*'s No. 35, both must have been out by 40' to the West.

We sailed successively around Mewstone Rock, which we coasted very close to, and South Cape in the southern part of Van Diemen's Land and then entered D'Entrecasteaux Channel by passing to the windward of the Sterile Islands and close to the Labillardière Peninsula. We finally dropped anchor at 4h00 in the evening in the great bay [Great Taylors Bay], a mile from the NE part of Partridge Island.

In several places close to the shore we saw fires lit by natives, some of whom were to be seen nearby.

On the **24th [Nivose 14 January 1802]** some of us went ashore on Partridge Island and met a number of the natives. They received with pleasure the various gifts offered

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to them. They appeared to be quite familiar with the trinkets being distributed but they nevertheless carried only one thing that pointed to a visit by Europeans to this place. It was an English penny.

Partridge island is one and a half leagues in circumference and is uninhabited, but since it is only separated from Bruny Island by a narrow channel three feet deep the natives sometimes go there to fish. The island is thickly wooded, with very tall trees. We saw no partridges.

On the **25th [Nivose 15 January 1802]** I went ashore on Bruny Island, and two of the *Géographe*'s boats landed there at the same time. A considerable number of Aborigines soon approached, accompanied by their women. None was armed and we soon established contact with them. These men are naked, black, and most of them cover their loins with a kangaroo skin. Similar skins are used by the women to carry their children on their backs, and they arrange the skin in such a way that it also forms a sack in the front, which is used to carry the provisions they collect for themselves and their families. Some women also have a small cushion, about eight or nine inches long, covered with skin, which they use to sit on.

These Aborigines are of ordinary height and their black colouring has a slight copper tinge. They paint their faces with charcoal dust and some also daub red ink into their frizzy hair, which then looks somewhat like the red areas which our shepherds mark on their sheep's wool. This finery is probably the ultimate in style for them.

The inhabitants of Bruny Island are confident but extremely mischievous. At the same times as we were showering them with gifts they were unashamedly searching through our pockets, and would have emptied them had we allowed it. But they never seemed to take offence at our repeated refusals, although it did not stop them making their requests. When they saw someone in our party who was beardless they immediately felt his breasts and often they even unbuttoned his vest to satisfy themselves that he was not a woman. They seemed astonished to see that there were no women in our party.

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As we were exploring the island a number of natives approached our boats and were keen to make off with some effects, but since our sailors prevented them from doing so they withdrew, rather unhappy, and did not reappear for more than two hours. However they then returned and were again quite friendly towards those of us whom they met. Citizen Mauroard, a midshipman on the *Géographe*, was one of those and, after having joked for a while with one of the islanders they engaged in an arm-wrestle to test their strength. The native was the weaker and, somewhat annoyed, he wanted a full wrestle but was beaten again. He then retired, without however showing any displeasure. But an event that occurred just afterward suggests that we may have misjudged the situation in this respect. As Citizen Mauroard was getting into the dinghy he was hit by a spear which pierced his clothes and lodged in his shoulder. Several of the crew rushed up on to the little hill overlooking the beach but they saw no natives. It seems reasonable to suppose that the New Hollander who had been bested by Citizen Mauroard had wanted to show that, while he may have been beaten for strength he was the superior in skill. Or perhaps this man, wanting to take revenge for having been weaker than a European, had, and I repeat perhaps, hidden in the bushes and had seized the opportune moment to throw his spear at Citizen Mauroard. The wound was not especially dangerous, but it must be admitted that Citizen Mauroard paid rather a heavy price for owning this weapon, or more precisely this fire-hardened stick, sharpened to a point at one end. This small accident was a valuable lesson for us, and we took precautions to ensure that there was no repetition in the future. Such precautions were not sufficient, however, because several days later, in another part of the island, there was another affray which however did not result in any damage even though the natives pelted us with stones.

Not far inland from the beach we

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came across some women and their children around a fire. They were in high spirits and several of them made gestures that would in themselves have given us some idea of their intentions, even without various movements which, without in any way being prompted, assured us that they were prepared to make us happy. Unfortunately, no-one presented himself for the challenge. What an affront for these Van Diemen's Land flirts!

During this time our longboats were busy looking for a watering place. The spring at Port Esperance was found to have dried up and while they sighted two prospects in Port Cygnet, the water was very difficult to access. Our naturalists saw some natives who took them into their huts, or rather their shelters, and showed them their wives and children.

As the Commander hoped to find an accessible watering place in the port of the North-West, we got under way on the **27th [Nivose 17 January 1802]**, with winds from WNW. But when we arrived at Isthmus Bay the winds were against us and forced us to anchor on the Western side of the channel, abeam of Cape Riche. The *Géographe*, having become embayed, dropped anchor between the small Green Island and Cape Le Grand.

I went ashore on Van Diemen's Land and I saw no natives, but the amount of charred wood that I saw left me in no doubt that they visited frequently. The trees, which were the finest I had seen in D'Entrecasteaux Channel, are immensely tall, with a proportionate girth, and most especially they are extraordinarily straight. Very few of them are not totally devoid of bark.

I saw traces of a small four-legged animal, which I judged to be a dog, near a small freshwater stream that runs into the sea.

The crew of a boat that visited Green Island saw some fur seals, as well as eggs laid by large birds, perhaps swans.

28th [Nivose 18 January 1802] We put the morning calm weather morning to use by doing some warping with our kedge anchors, which we dropped on 600 fathoms

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of line, but a WSW breeze sprang up at five o'clock in the evening and put an end to this work. We got under way and dropped anchor at the entrance to North-West Bay, a mile off Cape Gicquel.

The *Géographe* was only able to make sail on the morning of the **29th [Nivose 19 January 1802]**, when it came over and anchored near us.

Reconnoitring deep into the bay revealed a small river where it was considered that we could take on water easily. The longboats were therefore prepared, and to make their task easier we proceeded further into the middle of the bay.

Our pinnace, which set off on the **30th [Nivose 20 January 1802]** to look for a watering place in the river to the North returned two days later and had indeed found a very convenient spot, but the Commander, Captain Baudin, preferred to take on water at the extremity of North-West Bay.

The boats from both ships set off on **3 Pluviose [23 January 1802]**. Ours, under the command of Citizen Engineer-Geographer Faure, was tasked with reconnoitring the channel marked on the maps as providing access between Frederick Hendrick Bay Marion Bay; he discovered that it was an error. The *Géographe*'s boat, under Citizen Freycinet, sailed up the North River [Derwent River] but saw nothing of interest. The two boats returned on the **13th [Pluviose 2 February 1802]**.

While the longboats were taking on water the *Géographe*'s astronomer and I erected tents onshore near the watering place and set up our instruments. We checked the chronometers and carried out various astronomical observations, the results of which (for my instruments) are as follows:

Mean longitude of lunar distance observations made by Citizen Bernier and by me: 145º5'0".
Longitude according to Monsieur D'Entrecasteaux's map: 145º7'0".
Mean latitude of observations by Citizen Bernier and by me: 43º1'0".
Latitude according to Monsieur D'Entrecasteaux's map: 43º1'0".
Error in chronometer No. 31 at the time of landing: 0º40'0".
Error at time of departure according to former corrections: 1º22'47".

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Given these differences, I assumed that this chronometer had begun running differently only since we had been ashore and that its error up to that time had only been a second per day. My

fear was that when we returned it to the ship it would no longer operate as it had during my stay in the observatory.

The inclination by the magnetic needle was 69º49', and the declination was 8º11' NE.

We broke camp on the evening of the **14th [Pluviose 4 February 1802]** and the longboats were hoisted in on the **15th [Pluviose 5 February 1802]**. We then held ourselves in readiness to get under way and make for Oyster Bay, on Maria Island.

