

Mémoires de Louis Antoine de Bougainville : deux visites au Déroit de Magellan (1765, 1766) [Bougainville 1772, pp. 23-32]

[Premier Voyage]

Je me hâtai de débarquer les habitants nouveaux et les provisions de toute espèce destinées à la colonie, de faire de l'eau et du lest, et après un voyage par terre que j'entrepris pour reconnaître le déroit qui sépare les deux grandes Malouines, je mis à la voile le 2 février, pour aller chercher dans le déroit de Magellan une cargaison de bois assortis. Le 16, étant à la vue du Cap des Vierges, nous aperçûmes trois navires; et le lendemain, entrant avec eux dans le déroit, nous fûmes assurés qu'ils étaient anglais. C'étaient ceux du commodore Byron, qui, après être venus reconnaître les îles Malouines, le long desquelles ils avaient été vus par nos pêcheurs, prenaient la route du déroit de Magellan pour entrer dans la Mer du Sud. Nous les suivîmes jusqu'au Port-Famine, où ils relâchèrent, et au mouillage que nous fîmes ensemble sous le Cap Grégoire, un des navires anglais s'étant échoué en louvoyant pour gagner ce mouillage, je me fis un devoir de lui envoyer avec la plus grande diligence deux bateaux, avec les secours d'usage en pareil cas.

Le 21, je m'amarrai dans une petite baie à laquelle les matelots ont, depuis, donné mon nom, et dès le lendemain nous nous occupâmes à couper des bois de différents échantillons, à équarrir les plus grosses pièces, à tracer dans la forêt différents chemins pour les conduire sur le bord de la mer, à en faire l'embarquement et l'arrimage. Nous levâmes aussi et mîmes à bord, avec toutes les précautions que nous pûmes imaginer, plus de dix mille plants d'arbres de différents âges. Il était bien intéressant de tenter des plantations sur nos îles. Ces travaux divers nous occupèrent vingt jours, et je puis dire qu'à l'exception des dimanches, consacrés au repos, il n'y eut pas un instant perdu ni une personne oisive. Le temps nous avait favorisés, car, contre l'ordinaire de ces parages, il fut très-beau. Le 15 mars au soir j'appareillai de la baie, je sortis du déroit le 24, et le 29 je mouillai dans le port des Malouines, où je fus reçu avec de grands transports de joie, ayant ouvert une navigation devenue nécessaire au maintien de la colonie. A mon départ des Malouines, le 27 avril suivant, elle se trouvait composée de quatre-vingts personnes, en y comprenant un état-major payé par le roi.

[Deuxième Voyage]

Vers la fin de l'année 1765, nous envoyâmes de Saint-Malo l'Aigle aux îles Malouines, et le roi y joignit l'Étoile, une de ses flûtes. Cette dernière, partie de Rochefort, arriva dans la colonie le 15 février 1766, et l'Aigle y entra le 23 du même mois. Ces deux bâtiments, après avoir débarqué les vivres, les effets divers et les nouveaux habitants, mirent à la voile ensemble le 24 avril, pour aller dans le détroit de Magellan chercher du bois pour la colonie. C'était entreprendre ce voyage dans la plus mauvaise saison; aussi fut-il très-pénible. Les commandants des deux vaisseaux n'auraient pu, sans prolonger les risques et les difficultés, gagner la baie dans laquelle j'avais fait ma cargaison l'année précédente. Aussi mouillèrent-ils dans la Baie-Famine, où ils trouvèrent en abondance de quoi s'assortir de bois, des divers échantillons nécessaires à nos besoins. L'Étoile fut chargée la première, et rentra aux îles le 15 juin. L'Aigle est restée la dernière et chargée de pièces plus considérables, y fut de retour le 27 du même mois.

Cette expédition au détroit fut remarquable par deux événements d'une nature différente; savoir: un combat avec les sauvages qui en habitent la partie boisée, et une alliance contractée avec les Patagons, qui en occupent la contrée orientale.

[Baie-Famine : Combat]

Quelque temps après que l'Étoile fut partie de la Baie-Famine, des sauvages de la même nation que ceux que j'avais vus et auxquels j'avais fait des présents l'année précédente, se montrèrent aux endroits où l'Aigle continuait de faire du bois. Nos gens les reconnurent, et on leur fit de nouveaux présents. Ils vécurent plusieurs jours dans la meilleure intelligence, allant à bord du navire, soit dans leurs canots, soit dans les nôtres, sans aucune crainte réciproque. Le mauvais temps ayant obligé quelques-uns de nos ouvriers, au nombre de sept, de rester à terre, ils y passèrent la nuit auprès du feu dans une cabane construite à la hâte, et la passaient avec sécurité, lorsqu'ils entendirent du bruit et virent tout à coup paraître trois sauvages à l'entrée de la cabane. Ils ne purent se servir des armes à feu; l'attaque fut trop brusque. Ils se défendirent avec des haches et des sabres. De vingt-cinq sauvages ou environ qu'ils étaient, trois furent tués et le reste mis en fuite; deux de nos gens furent dangereusement blessés. Depuis cette acte d'hostilité, les sauvages ne

reparurent plus.

[Cap Grégoire : Rencontre — Rôle de Saint-Simon]

Cette aventure, désagréable en elle-même, n'était pas importante pour les suites; la nation qui habite la partie boisée du détroit étant peu nombreuse, faible, et n'ayant aucune communication avec les Patagons, les seuls habitants de ces contrées dont l'union avec nous fût intéressante, par rapport aux objets d'échange que nous en pouvions tirer. Aussi M. Denys de Saint-Simon, capitaine d'infanterie, né au Canada et ayant passé une partie de sa vie avec les sauvages de ce vaste pays, avait-il été embarqué sur l'Étoile et chargé de jeter les premiers fondements de l'alliance avec ce peuple, le voisin le plus proche des îles Malouines.

En conséquence, lorsque M. de la Giraudais, commandant de l'Étoile, eut fini son bois à la Baie-Famine, il s'occupa de l'exécution de ce projet avant de quitter le détroit de Magellan. Pour cet effet, il mouilla sous le cap Grégoire, aux environs duquel les Patagons étaient campés. M. de Saint-Simon se transporta à terre avec la chaloupe et le canot. Les Patagons se trouvèrent au débarquement au nombre de vingt, tous à cheval. Ils témoignèrent beaucoup de joie et chantèrent à leur mode; il fallut les accompagner à leur feu. Il en parut alors environ cent cinquante qui vinrent réunir aux autres; ce grand nombre n'effraya pas nos gens, parce qu'il y avait dans la bande beaucoup de femmes et d'enfants. M. de Saint-Simon jugea que, pour contenter cette multitude, il fallait envoyer la chaloupe au vaisseau chercher une plus grande quantité de présents que celle qu'il avait apportée; et par précaution, il fit demander à M. de la Giraudais un renfort d'hommes armés. La chaloupe tardant à revenir, il envoya le canot pour en accélérer l'expédition; et dans l'impossibilité d'abandonner la négociation par l'intérêt que semblaient y prendre les sauvages, M. de Saint-Simon resta à terre avec les Français armés, au nombre de dix. Cependant des cavaliers de tout âge descendaient rapidement les côtes et venaient grossir la troupe, dont le nombre augmenta jusqu'à huit cents ou environ. Le position alors parut réellement critique; le jour tombait, nulles nouvelles du bord (un coup de vent, plus sensible au large qu'à terre, ayant retenu chaloupe et canot), notre peloton de Français, entourés par les sauvages et prisonniers au milieu d'une multitude d'hommes bien montés, bien armés, et qui paraissaient observer entre eux une espèce de discipline, fit vainement

tous ses efforts pour donner à entendre qu'il désirait avoir son feu particulier et remettre les affaires au lendemain; jamais les Patagons, soit amitié, soit défiance, n'y voulurent consentir. Il fallut se résoudre à passer la nuit avec une douzaine d'entr'eux, les autres s'étant retirés à leur camp.

[Cap Grégoire : Tensions]

Cette nuit, passée sans fermer l'oeil et sans vivres sur le bord de la mer, parut bien longue aux Français. Mais quel fut leur embarras, quand le jour naissant leur montra que le navire avait chassé de près d'une lieue et demi par la violence du vent, qui soufflait toujours en tempête! C'était encore une journée au moins à passer avec ces Patagons, qui revinrent en famille comme la veille. Toutefois, ils laissèrent une espèce de liberté à nos gens, dont il y en eut que la faim contraignit à aller chercher des moules sur le rivage. Les sauvages, qui s'en aperçurent, leur apportèrent quelques morceaux de chair de vigogne à moitié crus, mais qui furent trouvés excellents. A l'approche de la nuit, les chefs parurent exiger qu'on les suivît à leur camp; sur le refus constant qui en fut fait, ils donnèrent ordre à la multitude de se retirer, et cent hommes restèrent pour en garder onze.