During my stay ashore the same natives we had seen in the great bay paid us a visit, during which I became aware that these people had a religion. I was unable to ascertain which entity they worshipped, although I have some reason to believe that it is the sun. I do not know whether these men crossed the channel in a canoe (we saw some, but only at a distance) or by swimming, but what is certain is that the day after I saw them on the mainland our people came across them on Bruny Island.

We killed many black swans and two large pelicans during this stopover. One of our mineralogists, using a hammer, killed a large kangaroo.

D'Entrecasteaux Channel is a magnificent port and there is nowhere that is not perfectly sheltered. The land, which is everywhere close-by, makes the sea as calm as a lagoon and ensures that vessels at anchor are undisturbed. Extraordinary resources of all kinds are abundant and are perfect for reviving sea-weary crews. But this place has been so well charted by the frigates *La Recherche* and *L'Espérance* that there is no need for me to rehearse here details that one will find more exactly set out in the narrative of the journey of these two ships, which is to be published.

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25th [Pluviose 14 February 1802] Wind from NW. We got under way and left North-West Bay but the wind soon veered NE and after having tacked for some time between Cape de la Sortie and Pierson's Point, without making headway because of the current, we dropped anchor in 12 fathoms of water over a muddy bottom. The wind prevented us from getting under way on the **26th [Pluviose 15 February 1802]**, but on the **27th [Pluviose 16 February 1802]** we took advantage of a SSE breeze to weigh anchor and proceed to Storm Bay, dropping anchor 3 miles NNE of Cape de la Sortie.

28th [Pluviose 17 February 1802] Wind from SE. We got under way and tacked out of Storm Bay, but it was impossible to round Cape Raoul (Cape Basalt for the English) before next morning. This cape has Cape Pillar situated to its east, at 2ºN.

We rounded Cape Pillar at 10h00 in the morning on the **29th [Pluviose 18 February 1802]**, after having passed 2 miles south of the small Tasman Island. We have good reason for believing that a small island shown on the map in the middle of the bay between Capes Raoul and Pillar is only a peninsula that juts a long way into the bay: but we cannot be certain of this fact.

As soon as we had entered the southern ocean we bore up to the North, some degrees East, so as to stand out to sea from the Hippolyte Rocks which we passed at a distance of about a mile. We then followed the coast quite closely and rounded Cape Frederick Hendrick which forms

the southern extremity of Marion Bay. After this we entered the channel separating Maria Island from the Tasman Peninsula and at 4h00 we dropped anchor at the entrance to Oyster Bay in 7 fathoms of water, over a bottom of muddy sand.

We went ashore on the **30th [Pluviose 19 February 1802]**. We found natives on the island and we made some exchanges with them. These exchanges were for spears, their only possession.

The English map shows a watering place in Oyster Bay. We found two rivers: one of them was dried up and of no use, while we only followed the other one upstream for a quarter of a league and still had salt water. We returned the next day but only confirmed our view

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that it was of no more use than the first stream.

Captain Hamelin, who had been in Marion Bay, returned during the night. What he had seen led him to think that the passage between that bay and Frederick Hendrick Bay really did exist, but he had not been able to confirm it. Consequently the *Géographe*'s longboat, under Citizen Henry Freycinet, was despatched on **1 Ventose [20 February 1802]** to attempt to verify this point. Ours was also despatched, under Citizen Louis Freycinet, to survey the coast between the northern headland of Marion Bay and immediately west of the Schouten Islands. It returned on the **3rd [Ventose 22 February 1802]**, having discovered a port in the western part of the northern headland of Maria Island.

The naturalist Maugé died on the evening of **1 Ventose [20 February 1802]** following a long bout of dysentery. His body was carried ashore the next day and he was buried near the beach. A lead plaque was placed on a tree beside his tomb, carrying an inscription with the date of his burial. Each ship fired three salutes in his honour.

The *Géographe*'s pinnace, which had left on **30 Pluviose [19 February 1802]** to circumnavigate Maria Island, returned on **2 Ventose [21 February 1802]**, having completed its assignment. Our own pinnace, which had set off the same day to reconnoitre the Schouten Islands, returned only on the **7th [Ventose 26 February 1802]**. Citizen Faure had not found several Schouten Islands (rather, just one small one) but had located the edge of a deep bay with its entrance to the south. It seems that Captain Furneaux, having sailed through this area in foggy weather, had mistaken some low-lying parts of the mainland for separate islands.

The *Géographe*'s longboat returned on the same day. Citizen Freycinet had sighted the passage joining Marion and Frederick Hendrick Bays, but there is no opening from the latter bay to the North. A mapping error appears to have been made, attributing the name Frederick Hendrick to a bay situated to the south of the real one, and probably separated from it by a narrow isthmus.

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Maria Island, situated at 42º43' latitude and 145º58' longitude (or 145º19' according to the mean of 8 lunar distance observations, which however are not as certain as the observations by the chronometers), is quite beautiful. It is very mountainous, and the probability that there is ample fresh water during the rainy season is enhanced by the fact that every few paces one

comes across deep gullies leading to the sea and facilitating runoff. It was probably during the period before the sun had dried up the riverbeds that Captain Cox had come across easy watering places. We found the one he used, but there was no water. It was only with great difficulty that we managed to fill just a few barrels.

We saw some native graves on Maria Island. The custom is to cremate the dead, following which the ashes are gathered into a pile and covered with small sticks, criss-crossed in the form of basket weaving. Bark is placed on top, and we noted that its under side carried the same, or at least similar, characters as the natives' tattoos. Is it not reasonable to assume that each family has its particular marks and that, as a way of honouring their dead, they place on the bark covering the deceased's ashes the marks they wore when they were alive?

Wood is readily available on this island and can be gathered all the more readily because there are few inhabitants. In any case these islanders are not vicious and our people had reason to complain about them only once. Their weapons consist of spears and a short stick or club. They speak more or less the same language as the natives on Bruny Island. It is even possible that these people are not indigenous to the island, because they have dugout canoes (catamarans) that can make the crossing to the mainland. Furthermore they lead the same sort of life as the others and have the same habits, way of decorating themselves, food etc. In short

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we saw nothing there that we had not seen before, except perhaps that their shelters, or huts, are a little more solid and habitable. Their canoes have the same shape, although they are made from rushes while the others make theirs from bark.

We got under way at 9h00 on **8 Ventose [27 February 1802]**, with wind from NNE, and rounded Maria Island on the southern side. We tacked out to sea until midnight and then stood inshore again.

9th [Ventose 28 February1802] Moderate breeze from NNW. We sighted land at first light. Bearings taken at 6h00 showed that the currents had embayed us several miles south of Maria Island. We were still four or five leagues away from the island when we tacked out to sea again at eight o'clock.

At noon I observed 43º latitude, with 146º26' longitude by the chronometers and 145º42' by lunar distance observation.

10th [Ventose 1 March 1802] Fresh breeze from N-NNE, foggy weather and frequent rain showers. At eight o'clock in the morning we went on to a starboard tack until eight o'clock in the evening when we stood out to sea again, not having seen land all day.

11th [Ventose 2 March 1802] Fine weather, wind from NNE. We tacked inshore at 6h00 in the morning.

At noon I observed 42º18' latitude and 147º26' longitude.

During the evening a thick fog came in and we lost sight of the *Géographe* several times. We rang the bell a number of times and fired some swivel gun rounds to indicate our position.

The Commander rejoined us at 6h30 and signalled the order to tack, which we executed immediately.

12th [Ventose 3 March 1802] Foggy weather, wind from NNE. We tacked to starboard at 6h00 in the morning.

At noon I observed 41º50' latitude and 147º20' longitude.

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The wind veered SE in the afternoon and we took this opportunity to steer north until eight o'clock when, following the order we had just received from the Commander we sailed close-hauled on a starboard tack, under topsails only. Following the same order, we changed to a port tack at midnight. Soon afterward we lost sight of the *Géographe* which did not respond to several rockets we put up during the night. This separation, which fortunately did not last long, only occurred because Captain Baudin did not change tack at midnight, even though he must have known that we would carry out the orders he had given us.