Les Français tinrent conseil, se conformant aux avis de M. de Saint-Simon, habitué aux moeurs de pareilles nations. Il ne leur cacha point qu'étant sans défense, le moindre mouvement mal interprété pouvait leur être funeste, et qu'il fallait montrer du sang-froid et de la tranquillité. On se rangea donc auprès de ce détachement de sauvages pour y passer une seconde nuit. On ne dort point; un des chefs, qui paraissait être le protecteur des Français et qui avait déjà reçu des pipes et du tabac, fit les frais de la conversation et les cérémonies de l'hospitalité; la pipe passa de bouche en bouche, on chanta, sans envie de la part des nôtres, et on mangea de la moëlle de guanacos, qui paraît être un de leurs mets favoris.

Un instant pensa tout brouiller, par la mauvaise humeur d'un chef dont la physionomie était sinistre, et qui prit à partie le chef notre protecteur. Il parlait avec le ton de la fureur, l'écume sortait de sa bouche, et ses gestes indiquaient qu'il récitait des combats malheureux que ses compatriotes avaient eus contre des hommes porteurs d'armes à feu. Les pleurs que fit couler son récit confirmèrent cette interprétation. M. de

Saint-Simon parla aux siens et disposa tout pour résister tant bien que mal, en cas d'affaire, sans donner par ces dispositions d'ombrage aux Patagons, auxquels il tâcha de faire entendre, affectant un air déterminé, qu'il était surpris de leurs disputes et de leurs larmes, que ceux qu'il avait amenés avec lui étaient les amis de leur nation et plus disposés à les obliger qu'à leur faire injure, qu'ils les regardaient comme des frères et venaient contracter alliance avec eux. Le style de cette, harangue par gestes aurait pu ne pas produire tout son effet, si le jour n'avait enfin rétabli le calme et dissipé les inquiétudes réciproques.

[Cap Grégoire : Détente]

Le temps était devenu plus serein; on vit revenir le canot avec les présents si longtemps attendus. On les remit entre les mains des chefs; il eût été impossible de les distribuer par familles, à cause du grand nombre. Les hommes qui s'étaient retirés la veille s'étant rapprochés avec leurs femmes et leurs enfants, formèrent un monde de cavaliers autour des Français et les traitèrent avec toutes les démonstrations de l'amitié. Ce fut dans ce moment intéressant que M. de Saint-Simon contracta l'alliance avec eux en leur présentant le pavillon du roi, qu'ils acceptèrent avec des cris de joie et des chansons. On leur fit entendre qu'au bout d'un an on viendrait les revoir. Ils offrirent à M. de Saint-Simon des chevaux qu'il ne put accepter, la chaloupe de l'Étoile s'étant perdue dans le coup de vent des jours précédents, et on se sépara avec les témoignages de la meilleure intelligence.

Il parut attesté par le rapport uniforme des Français, qui n'eurent que trop le temps de faire leurs observations sur ce peuple célèbre, qu'il est en général de la stature la plus haute et de la complexion la plus robuste qui soient connues parmi les hommes. Aucun n'avait au-dessous de cinq pieds cinq à six pouces, plusieurs avaient six pieds. Leurs femmes sont presque blanches et d'une figure assez agréable. Quelques-uns de nos gens, qui ont hasardé d'aller jusqu'à leur camp, y virent des vieillards qui portaient encore sur leur visage l'apparence de la vigueur et de la santé. Parmi les chefs, une partie était armée de sabres fort grands, proportionnés à leur taille; plusieurs avaient de larges couteaux en forme de poignards, d'autres des massues d'une pierre semblable au granit et pendue à une tresse de cuir qui paraît être de cheval.

Observations on the Streights of Magellan, and on the Patagonians, by Alexander Duclos Guyot, 1765 [Pernety 1771, pp. 262-266]

[Encounter with British squadron under Byron]

On Sunday the 27th, we had discovered three vessels coming from the West. On the 2d of February, seeing that they did not come into the bay, we set sail for the Straits of Magellan. The weather was rather changeable during our passage. On Tuesday the 12th of February, we had a prospect of Cape Lookout, on the Patagonian coast. After having tacked about, we found ourselves within cannon shot of a lurking rock as large as our longboat, which we had a great deal of trouble to get clear of, on account of the currents, and the roughness of the sea. This rock is not pointed out in our charts. On Saturday the 16th we observed three vessels steering the same course that we did. On the 17th we entered the Straits of Magellan, together with the three ships. On Monday the 18th, one of the three ships working to windward while we were at anchor, she struck on a sand bank. The weather was very fine. We sent our boats to her assistance, with an officer, with anchors and cables; but she soon disengaged herself, and got off without injury. We then found out that they were English. /•/

/•/ This was in reality Commodore Byron's small squadron. The fact is told in the printed account of his voyage round the world, in the following terms :