13th [Ventose 4 March 1802] Foggy weather; we set a westerly course at four o'clock in the morning, again in accordance with the orders given by the Commander the previous evening. The wind soon died away and we had made little headway by six o'clock in the evening, when we bore up into the wind on a port tack, under topsails only.

14th [Ventose 5 March 1802] Wind from SE to ESE. We sighted land to the West at 6h00 in the morning. It was quite close and we stood in for it and were about to coast North when we sighted the *Géographe* bearing ENE. We went up to join it.

There was little wind during the day but Captain Baudin took advantage of what little there was to steer south. In this way we came no closer than 9 or 12 miles to the coast.

At noon I observed 41º32' latitude and 146º28' longitude.

15th [Ventose 6 March 1802] Fine weather, moderate breeze from NE. We were coasting South when, at 7h00, Citizen Faure recognised the most northerly part of the area he had visited. We informed the Commander of this at ten o'clock. He ordered us to sail close-hauled on a port tack until noon. He also informed us that he would despatch a boat, commanded by his engineer-geographer.

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We sighted Maria Island at 11h00, bearing SSW, and by my observation about 30 miles distant.

At noon I observed 42º10' latitude and 146º30' longitude. At that time we crowded sail and ran close-hauled to get to the North, without however straying too far from land.

The part of Van Diemen's Land we had before us on this day is generally rocky and not very heavily wooded, indeed in many parts there is little greenery at all. It is quite high, which proves that Captain Furneaux sailed by at a greater distance than he believed, because he says that after having rounded the most northerly of the Schouten Islands he went close inshore

and that the coast was very low-lying in this part. For it to have seemed this way he must have been more than eight leagues out to sea, while believing himself to be only 9 or 10 miles out, an error that could readily be attributed to the thick fogs in this area which, as we have noted on several occasions, can make objects appear closer than they are.

At eight o'clock in the evening we went over to join the *Géographe*, from which we had become separated during the day. We did not notice that it was lying to and we passed very close under its lee. In so doing our foresails had the wind taken out of them but our main courses were still drawing fully, meaning that we bore down on the ship at the very moment when, unfortunately, it was not steering but was nevertheless coming about. Its spritsail yard became entangled in our shrouds and broke. Our crossjack suffered the same fate when it struck the *Géographe*'s protruding bowsprit, but the damage was minor and was repaired forthwith. I assume that the damage to the Commander's ship was not major either: the impact had been very slight and moreover we noticed no damage the next day.

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In accordance with the Commander's order we kept a lookout for the various signals he made during the night to facilitate the return of his boat.

16th [Ventose 7 March 1802] Fine weather, fresh breeze from NE. We continued to tack under full sail, remaining between ten and twenty miles offshore. The wind veered during the evening and then died away and it was not until about eight o'clock that it began to blow strongly and in squalls from SSW. It remained in that quarter all night.

Between five and six o'clock in the evening the *Géographe* had fired several canon rounds, which we had heard despite being some way off. We thought at first that this was for the purpose of foreshadowing some signals, but when no flags were run up the mast we began to fear that the boat sent out from the *Géographe* the previous day had not yet returned. While this seemed a ridiculous fear in light of the way the Commander had been manoeuvring his ship all day it was in fact only too founded, as we happily came across the boat three days later, as we were entering Banks Strait.

The weather was rough all night and despite sending up many signals we became separated from the *Géographe*, which had disappeared at sunset. This separation, which was exceptionally surprising, could have been very easy avoided. It seems to me that the Commander, who was at a considerable distance from us at sunset, should have sent up some signals to help us rejoin him and also to facilitate the return of his boat if it was not too far away. These steps were all the more necessary in that the weather was bad, and yet the Commander did not do it. For our part, we tacked to the SE when everything suggested that we should have steered N. Yet Captain Hamelin

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decided only at midnight to set that course, despite the fact that he firmly believed that the *Géographe*'s boat was back on board. What then did he think the Commander would be seeking to do by going South?

17th [Ventose 8 March 1802] The weather fined up and we stood inshore quite early, coasting North at 8 miles offshore. The coast is low-lying along almost all of this part and

lined with reefs, some of which extend a little out to sea. The hinterland is quite raised, with several headlands. It is all well-wooded and presents a very pleasant aspect.

The considerable number of fires we saw at different points along the coast convinced us that it was densely populated. Our visit to this coast was in some respects strangely similar to that of Captain Furneaux. The large number of fires he saw had led him to give the name Bay of Fires to a small inlet that we also sighted, and more than twenty years after him we would have given it the same name had it not already been so described. The ready availability of resources in this area, compared with other parts of the coast, no doubt induced the natives to live there.

I have already said that there were some rocks off the coast. I identified only one of them - the one that, because of its resemblance to Eddystone Rock in the English Channel was given that name by Captain Furneaux. It is situated at 41º12' latitude and 146º21' longitude. A small wooded island close to the south is at 41º19' and 146º24'.

At noon I observed 41º13' latitude and 146º29' longitude. At that time we sighted, to the north, the most southerly of the Furneaux Islands.

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At three o'clock we sighted a ship bearing SSE. As the wind had just veered NE we were able to bear up on this vessel, which at 5h00 we recognised as an English schooner. Meeting a European ship in this area caused us no great surprise given its proximity to the English settlement at Port Jackson, but we were nevertheless very happy to see it. Everyone had their own view on the possible destination of this small trysail. For our own part we hoped that it would afford us an opportunity to send some news back to Europe. Alas, however, this illusion soon vanished and we regretted having got our hopes up. At half past six we came abeam of the schooner *Endeavour*, and Commander Milius went aboard. He learned that the ship had left Port Jackson some twenty days earlier and was bound for Maria Island where it was planning to take on fur seal pelts. Botany Bay had not had news from Europe for quite some time. The colony was well stocked with general provisions but there was no salted meat, which had to be obtained from the island of Tahiti. Does that mean that the English have founded a settlement there as well? Such was the information we were able to obtain from this fishing vessel, from whom we took our leave at half past seven.

18th [Ventose 9 March 1802] Cloudy weather, strong wind from SW. We tacked continuously some 24 miles to the West of the Furneaux Islands.

In the afternoon, immediately following a change of wind direction, we noticed a very unusually shaped waterspout to the north: its upper part was the more substantial, and was attached to a large black cloud very close to the horizon. The lower the spout came to sea-level the smaller it became, reaching the sea in an S-shape. We were too far off to determine

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whether it caused much disturbance to the sea around it, or in which direction it was rotating. We only had sight of it for approximately ten minutes, after which it disappeared.

19th [Ventose 10 March 1802] Light breeze from SE; we entered Banks Strait at daybreak. At seven o'clock we sighted a square-rigged ship at anchor off Swan Island and were convinced that it was the *Géographe*. But we were mistaken in this, and soon after we recognised it as a brig. Citizen Milius went aboard and learned from Captain Campbell that this English ship, the *Barrington* [*Harrington*], had been sent from Port Jackson to explore Bass Strait. This meeting produced some very interesting notes for us on the areas that we had orders to visit, but what happened soon afterwards, and which I will soon mention, [illegible] made us aware that we needed to be very careful when using the information provided to us. Captain Campbell got under way on the 20th to sail further into the strait. Following is a summary of what Commander Milius was able to learn from this English sailor.

The brig *Harrington*, not long out of Port Jackson, reports that when it left port news of a general peace was expected.

Wilson's Promontory (whose position our orders required us to determine) is incorrectly situated on the English maps, which place it at 38º56' latitude and 144º40' longitude east of Paris; Captain Campbell had just observed it at 39º10' south latitude and 143º59'45" longitude east of the Paris meridian. There are many islands to the south of the promontory and it is very dangerous to get too close. The port situated a little to the east provides no resources but that is not true of Western Port, situated to the NW; it provides a safe anchorage and

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water is available from a large river flowing through this part of New Holland.

The English have explored the SW coast as far as 139º longitude (Paris meridian).

Port Dalrymple, on the northern coast of Van Diemen's Land, is very beautiful, with a large river making watering easy.

The Kent Islands, situated towards the middle of Bass Strait, are worth a visit. They contain a bay that is sheltered from all wind.

The eastern side of the largest of the Furneaux Islands has been explored, without any shelter being located for ships. This coast is lined with reefs.

Finally, in the northern-most part of Furneaux Island, King's Bay offers a vast and convenient port. It is sheltered from the wind in all directions and a river flowing into it provides good watering.

In addition to this information, Captain Campbell noted that an English frigate had set out from Port Jackson to explore the Gulf of Carpentaria and the southern coast of New Guinea. How shameful for us, we could already have completed this work! But let me return to my narrative.

A boat that we had seen set off from the brig before we had despatched ours arrived at noon. How great was our surprise when we recognised it as belonging to the *Géographe*! Citizen Boulanger, the engineer-geographer, had not seen our ships since the evening of the day he set off and had considered it best to follow the coast as far as Swan Island, which he had

reached on the morning of the previous day. He had been very well received aboard the English brig, which he had made for as soon as he had seen it out to sea. It will be appreciated

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that our own great pleasure at having arrived in time to save the boat was somewhat tempered by the thought of the concern being experienced by the Commander who was probably, at that very moment, engaged in a fruitless search along the coast where we had become separated.

We made many errors during this mission, no doubt, but one of the gravest was to drop anchor in the middle of the Strait. Had we returned south we would certainly have met up again with the *Géographe*, which we could not have missed, but Captain Hamelin considered that it was enough to despatch that ship's pinnace on the **21st [Ventose 12 March 1802]**, with orders to use the five days for which supplies were provided to carry out searches off Swan Island. This exercise was utterly fruitless.

20th [Ventose 11 March 1802] and **21st [Ventose 12 March 1802]** I went ashore to make two lunar distance observations. On the first day I went to Cape Portland, determining its position to be 40º 44' latitude and 146º13' longitude. Chronometer no. 31 produced 146º5' east of the Paris meridian for this position. See later for the result established in Port Jackson… On the second day I made my observations on Swan Island and I found, at the centre of its northern part, a latitude of 40º41' and a longitude of 146º24' – or 146º15' by the chronometer. Bearings that I took of the ship at each of these points enabled me to relate my various observations to the spot where we were anchored, and I was very happy to note that they corresponded exactly to the initial results obtained on board on the **19th [Ventose, 10 March 1802]**, the day of our arrival in the strait. I am therefore very confident about the position given to Cape Portland, which the government had asked us to chart.

22nd [Ventose 13 March 1802]. In the evening Citizen Faure was despatched in the pinnace to survey King's Bay. He returned on the **27th [Ventose 18 March 1802**] and from his report it would appear that the captain of the *Barrington* had wanted

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to mislead us by presenting as a safe and indeed desirable shelter a place that in fact is extremely dangerous. King's Bay is not a viable anchorage, and our naturalists found there the remains of three different war and merchant ships, one of which seemed to have been shipwrecked less than six months ago. Although Captain Campbell claimed to have visited this bay himself, I cannot believe that he would have wished to become the instrument of our disaster: this would be unworthy, even on the part of an enemy, and I prefer to believe that he was misled by his predecessor's report.

During the night of the **22nd [Ventose 13 March 1802]** the wind blew very strongly from the SE. The horizon was lit up, the weather was threatening and we had no doubt that we were in for a strong blow. It duly arrived in the afternoon of the **23rd [Ventose 14 March 1802]** when the wind became violent and the squalls much closer together.

At four o'clock the cable on our kedge anchor, of which some 150 fathoms were paid out, failed near the anchor ring. It would have been prudent no doubt to remain under sail, but the Captain did not see the need for it and decided to drop another anchor. This one dragged for a

considerable time before finally holding, but not for long, and the new cable soon failed under the combined forces of the wind and the current; it went the same way as the first one. As we had no other anchors mooring us we had to lie to and to wait out the bad weather. We managed to get two more anchors bent during the evening, and we manoeuvred in such a way that we did not get far from the opening of the Strait.

This blow was an extremely violent one and lasted until the **25th [Ventose 16 March 1802]**, when the weather fined up and we were able to put on some sail to help us out. However we only returned to Banks Strait on the **28th [Ventose 19 march 1802]** with the assistance of a light westerly breeze. When we were close to our earlier anchorage we put into the wind and let the ship drift so that we might be better able to find our buoys, assuming that

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the storm had not sunk them. But our search was futile, and nothing appeared.

The situation was critical for us at this time. In addition to the three anchors we had lost in Geographe Bay and Shark Bay we had just been obliged to abandon two more, leaving us with a grand total of only two.

We were separated from the *Géographe* which, perhaps not having abandoned all hope of locating its boat, may not have finished searching. It was possible, although unlikely, that we might meet up with it in the south. Accordingly, Captain Hamelin decided that we should put out to sea and we made sail to leave the Strait, coasting southwards.

On the evening of the same day, the **28th [Ventose 19 March 1802]**, I observed on board the beginning and end of the lunar eclipse indicated in the *Connaissance des Temps* publication. I obtained an average longitude reading of 147º E whereas according to the lunar distance observations we were only at 146º26'. The result is not surprising given that I was obliged to use a simple night telescope.

29th [Ventose 20 March 1802] Cloudy weather, wind from NNE. At noon I observed 41°30' latitude. We followed the coast close inshore and at nightfall found ourselves very near the northern part of Schouten Island. But a violent blow from NW soon obliged us to pull away and stand out to sea. After that we only rarely approached the coast until **3 Germinal [24 March 1802]** when, having endured four successive blows, we were back in the vicinity of the Maria and Schouten Islands. We sighted them in the afternoon but were hopelessly embayed, given that the ship that was such a poor swimmer. We took some consolation from this misadventure, however, hoping that it would oblige

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us to abandon a search which the circumstances had shown to be fruitless. But we were mistaken; Captain Hamelin, who by his own admission had no doubt that the *Géographe* was in Banks Strait, persisted in the struggle despite all the difficulties we were encountering. He wanted to visit Oyster Bay as well as another bay that our engineer-geographer had sighted on the small Schouten Island, and he stubbornly maintained this resolution. I leave it to him to condemn himself, we he will see the various manoeuvres that he carried out to give effect to this plan, which the winds facilitated over the next few days, and even more so on **7 Germinal [28 March 1802]**, the day when we were convinced that his only goal had been to

defer and perhaps to make impossible any reunion with the Commander. I repeat that Citizen Hamelin's own journal is sufficient witness in these circumstances and I fear that, should I seek to explain his conduct in these circumstances I would fall into a bottomless pit and be unable to extricate myself.

I am aware that is inappropriate for a subordinate to censure the conduct of his superior officer and I had made it a rule not to do so in this journal, a sensible decision motivated by fear that any such complaints might be attributed to some particular animosity. I have gone beyond the bounds I set for myself, but only because circumstances brought about this change. The lack of success of an expedition that I had thought was going to be magnificent (and which would have been had the Government chosen others to lead it); basic errors constantly repeated, plus many other reasons inspiring nothing but disgust: all of this has helped to embitter a subordinate who has been tainted by the shame and dishonour that only his superior officers have merited. I am a victim of necessary obedience, despite having suffered all sorts of difficulties and having carried out conscientious if fruitless work.

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I have already said that on the **7th [Germinal 28 March 1802]** the wind was more favourable than ever for the execution of Captain Hamelin's plan but that he did not avail himself of it. He confined himself to lying to all night SE of the small Schouten Island, and launching rockets every hour. But at dawn the next day, no doubt forgetting the searches he had planned, he got under way under full sail, setting a course to the N.