"At four in the afternoon, the master of the storeship (the Florida) came on board the Dolphin, bringing a packet from the Lords of the Admiralty to the Commodore. — He had likewise been several days in search of Pepys's island, but was like us obliged to desist. — To our great surprise in the morning of the second day, after we left the harbour in company with the Tamer and storeship, we discovered a strange sail, which indeed put us into no small consternation. The Commodore was inclined to believe, that this ship was a Spanish man of war of the line, who having got intelligence of our voyage, was come to intercept us; and in consequence of that surmise, boldly gave orders, that all on board the Dolphin and Tamer should prepare for a warm reception, by firing all our guns, and then boarding her from both ships; but while we were bringing to, and waiting for her, we found it grew dark, and we soon lost sight of her till the next morning, when we saw her at anchor, at three leagues distance, and therefore continued sailing towards Port Famine. We

however found that she still followed us, though at a great distance, and even came to an anchor when we did. On the 20th we were chiefly employed in getting up our guns; we soon got fourteen upon the deck, and then came to an anchor, having the Tamer astern, with a spring on our cable.

Thus busily were we employed in taking all the measures prudence could suggest, to defend us from an imaginary danger; when an unlucky accident, which happened to the storeship, showed that we had nothing to fear, and that the vessel, against which we were arming ourselves, ought not to be considered as an enemy; for while the storeship was working to the windward, she took the shore on a bank about two leagues from our ship. About the same time, the strange ship came up with her, cast anchor, and immediately began to hoist out her longboats, to give her assistance. But before they had come to the storeship, our own boats had boarded her, and the commanding officer had received orders not to let them come on board, but to thank them in the politest manner for their intended assistance. We afterwards found this to be a French vessel; and having no guns that we could see, supposed it to be a merchantman, who had come to those parts for wood and water. — On the 21st we got into Port Famine, where we moored our ships."

[Port Famine: friendly encounter]

On Wednesday the 20th, the English anchored in Port Famine, and we sailed on till the 21st, when we cast anchor at the distance of five leagues from the English, and called the place the Eagle's bay, as it has no name on the charts. The next day, being the 22d, M. de Bougainville discovering a very fine bay or port, at the distance of one league and a half to the South, we went there and fastened the ship to four trees very much under shelter, at the distance of a league from the French bay. We called it Bougainville bay. We took in some very fine wood here and shipped it conveniently, by hauling on board with a hawser the wood cut upon the shore. We stayed here till the 16th of March, it being all the time very fine weather. On the 25th of February, two English vessels, going to the South Seas, passed by us. On the 16th of March in the morning, after having left a French flag, hoisted upon a hut, and several clothes, kettles, hatchets, and other utensils necessary for the savages, we set sail. After having gone a league a calm came on, and we cast our anchor in Eagle's bay. On the 17th it being calm, M. de Bougainville met some of the

savages as he was out a-shooting. He went up to them, and they appeared very gentle. On Tuesday the 19th we set sail again; and on the 20th in the morning, the wind being against us, we anchored in Port Famine. On the 21st in the morning, some of the savages calling out to us, we went up to them. They expressed a great desire of coming on board: we therefore took six of them along with us, whom we entertained, and who did not appear to be much surprised. They are a set of men much like the Indians of Montevideo, having no other dress than the skins of sea-wolves, guanacos, and vicuñas; they appear very poor, have no taste for wine, but are very fond of fat. We dressed them in red clothes, and gave them several necessary domestic utensils; we then accompanied them to land; crying out all the way *Vive le Roi de France*, which they repeated after us very well. We left a flag displayed. They expressed much good-will towards us, giving us their bows and arrows. When we saw them they were painted white, and in spots, but as soon as we had given them some red lead, not cinnabar vermilion, they immediately painted themselves with it; and seemed to be fond of this colour. As we were returning to the ship, they saluted us with *Vive le Roi* in French, having remembered that expression; and then they hollowed after their own manner, standing all round the flag. As we got farther from them, they raised their shouts, and increased their fires.

This is nearly all I can tell you of these inhabitants of Patagonia. We did not land on the Terra del Fuego, I believe these are nearly the same kind of people as those who cross the Straits, in their canoes made of the bark of a tree. The first time we saw them, they had kinds of hatchets; but they took care to conceal them afterwards, as well as their wives and children.

[Departure]

At length, on Saturday the 23d of March, we sailed out of that famous strait so much dreaded, after having experienced there, as well as in other places, that it was very fine and very warm; and that three-fourths of the time the sea was perfectly calm.

It is remarkable that the sea ebbs as it enters on the northern side; we had a proof of this every day: in the middle the currents are distinguishable, but in the narrowest parts of the entrance they are very strong; they run at least two leagues and a half, and sink about four fathoms.