The fresh S-SSE breeze enabled us to sail quite close to this coast for a third time, and that same evening before six o'clock we were abeam of Banks Strait, tacking to its E throughout the night. Unfortunately we got too far away and with very light airs over the following two days it was not until seven o'clock on the evening of the **10th [31 March 1802]** that we dropped anchor in almost the same position as previously, and then only because the calm conditions forced us to do so. However the next day a light NE breeze sprang up and enabled us to proceed to an anchorage a league or so to the W of Waterhouse Island, which was the rendezvous point. Two boats circumnavigated the island but saw no trace of any visit by our Commander.

Waterhouse Island, which is situated at 40º47' latitude and 145º48' longitude according to chronometer No. 31, is a low-lying island with little vegetation and few resources. There is no water to be had and it is only with much difficulty that a little wood can be gathered. The same is true, generally speaking, for all of the islands lying close to the large Furneaux Islands and those around Cape Portland. They are only frequented by English ships out of Port Jackson, looking for the fur and common seals that are abundant there. The crews of these ships can also indulge in hunting a sort of wild goose that is very good to eat and which never leaves these islands. There are also many cormorants, and four hunters are all that is needed to catch enough

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of these two species to feed an entire crew.

We got under way on the afternoon of the **15th [Germinal 5 April 1802]**, with very light NNE airs, and set a course for Port Dalrymple to meet up with our pinnace, which had been

despatched on the **12th [Germinal 2 April 1802]** and which we were to pick up at the entrance to the port. We were becalmed before nightfall, so becoming the plaything of currents that would have thrown us onto a small island that we were not far from at sunset, had not the dawn revealed our position. However we were unable to get far away from it as there was so little breeze that without the current (now in our favour) we would not have progressed even two miles during the whole morning.

A moderate southerly breeze arose on the evening of the **16th [Germinal 6 April 1802]** and by early morning on the **17th [Germinal 7 April 1802]** we had reached the entrance to Port Dalrimple, where we sighted a fire that we assumed had been lit by the crew of our boat. A canon round alerted Citizen Freycinet to our presence and he set out immediately to rejoin the ship. As soon as he had arrived the boat was hoisted in and we got under way, heading N to Wilson's Promontory.

According to Citizen Freycinet's report, Port Dalrymple is nothing but a river, whose narrow entrance is very difficult because of rocks forming a bar across it. It would be possible to enter with help from the boats, but to do so one would need a ship that sailed well, which is enough to give pause to a captain under time pressure and who had reason to doubt being able to get out when he wished to. Nevertheless, according to Citizen Freycinet this river has a very fine and safe port.

It is unfortunate that time was pressing to such an extent that we were unable to send a boat far enough upstream. The river may well be navigable quite a long way inland, in which case it would afford a very convenient means of penetrating the interior, much more useful than reports from sailors who, unable

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to stray from their strictly limited instructions, are quite unable to make accurate observations regarding the customs and habits of the people they meet, who in any case since they live near the sea cannot give a clear idea of the sort of food available to those who live inland. One of our sailors met some natives in Port Dalrimple. They happily obliged him by helping to gather shells but did not wish to remain long. Citizen Freycinet, who heard their shouts wanted to follow them but this was unsuccessful and it proved impossible to catch up with them.

18th [Germinal 8 April 1802] Cloudy weather, fresh breeze from ESE. Having lain to from 8h00 the previous evening we got under way early in the morning and resumed our course N. During the morning we sighted several groups of small islands marked on the 1798 English map and at 11h00 we sighted the promontory. We hoisted out the *Géographe*'s pinnace and at 1h00 I received the following order from Captain Hamelin:

"Citizen Lieutenant Saint Cricq is ordered to embark in the *Géographe*'s pinnace, accompanied by engineer-geographer Boullanger, and to proceed to the southern extremity of Wilson's Promontory in order to determine its geographical position as well as the positions of the surrounding islands, rocks and reefs.

NB: this promontory is thought to be more to the South and more to the West than is indicated on French map No. 14, and it will be of interest to verify this fact.

Using chronometer No. 38, Citizen Saint Cricq will determine not only the longitude of the aforementioned promontory, but also that of the main coastal headlands between it and Western Port, which is at a distance of eighteen leagues from it according to the map being used.

He is aware that soundings, the nature of the seabed, tides, currents, watering places, anchorages, and anything that can increase

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our knowledge of the area that he is to visit must be included in the written report on the mission that he is to submit to me on return and that I will keenly await.

The boat carries provisions for fifteen days and I recommend prudent use of these supplies. As no midshipmen will be present, thereby enabling him and the engineer to be able to set about their work more readily, four firearms and ammunition are to be provided.

If it should transpire that he does not find the corvette the *Naturaliste* anchored in or off Western Port, and no instructions left there by the ship for him, he should continue along the coast of New Holland for a distance of ten leagues to the west, which the marine chronometer will readily enable him to calculate, and there, without fail, he would find either the ship or a ship's boat to show the way to rejoin it.

If, at this point, he were to see neither the ship nor a ship's boat he should remain there and not be anxious, for as soon as the wind permitted he would see me arrive. From the time that he became separated, or even before should the winds be contrary, the crew should be put on half rations.

Citizen Saint Cricq is not obliged to chart the area between Western Port and the second rendezvous."

I carried out this mission as well as the circumstances allowed. I have not included here a copy of the written report that I submitted to Captain Hamelin. Suffice it to say that almost the entire coast I visited is inaccessible. A river near Wilson's Promontory is useless because it is not accessible. Its position can be seen on the chart that Citizen Boullanger and I made of all of this area.

When I returned to the ship it was under sail and awaiting the arrival of two boats that had been despatched under Citizen Milius to chart Western Port. They only returned on the evening of the **27th [Germinal 17 April 1802]**,

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after an absence of 8 days, and were hoisted in immediately.

Captain Hamelin situates Western Port at 38º35'10" latitude and 143º21'55" longitude, the latter being the mean of several sets of lunar distance observations. My own observations, which were carried out with chronometer No. 31 give a longitude for this port of 143º34'10", placing it some 23'40" further E than does the captain. In fact, the determinations that one is obliged to make following a limited number of observations cannot inspire the same degree of

confidence as one made with the aid of a chronometer known be substantially correct, because longitudes determined at various positions can easily be rectified when one has made a substantial number of lunar observations, on both sides of the sun, and can know the chronometer's degree of error rather exactly. When I was able to use this method I believe that I never made an error greater than 10', and I dare say that this degree of error is the greatest that can be made if one observes with some attention and has nothing else to worry about.

According to Citizen Milius, it seems that Western Port, the finest port he has seen, has been only very imperfectly surveyed by the English, who have not marked even the essential things required to ensure the safety of a ship that might be obliged to call there. The work of this officer, who viewed the port with a seaman's eyes, will show better than a long description, how useful Western Port could be to a nation planning a settlement in this area.

After having searched unsuccessfully in all the places that one could reasonably expect the *Géographe* to be, it was becoming necessary for Captain Hamelin to make a rapid decision. He

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would probably have decided to continue on alone to complete our assignment, despite the lateness of the season, had not the scarcity of our remaining supplies forced him to change his plan. A port stopover was becoming indispensable to enable us to take on necessary supplies and Port Jackson was at hand. We had been told that this settlement was very well-supplied and we had expectations that we would be able to satisfy our needs there. Consequently, on the evening of the **27th [Germinal 17 April 1802]** we set sail to reach it as soon as possible.

On the **28th [Germinal 18 April 1802]** we were becalmed abeam of the islands around Wilson's Promontory. It was only at 8h00 in the evening that the wind arose in the NNE but we made no headway, continually tacking instead.

29th [Germinal 19 April 1802] The breeze veered NE, obliging us to tack between the islands. We had managed to double all except one of them when, at 8h00 in the evening, the wind suddenly strengthened and veered W. In order to take advantage of this favourable development we set a course NE ¼ E, under all the sail we could carry, so that the next day after having made several leagues' headway NE ¼ N we were close to the coast bounding the strait. At noon, when we were at 37º57' latitude, we followed the coast, standing off about two leagues. This area, which the English have said is very wooded, is however fairly low-lying. While indeed very wooded, the greenery is often interrupted by wide sandy cliffs on the coast. However it appears quite safe; we did not see a single reef, even off the headlands, that would make it dangerous to approach. We saw no indication that the area was inhabited.

The wind, which had been blowing strongly in the morning, gradually abated in the afternoon and the weather fined up in the evening. Before nightfall we rounded the eastern headland of the

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northern part of Bass Strait and soon afterwards set a course N ¼ NE, standing slightly off the coast that was turning N.

1st Floréal [21 April 1802] There was little wind up to noon but then it suddenly freshened from WNW. We were at latitude 36º19', less than 50 leagues from Botany Bay. We put on all the sail we could, course N.

2nd Floréal [22 April 1802] In the morning we sighted land far in the distance, but the wind was against us and we soon lost sight of it. We tacked shortly before noon, when we were at 34º28' latitude. We stood out to sea again at 8h00 in the evening, not far off the coast.

3rd Floréal [23 April 1802] Wind from NNW. At noon we observed 35º11' latitude and were then more than 15 miles offshore. It can be seen that the small changes of wind direction that had been occurring since the previous day had been considerably to our disadvantage, as we had been forced more than 40 miles south. Fortunately, after a violent storm the wind veered to the south and to the SSW so that this small disappointment was soon replaced by the hope that the next day we would reach the entrance to Port Jackson. And indeed we sighted it at noon on the **4th [24 April 1802]**, when we observed 33º48' latitude and 149º50' longitude according to chronometer No. 31 (but only 148º33' by the mean of four lunar distance observations I had made during the morning and which all agreed perfectly). I assume however that this result in fact placed us some leagues to the west of where we really were. A fact that I have not mentioned to date but which merits discussion here, means that I am not at all surprised by this result. Either because of errors in the tables we were using to calculate phenomena predicted in the ephemeris, or because of an instrument error of which I was unaware, it was rare indeed that the results I obtained from my lunar observations did not differ considerably

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one from the other, when after having observed the moon on both sides of the sun I compared the results obtained (which was easily done by means of the chronometers). When the moon was to the east of the sun my observed longitudes were always too far to the East, and the converse occurred when I observed the planet from the opposite side. However I have great confidence in the longitudes that I ascribed to the various places where we stayed long enough for me to repeat, in equal number, my observations of the moon from each side of the sun. The error in the tables was nil on these occasions, and the only errors to be feared were those attributable to the observer. These too were almost nil at Shark Bay and in Timor because of the large number of observations that I made in each of these places.

We sighted signals on the headland at the SE extremity of the entrance to Port Jackson, and next to the boat which carried them we noticed a sort of tower which we took to be a lighthouse. We were not mistaken, since we noted that a fire was lit in it at nightfall. We had spent all day getting upwind to enter the port and had only succeeded in doing so very late in the day. We therefore decided to keep tacking all night so as to be able to despatch a boat at dawn, with an officer who would seek permission from the English settlement Commander for us to put into port to resupply, given that our own provisions were virtually exhausted, we had fewer than forty days' worth left.

Another storm came up from SSE at 8h00 in the evening, followed by more bad weather.

5th [Floréal 25 April 1802] Wind from SSW, squally weather. A pilot arrived on board at 9h00 in the morning but it was not until 4h00 in the afternoon that we were able to drop

anchor near Midley Cape. In the morning, as we were tacking, we suffered an unfortunate accident that nevertheless had no fatal consequences. The pinnace had been hoisted out at 6h00 in the morning

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and had been towed while we were waiting for the weather to be fine enough for us to despatch it. During one of our tacking manoeuvres the pinnace's messenger rope fouled in the mast and before the dinghy crew had had time to cut the rope this boat capsized. Fortunately help was quickly at hand and all the crew were rescued, and the stern boat and pilot boat towed it to the coast nearby, where they beached it. This minor incident resulted in the loss of only a very few objects, and the boat was back on board on the 8th.

As soon as we had dropped anchor Commander Milius was sent in to the town where he was to present to the Governor the passports we had received from the English court. Captain Philips Gidleys King, who had established the settlement on Norfolk Island, was at the time on a visit inland but when told of our arrival he hastened back to Port Jackson. During his absence Citizen Milius had been very obligingly welcomed by the Lieutenant Governor, Colonel Paterson, a distinguished naturalist and member of the Royal Society of London.

Governor King assured Commander Milius that he would do his best to supply all of the articles we needed, and he was honest enough to add that he was very sorry the colony currently lacked a number of essential items, which he would gladly have provided. He saw us, he said, as citizens of the world and we had a right to expect recognition from every nation.

On the **8th [Floréal 28 April 1802]** we accompanied the Captain into the town and again paid a visit on the Governor and his Lieutenant. Both received us very warmly and promised to make our stay in this port as pleasant as possible. In addition the Governor had the politeness to inform us that we were always welcome at his table and he invited us to dine with him whenever we were not otherwise engaged. He thus

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invited us all to dinner the next day.

Captain King informed us that the English had sent out many ships on exploration missions in this part of the world. They had recently discovered an island 80 miles long in Bass Strait, between Western Port and the Hunter Islands. Western Port had been well reconnoitred but three expeditions to the south-west coast had been unsuccessful: on each occasion the ships carrying out the survey had been forced to abandon their work. However a superb port had been discovered 15 miles to the west of Western Port, and given its shape it appeared to be separated from Western Port's extremity only by a chain of mountains about five miles long. Captain King assured us that the port was as convenient as it was a valuable find.

We had very bad weather during the first few days of our stay in Port Jackson. The SSW wind did not allow us to sail to the Sydney Cove anchorage, 5 miles from the port entrance, so we had to warp the ship this distance, an operation that is both difficult and tiring for our sailors. We finally dropped anchor on the **9th [29 April 1802]**, near a three-masted ship that was soon to be despatched to the island of Tahiti where it was to purchase provisions.

There were several fitted-out ships in the port. Apart from the one just mentioned there were two other three-masters and a brig. We noted also that ships were being built on-shore, one of them in a dock. In addition, two ships that had left England a long time ago were expected from one day to the next.

It can be appreciated that we were as anxious as the English to see these two ships arrive. The Governor had been kind enough to send on board all the newspapers published since we had left France and up to

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15 July 1801 and we had discovered news that was so interesting that we were very keen to learn the outcome of all the expeditions that we knew had occurred since we left France. Our impatience was satisfied a few days later. Captain Flinders, commanding the Investigator and charged with reconnoitring all of New Holland, arrived in Port Jackson on the **19th [Floréal 9 May 1802]**, and the newspapers he carried told us that General Gantheaume had happily succeeded in his mission.

We sincerely regretted that this vessel carried no news concerning peace, but two days after its arrival a whaling ship came into port. It had met an American ship at sea, whose captain had provided a copy of a certificate from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope attesting to official receipt of news of a general peace between the peoples of Europe. We were unable to obtain any further details, except that the English had returned the Cape of Good Hope to the Dutch but had retained the island of Ceylon. We nevertheless expressed all the joy that such news was bound to inspire.

Captain Flinders told us on the day of his arrival that a month previously he had met Captain Baudin on the south-west coast and that Captain Baudin had informed him that he intended to put into Port Jackson as soon as bad weather set in where he was. Captain Baudin had been to Waterhouse Island and Western Port, and by comparing dates it can be seen that he visited these two areas while we were wasting our time searching for him off Maria Island.