There is no wood at the entrance of the Straits, neither on one side nor the other. There are nothing but immense plains.

About four and twenty leagues up the country, both on the coast of Patagonia, and on the Terra del Fuego, the woods begin. We found very little game, and that much followed by the natives, very little fish, and in the places where we had been, none of those beautiful shell fish so much admired.

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Extract of the journal of Lieutenant Alexander Duclos Guyot, on board the Eagle frigate, in the Straits of Magellan, 1766. [Pernety 1771, pp. 270-285]

[...] On Sunday the 4th [of May], at break of day, we were about four leagues S. E. of Cape Possession. There is a ridge of rocks and a sand bank near Cape Orange. It extends a great way, so we were obliged to coast the land of Patagonia. Here we saw a fire upon the shore, and drawing nearer to it perceived some men on horseback, and many others on foot. When we came opposite to them, they called out to us, but we did not understand their language. We answered them with shouts, and hoisted out flag. Five of them followed us about two leagues round the coast, but night coming on we lost sight of them. They seemed to be good horsemen, managing their horses well, which were very active.

[...] We perceived about three o'clock in the afternoon [May 5th], that the sea began to enter into the narrows, the Moon being 26 days old; which would make the situation of the narrows E. and W. so that it would be high water there at twelve minutes past six o'clock on the day of new and full moon.

[Bay Boucaut: first encounter]

On Tuesday the 6th, the savages appeared about nine o'clock in the morning, and were kindling a fire on the shore by the small river Baudran. We hoisted our flag, and M. de la Gyraudais his broad pendant. Afterwards we both put our yawl and longboat to sea with men armed with muskets and cutlasses. In M. de la Gyraudais's longboat was an officer

with presents for the savages. In my yawl, we had seven sailors and three officers under the command of my brother. At eleven o'clock we saw them land, and some men on horseback who received them; which appeared to me a good omen of peace. Nothing particular happened till twelve o'clock.

My brother's account was, that the savages, who are natives of this country, were not the same as those we saw last year in Savage bay, and that they spoke a different language. There were six men and one woman who had but six horses, each guarded by a dog who never leaves them.

They received our people very well, coming up to them to show them where they should put into the shore and land. They did not appear surprised nor show the least sign of emotion. We measured the shortest of them, and my brother found him 5 feet 7 inches high French measure. The rest were considerably taller. They were covered with the skins of deer, guanacos, vicuñas, otters, and other animals. Their arms are round stones, whose ends are lengthened out and pointed. The round part is fixed to the end of a firing composed of several narrow straps, twilled and interwoven into a round form like the firing of a clock, and making a kind of sling. At the other end of the firing is another stone in form of a pear, not more than half as big as the other, and appearing as if it was wrapped up in a bladder.

They use these weapons chiefly to catch animals; at which sport they are very dexterous, as they showed our people by an experiment made in their presence. They have also other slings nearly of the fame kind of construction. They manage their horses with great dexterity, and have a kind of saddle, very much like that we use for packhorses. These saddles are made with two pieces of wood, covered with leather and stuffed with straw. The bit of the bridle is a small stick, and the reins are twilled as the strings of their slings. They wear a kind of buskins or half boots, of skin with the shag [hair, Ed.] on, and two pieces of wood fitted to each side of the heel, joined together in a point, which serve them for spurs. Their breeches are very short drawers, much resembling those of the savages of Canada, and are of a very good cut. It is evident they have had some intercourse [dealings, Ed.] with the Spaniards, from their having a very thin two-edged knife, which they place between their legs. Their buskins are made like those of the Indians of Chile. They pronounced some words which were either Spanish, or derived from that language. On pointing out

the person who seemed to be their chief, they called him Capitan. When they wanted to smoke and asked for tobacco, they said Chupan.

They smoke in the same manner as the inhabitants of Chile, throwing out the smoke by their nostrils; and are extremely fond of a pipe. While they were smoking they cried Buenos, striking themselves upon the breast.

We gave them some new bread, and some sea-biscuit, which they eat with great appetite. The presents we made them consisted in some pounds of that red which we call vermilion: and some red woollen caps, which however not one of them could put his head into: these caps though very large for heads of a common size, were still too small for them. We also gave them some bedding, some hatchets, some kettles, and other utensils.

My brother put his pocket-handkerchief round the neck of the chief; who having accepted of it, immediately loosened his girth, made of straps twisted together like the girth of a saddle, having at each extremity a ball of stone half enclosed with leather. There was also another stone fixed to the middle of the belt, and a whetstone. He gave this belt to my brother, and fastened it round his waist, expressing much friendship for him. We gave them to understand we were going on much farther in the Straits, and they made us comprehend by signs, that they would go to bed as soon as the sun did, showing us at the same time that they would lie down, and making a noise as if they were snoring in their sleep.

As soon as our boats had quitted them and got out to sea, they mounted on horseback, and directed their course towards the place to which we had made them understand we were going.

They seem to be crafty, bold people, being more inclined to receive than to give. They wrap themselves up in beasts' skins sewed together, as the Spaniards do in their cloaks. Our people killed some partridges; saw some wolves, foxes, and a great number of rats, but nothing curious.

On Thursday at noon we cast anchor under the low lands of Cape Gregory, in 25 fathoms of water.

After dinner we put our yawls to sea to go a fishing and shooting. They came back in the evening without having taken or killed any thing,

excepting one mangy vicuña, which M. Gyraudais shot. There are numbers of vicuñas in this country, which is very beautiful. Our people saw a great quantity of foxes, wolves, and rats, and met with some few thickets of yellow wood, but no water.

[Further into the Strait: loading timber]

On Friday the ninth we set sail at day-break. At ten o'clock we got into the second narrows, and steered our course in order to pass between the islands of St. Elizabeth and St. Bartholomew. We afterwards anchored at 11 o'clock in the bay of Cape Noir, its point being N. N. W. 5 degrees N. where the wood begins to appear.

[...] On Saturday the 17th, we sounded the small bays to the North of St. Ann's point [modern Punta Santa Ana, Ed.], where we found some banks, extending far out.

On Sunday the 18th, we sent after dinner all our carpenters on shore, to cut some wood for burning and building; which was the reason of our being sent here, as well as to fetch away some trees for planting.

On Wednesday the 28th, M. de la Gyraudais being laden and ready, set sail at seven in the morning to return to the Malouine Islands.

[Port Famine: first contacts]

On Friday the 30th, in the morning, I perceived some savages upon the sandy island, which forms the South entrance of the bay where we had left them the year before, I went to them, and knew them to be the same savages. They were two and twenty men, without women or boats. Having no presents to give them, and not being able to make them comprehend me, I embarked again.

On Sunday the 1st of June, early in the morning, the savages made some signs to us; but the bad weather prevented us from coming to them. They made us understand, that they wished we should get into the river with our yawl.

On the 2d, two of the savages appeared at the bottom of the bay, calling out to us in their language. I sent an officer in the yawl, to ask them if they

would come on board. On the arrival of the yawl they fled towards the river beckoning us to follow them. The officer thought it more prudent not to do it, and came on board again. At eleven o'clock we saw them come out again in six canoes. They crossed the bay, passing within musket-shot of us, but would not come on board; they went and landed in a little creek under St. Ann's point. As I had put six men in this place to cut firewood, and the savages were very numerous, I immediately armed the yawl and the longboat, and went to meet them. At my arrival, some of them were employed in building their huts; others were fishing for shellfish, mussels, patellae [limpets, Ed.], sea-urchins, crabs, bucinna [type of shellfish, Ed.], taking all these only from the rocks. Notwithstanding this they have nets made with cat-gut.

After having renewed the alliance made last year, I distributed presents among them, consisting in some pounds of vermilion, some woollen bedclothes, small looking-glasses, chalk, knives, some cloaks, a hatchet, bread, &c. They would not taste any wine, I did not choose to offer them brandy, lest their acceptance of it might be attended with dangerous consequences.

Their company appeared to consist of twenty-six men or boys, and forty women and girls, among whom were a great number of young people. The Chief of them is called Pacha-chui. He is distinguished from the rest by a cap of birds' skins with the feathers on. When he receives any visits he puts it on his head, which is, no doubt, meant as a mark of his dignity. The presence of the men, who seemed excessively jealous, obliged the women to assume an appearance of great modesty.

I questioned the Chief as well as I could about his religion. He gave me to understand, at least I thought I comprehended by his signs, that they neither worship the sun, moon, men, nor animals, but only the heavens or the whole universe; this he repeated several times, always lifting up his hands joined together over his head.

During this time they continued throwing upon the fire, without any ceremony, all the wood cut down by our people. This obliged me to send my six men to cut wood at a greater distance from these savages, to avoid quarrelling with them.

They exchanged with our people some bows and arrows, and some

necklaces of shells in return for clothes. I then left them, and invited them to come on board. Four of them accepted my invitation. I made them dine with me, and entertained them in the best manner I could. They preferred bacon to every thing else. Their desert was a candle to each, which they devoured with great eagerness. When dinner was over, I had them dressed from head to foot, and gave them some trifles with which they appeared very much pleased; and then sent them to land.