I mentioned previously that the aim of our visit to Port Jackson was to procure the supplies we needed to continue our expedition. Judging by what we had learned from the two English vessels we had met recently it was not likely that we would find

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much by way of resources in this place, but I admit that we had some right to expect to leave rather better provided for than we were obliged to do. In the end Governor King, who had promised to share with us the few provisions available in the colony, only allowed us to purchase wheat and potatoes, refusing obstinately to give permission for us to have 2,000kg of salted pork, even though he admitted there were 5,000 pigs in the colony. I do not know whether this behaviour arose out of fear of leaving the colony short of food, or from the hope of forcing us to call off our exploration given that an English ship had been sent to do the same work as we were ordered to carry out. But it is certain that we have reason to complain about the lack of generosity shown by Governor King on this occasion.

Commander Milius, who had been ill during the last 15 months of our expedition, was judged unable to put to sea with us. In accordance with a certificate provided by the French and English doctors, acting together, Commander Milius received his orders to disembark. The loss of this officer was sorely felt. In addition to the fact that I lost a close friend, I could not help thinking that it was only because of him that Captain Hamelin had managed to extricate himself from a number of difficult situations, and that it was certain that the most dangerous time for us was the moment when this excellent officer left us (note: I believed at that time that we were about to sail into bad weather and attempt to explore the SW coast, but the day after our departure I learned that Captain Hamelin's intention was to sail directly to Isle de France).

Captain Hamelin, who knew perfectly well that the season was too far advanced for him to be able to hope to complete the slightest work on the coast, and who was well aware of the difficulties he would encounter in travelling to Isle de France at a time when strong westerly blows came one after the other, nevertheless preferred to put to sea again rather than stay where he was and await the Commander. It was thus demonstrated to us once again that Captain Hamelin's

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only desire was to prolong the separation so he could be independent and not have to consult anyone else on what he was to do. This behaviour was undoubtedly odious and implied extreme ambition, especially when our lack of provisions made it imperative that we rejoin the Commander. The expedition plan had been thrown out for the second time and what was required was for the two ships to get together to decide what to do now. Be that as it may, on the morning of **28 Floréal [18 May 1802]** we got under way and, after clearing Port Jackson, set a course SSE, with wind from SW.

I had pitched my tents onshore on the morning of the **13th [Floréal 3 May 1802]** and they had remained there until the **26th [Floréal 16 May 1802]**. I detected the error in our chronometers when we arrived in port, and will include below corrected longitudes for the points we had determined after leaving D'Entrecasteaux Channel.

I have little to say about Port Jackson. This settlement is too well known now for any new information to be obtained during a short stopover. I will confine myself to recording a few features that have perhaps not been mentioned.

We had been misled when we were told that the English had founded a settlement in Tahiti. It is true that there is constant trade with the inhabitants of that island, but its only purpose is for the purchase of pigs, which are transported live to Port Jackson where, when bred with the English species, they improve considerably. The English also regularly despatch ships to the other islands in the South Seas (probably for the same purpose), particularly to New Zealand where many whalers take on rich cargoes. Almost all of the ships that visit the South Sea Islands bring back natives. I saw some from Tahiti, from Hawaii, from New Zealand, etc. Like almost all of the natives who live around Port Jackson,

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all of these men speak English with great facility but, in general, they are unable to adopt European ways. One of them, however, who has visited England, knows the rules of polite behaviour quite well and is able to act in company with great respect for the people he is with.

The town of Sydney is not the only one that the English have established in this part of New Holland. There are several others [not] far away, and two of these are said to be very beautiful. Parramatta, some 5 miles from the port, is situated upriver. Wheat is grown there with great success. Hawkesbury is the second of the two, situated 80 miles inland on a river of the same name. This river, which is navigable by large ships up to 100 miles upstream, promises to makes this town rich one day. It flows into Broken Bay, 10 miles south of Port Jackson.

There are endless details that I could provide on the form of government in this colony, but I reiterate that the reports I have seen are so accurate that I am convinced that I will contribute nothing. Filling a volume for the pleasure of writing is the preserve of men who believe that everyone is unaware of that which they did not know.

According to the mean between what chronometer no. 31 was showing in D'Entrecasteaux Channel and in Port Jackson, this timepiece provides the following longitudes:

- Cape Portland 145º45'00"
- Wilson's Promontory 144º16'30"
- Waterhouse Island 145º28'00"
- Western Port 143º01'00"

Needless to say, this latter determination is more trustworthy than the method of distances can produce, when one has been unable to observe the moon on both sides of the sun.

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On the evening of **27 Floréal [17 May 1802]** an unfortunate incident had occurred onshore. At the time fixed for the boat to return to the ship the midshipman on duty learned that some sailors were involved in an argument in a tavern and he immediately went there to restore order. The boat crew, who were drunk, challenged this young man's authority and some of them even attacked him. The midshipman then discharged his weapon and seriously wounded a certain Bouteillier, who died the following day, a victim of his own disobedience.

The first few days' sailing were not happy ones. Southerly winds pursued us relentlessly and several storms, close together, did nothing to make life any easier. Finally however, a fresh breeze sprang up from the NE on the evening of the **12th [Prairial 1 June 1802]**, when we were at 44º latitude and 152º50 longitude, and at noon on the **15th [Prairial 4 June 1802]** we were at 45º40' and 147º longitude, that is to say 50 leagues WSW of the southern approach to Van Diemen's Land.

This was none too soon, because after first becoming favourable the wind had veered South by East, fixing at SW on the evening of the **15th [Prairial 4 June 1802]** which would have been very detrimental to our plans had we been a little further to the east. But what followed next proved to us that we would have been better off had these troubles lasted longer, because on **18 Prairial [7 June 1802]** the Captain noticed, or pretended to notice, that there were fewer provisions on board than he had told us, and he immediately took it upon himself to cut

the crew's rations by one third (moreover, despite the fact that we had a mill on board, he wanted to serve two meals of boiled wheat per day instead of bread, but the crew threw this concoction overboard, as strange a brew as the person who had *had the honour* of inventing it) until he had more information on which to base

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a definitive decision. Further information was not long in coming, and at noon on the **19th [Prairial 8 June 1802]** all the officers and the surgeon were called into the Captain's cabin. He told us that there were only 37 days' worth of provisions on board (if one were to mix bran with flour and make bread from the resulting mixture) but that by using some fermented barley that had been shipped for beer-making but that, he said, made very good eating (yet even the pigs refused to eat it) one would be able to give the crew bread for 77 days if they were put on half rations. But did we think that was sufficient time for us to reach Isle de France? What did we think was the best thing to do?

I admit that this unexpected news, although almost predictable given the Captain's behaviour the previous day, absolutely amazed me. I could not have imagined anything more muddled than what had just been achieved by a man who, I am convinced, really wanted to travel to Isle de France, the more so in that he was convinced that the *Géographe* would spend the winter at Port Jackson. (He said so quite openly the day after our departure, and when Citizen Midshipman Maurouard ventured the opposite opinion in his presence the Captain replied that he knew the Commander's intentions better than anyone. What an astonishing mixture of foolishness and roguery! Why then had he left Port Jackson?) By avoiding meeting up with the Commander he would also avoid having to take orders which offended his pride and robbed him of the glory of making discoveries.

Whatever the truth of the matter, when it was my turn to voice my opinion I said to Captain Hamelin that men were only to be put on half rations in extremely grave circumstances, that I believed humane considerations precluded such action when a port was at hand and that moreover I considered it unlikely that we would reach Isle de France within the

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short time our provisions would allow us to be at sea and that, consequently, I thought it essential to put into Port Jackson. All the officers were of much the same opinion and it was decided there and then that we would alter course to reach this port as soon as possible.

It does not take much to underline the incompetent nature of Captain Hamelin's behaviour on this occasion. Just consider: he was leaving Port Jackson for Isle de France, that is to say he was embarking on a 2,400-league trip, in a season when the first 1,000 leagues would inevitably be spent battling contrary winds and heavy seas. And yet he only had 56 days' worth of rations on board. He seemed to wish to ignore this fact. Thus he had made a very large miscalculation, for he alone had done the purchasing, since he had claimed there was enough for 120 days. What then was he seeking to achieve? (I dare not say what a gross error!) I leave that to be pondered, because I have not been able to work it out over the fortnight I have been turning it over.

We were held up by a series of SE winds that sprang up the day after our deliberations, and in a season when westerly winds normally blow consistently in this region it was enough for us

to wish to travel east for them to start to blow to the contrary against us. We struggled for eleven days before being able to round Van Diemen's Land again, and as soon as we had begun to coast along the land to the North the winds veered westerly once again. I could cite a thousand similar incidents that showed that everything, even the elements, contributed to, or rather added to our leaders' incompetence in making our expedition a fruitless one.

But we had reasonable fortune after

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having rounded the South Cape and up to latitude 35º, where we again ran into contrary winds. We only sighted Port Jackson at 5h00 in the evening of **8 Messidor [27 June 1802]**, and we entered port the following morning.

On arrival we learned that the *Géographe* had been in port for a week, but our joy at having been reunited with the ship was very much tempered by the accounts given to us of the state in which it had arrived. The exhaustion suffered by its crew on the south-west coast, which Captain Baudin had seen in its entirety, had resulted in severe scurvy that had carried off a large part of the crew, the remainder of whom were in the port hospital. Fortunately however this deadly illness yielded to a vegetable diet, and especially to a land environment, and we only lost two more men.

As soon as we were reunited the Commander made many changes as concerns the future of our mission. He decided to send the *Naturaliste* back to France with the collections we had obtained so far, and he purchased a small 30-tonne ship that was under construction at the time and which he judged fit for work along the coast and in bays. It was thus promptly completed and fitted out, so that it did not delay the departure of the two ships, which themselves were held up by the need to take on provisions. This small ship, named the *Casuarina* after the species of wood from which it was built, was placed under the command of Citizen Freycinet the younger, who had been lieutenant on the *Naturaliste*. This officer had already sailed on a schooner under the command of his brother, and thus appeared to the Commander well suited to carrying out the mission with which he was entrusted.

We were lucky enough to return to Port Jackson at a time when the colony had just received a considerable quantity of supplies. The Governor made available to the Commander everything he wished to purchase, so we left better provisioned than we had been following any of our port visits up to then.

As the *Naturaliste* was in for a lengthy voyage we

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renewed the rigging, enabling it to make the trip without sustaining much damage, but we were aware that the large number of rats on board could cause considerable harm to the collection containers. We considered it appropriate to fumigate the ship to get rid of hem, but unfortunately this was not very successful and we were not able to discern any great decrease in their numbers.

Soon after our arrival I set up camp on Point Bennelong, alongside those of the *Géographe* and Captain Flinders, but we did not enjoy the latter's company for very long as he left 14

days later. I found there were few differences between the longitudes I observed this time and those I had noted on our first visit, and what gives me considerable confidence in them is the fact that they agreed with those observed by Captain Flinders and Citizen Bernier. I passed over my chronometers to the latter gentleman on **1st Vendémiaire, Year 11 [23 September 1802]**, the day on which, owing to Citizen Freycinet's departure I was obliged to go aboard to supervise the work being done. At the time the stowing and rigging were being attended to, and since this work had only just started I was forced to conclude that, with the small number of remaining crew members (some had been reassigned to the *Géographe* and we had given 15 of our best men to the *Casuarina*) we would not be ready to put to sea for a month or a month and a half. However I pressed our men and was pleased to be able to inform Captain Hamelin that he would be able to get under way in early Brumaire [late October].

A number of changes took place among the naturalists. Our ship retained only Citizen Depuch, who was too ill to continue the exploratory mission. We also took on as passengers Mr Thomson, an English surgeon, and his wife. We made a cabin for them on the gun deck, immediately below the great cabin.

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During this second port visit we had occasion to note how frequently trading ships visit Port Jackson: during our stay few weeks went by when one or more did not arrive or depart. We saw two American ships, one of which, a three-master, was there when we arrived. Its commander, Captain Sinks, would accept no payment for carrying Commander Milius, who needed only to purchase his own supplies for the trip to Le Havre.

During the month of Vendémiaire the French schooner the *Surprise*, commanded by Captain Lecorre, came and went. It had come from Isle de France to hunt fur seals in Bass Strait, and had only put into port to repair some damage caused by rough seas. We learned subsequently, at sea, with much distress, that this unfortunate ship had been shipwrecked on the Furneaux Islands and that all the French citizens on board had been lost. The type of trade which it was attempting could have become important for our colony and I fear that shipowners, alarmed by this event, will not wish to risk their ships in similar ventures.

We did not set sail from Port Jackson until **27 Brumaire [18 November 1802]** (twenty-five months after our departure from France). We were accompanied by an American ship, en route for Batavia, which took advantage of our escort to navigate into the strait. We lost sight of it on **14 Frimaire [5 December 1802]**, the day before we dropped anchor in Sea Elephant Bay, on the eastern side of King Island. Our anchorage was situated at 37º51' latitude and 141º34' longitude.

Several of our midshipmen went ashore to visit the small English settlement. They found the hinterland charming but they all consider that the soil is too sandy for successful cultivation to take place; potatoes appear to be the only vegetable to have had any success.

After a visit of two days we said goodbye to our comrades, who

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still had about half of their mission in front of them. At this moment it was difficult not to be conscious of the many obstacles that they still had to confront, the imminent danger in which

we were leaving them and the many hardships they would need to endure. This made a great impression on me and I could not help comparing their future with mine. I was returning home to my family and would henceforth only be sailing on the high seas, not exposed to the dangers of reefs. I could look forward to pleasure. In short, my own future happiness overwhelmed me. I do not doubt that I would have supported the comparison with greater courage had I been in the situation of my comrades. They were all precious to me, and I was leaving them to face danger while I was safe and sound!

We were on the point of setting sail on the evening of the **17th [Frimaire 8 December 1802]** when an English schooner dropped anchor nearby. The captain and a geographer came on board and informed us that they had left Sydney four days after us and had orders to visit Port Philips [sic] (on the south-west [southern] coast), Frederick Henry Bay (Van Diemen's Land) and the North River [Derwent], on the same island close to D'Entrecasteaux Channel. They were to chart each of these three places and were to wait in the last spot for arrival of the corvette La Surprise, which was being despatched forthwith with troops to found a settlement.

We also learned that the brig *Lady Nelson*, which had set off with the *Investigator*, had returned on **28 Frimaire [19 December 1802]** after having lost all its anchors and having been obliged to make a spare one out of wood. It had left Captain Flinders on 2 October 1802 at latitude 20ºS, close inshore. The *Investigator* had also lost three anchors and had run aground several times, as had the *Lady Nelson* whose keel had been damaged. At the time of their separation, Captain Flinders was to head towards the Gulf of Carpentaria. Thus it will be said that we are to be beaten everywhere! As concerns both discoveries and settlements! The English explored the south-west coast before us, will do the same in the Gulf, and will settle without any challenge in the areas that we discovered! And yet the *Investigator* left Europe a long time after we did.

These gentlemen left us at about 9h00 and we got under way immediately.

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On the morning of the next day we lost sight of land.

End.

NB. I had resolved to continue this journal up to the time of our return to France. But I wished only to present the historical part of our trip. A port visit to Isle de France, which was quite unexpected, did not afford me the opportunity to do this, as I was obliged to hand over my record to the Captain at that time. It has been passed to him sealed, and the seal is not to be broken except on the Minister's orders.

[Signed] J. St Cricq

11 Pluviose, Year 11 of the Republic [**31 January 1803**].