In the afternoon I returned to the huts of the savages. The Pacha-chui came to meet me, and made me a present of a kind of flint to strike fire, like those which are found in Canada, appearing to be a marcasite of yellow copper [perhaps iron pyrite; all groups of canoe people valued it highly because of its scarcity. Ref. Bridges (1952), p.58, Ed.]. He afterwards distributed the presents I had made them in the morning.

One of them was continually muttering; I asked him the reason of this. He gave me to understand that he was saying his prayers, by pointing up to the heavens as the Pacha-chui had done in the morning. This seemed to imply that they worshipped some divinity, but I could not comprehend what the divinity was, nor under what title he was adored.

Both men and women have no other dress than the skins of sea-wolves, vicuñas, guanacos, otters, and lynxes, which they throw on their shoulders. Most of them are bare-headed. A bird's skin with the feathers on, covers their private parts. The men call themselves Pach-pachevé; the women Cap-cap. They taught me these names by showing me first their persons, and afterwards the parts which distinguish the sex. Both men and women are thin. Their canoes are ill-built, in comparison with those of the savages of Canada. The women are the persons employed in rowing and fishing. They have a number of dogs, resembling foxes; which they call Ouchi; and their canoes, Shorou.

It is to be observed, that the morning tides are always equal every morning; rise very little in open sea, and are only as the neap tides.

[Port Famine: relationship turns difficult]

On Wednesday morning the 4th, the savages made no scruple of burning five or six cords of wood, which our people had cut down, but they assisted in bringing the rest on board.

At noon the Pacha-chui came on board our frigate, attended by eleven men. I made him dine with me, and gave the others some biscuit, and a piece of tallow; and for their drink three pints of the oil of sea-wolves. They ate and drank all up with a most excellent appetite. I afterwards dressed the Pacha-chui, and giving some trifles to the others, sent them all on shore.

On the 6th, all the savages, pleased with the reception I had given their comrades, came in four canoes to pay me a visit. But as they had large fires in their canoes, I would not suffer them to come on board, at which they seemed displeased. I ordered them some biscuit and oil; and after dinner sent them back without giving them any reason for it.

On Sunday the 8th, the savages began to be troublesome: they stole several hatchets, some provisions, and clothes from us. As they seemed inclinable to theft and fraud, I took the resolution to let nobody lie on shore, and to submit to the inconvenience of having all the utensils and tools brought back, every night.

On Monday the 9th, the savages stole again some harpoons, hatchets, iron-wedges, and mauls. I complained of this to the Pacha-chui, and desired our tools might be returned, but to no purpose. I then gave them to understand, that if they persisted in these practices, we should treat them in a different manner.

Their boat, which had crossed the bay last night, now brought them a dying man, about forty years of age, who was exceedingly emaciated.

In the afternoon, our wood-cutters represented to me, that they lost a great deal of time in coming back to lie on board, and then returning in the morning to the wood: they therefore asked leave to lie on shore, I consented to this, desiring them at the same time, to treat the savages mildly if they came to visit them.

For this purpose, I placed a discreet person at the head of them, and with him his brother, a man of a mild disposition, and who, from being used to live among the savages of Canada, was in some measure acquainted with their manners: and after recommending it to them to keep a strict watch lest they should be surprised, I returned to the ship.

[Port Famine: mourning customs]

On Thursday the 12th, about four o'clock in the morning, we heard some noise among the savages. Three of their canoes, with a great number of women in them and some men, came up to our frigate. I gave them some pieces of bread, and some oil of sea-wolves, the greatest part of which they put into a kind of bladder they had brought on purpose, and drank off the rest. I would not suffer them to come on board, on account of their being so much addicted to theft, and because they had got large fires in their canoes. This day I observed, contrary to the common custom, that the men were not painted; only some few of them were painted black, which gave them a very frightful appearance. The women were all spotted with black, having their faces and necks bloody, as if they had scratched themselves with thorns. Two of their canoes doubled St. Ann's point going to the North.

On Sunday the 15th, in the morning, I went to pay a visit to the savages. Not seeing the sick man, I asked them what was become of him; they made me comprehend he was dead. The cries we had heard on Thursday morning were probably the marks of their mourning. They seemed all very much afflicted, and were all painted black, contrary to the usual custom; and the women appeared scratched all over, as if they had been torn with pins. I observed that they showed much regret for the dead man. I asked them by signs what they had done with him. They answered me only by lifting up their hands to heaven, repeating the same signs several times, in order I suppose to make me understand the deceased was there: from whence it may be conjectured that they believe in a future state. They would never tell me what they had done with the dead body. I am inclined to think they had transported it in one of their canoes, with which they had doubled St. Ann's point. I distributed some biscuit and oil of sea-wolves among them.

On Monday the 16th, I perceived two canoes of savages coming towards us, and all the rest going out of the bay. I put myself into our yawl, taking some bread and oil along with me. When I came near them, I made them a sign to follow me to land which they did very readily. I gave them the bread and oil. They broke up their camp, and those who staid behind were gathering up the remains of it. They made me understand that they were going to live at the distance of a league from that place, in one of

the small bays to the North of St. Ann's point, because the shellfish became scarce in the place where they were. The Pacha-chui was in one of the two boats, and was coming with an intention to thank me, and to apprise me of his departure.

[Port Famine: invitation to travel]

I then ventured to ask him, if any of his young people would come away with us, making him understand as well as I could, that I would bring him back in a twelvemonth. He answered by signs that he consented, and immediately presented one of them to me, who seemed satisfied. We then left each other, and I brought away my young savage with me, to put him on board, I dressed him, and entertained him as well as I could. The Chief went out of the bay to join his troop.

On Tuesday the 17th our savage seemed to be pleased with us; and even looked contented and cheerful. About ten o'clock, seventeen savages coming by land from a small bay which lay North of us, and where they were encamped, paid a visit to their companion. We went to meet them, taking him along with us; and I gave them some bread and oil for their breakfast. As we were going back, another of them asked leave to come on board to stay with his comrade. As the offer was voluntary I took him along with me.

Towards six o'clock in the evening, I perceived that our two savages were so melancholy as even to shed tears, and that they were constantly looking towards land. I was not at a loss to find out the cause of this uneasiness; and thought it natural that they must on reflection regret the resolution they had taken. Notwithstanding my desire of bringing them away, in hopes that I might afterwards receive some useful information from them, I determined to send them back, and restore them to that liberty which they certainly imagined they had lost. I made them get into our yawl, and had them conducted back to land. They expressed much joy when they came on shore, and desired they might go to their families.

[Port Famine: fatal attack]

On Wednesday, at 9 o'clock, they came to ask for some bread and oil. I ordered some to be distributed to them, and having assisted in loading our longboat, they went back to their first encampment. At four o'clock in

the afternoon they left us, making me understand that they were going to rest, because the moon, which they call Sercon was up; but that they would come back, and bring with them the two young men who had been on board of us. When we got back to our ship, we heard two guns fire; the signal agreed upon between us to call, for help, in case we should be attacked by the savages. I then suspected that our people were engaged with them. I immediately had our boats armed, and sent them to their assistance, but it was too late: the victory was already gained, and the savages routed when we landed. The affair happened in the following manner:

Twenty, or six and twenty savages, as we were told, came down secretly and silently through the wood behind the workshop; and three of them entered suddenly into the hut where our people were, who thinking that the savages seemed to have some mischievous design, placed themselves at the entrance of the hut to hinder the rest from coming in. They then attempted to force their way, and not succeeding fell upon our men, some attempting to seize their legs, in order to throw them down, and probably to bind them, being provided with large straps in form of slings, having at the end a dart about six inches long, made of a jagged bone; the rest beat them with large sticks. Our people, though they were surprised at so sudden a declaration of war, were not discouraged. They seized their cutlasses, and exerted themselves bravely against their enemies, destroying as many of them as they could; by which means they threw the savages into confusion and routed them: our people however were but seven against twenty-five; three savages remained dead upon the field of battle, exclusive of the wounded; three of our people were wounded; the master carpenter received several blows upon the head with a stick; another was dangerously wounded in the head with a cutlass; and his brother was cut on the hand with the same instrument, which has quite disabled him. The wounded were dressed as soon as they came on board. One of the three was afterwards trepanned.

On Friday the 20th, in the morning, I sent the longboat to fetch away the timber, and to bury the three savages in the same grave. After having raised the ground to a certain height, we placed their skins or cloaks, with their shoes on the top, that the other savages might find out the place where their dead companions lay; and that they should not think we had eaten them; which perhaps they might do, if they were unable to find the dead bodies.

[Cape Gregory: leaving - unable to make contact]

On Sunday the 23d, we were at the entrance of the narrows; and at eleven o'clock we saw several fires on the low lands of Cape Gregory. In coasting these, we discovered about 90 or 100 men, most of them on horseback, who followed us to the place of anchorage; thinking, without doubt, that we should anchor there. But I was prevented by the wind blowing fresh, and the weather being favourable for sailing out of the Straits. We made twelve leagues since morning, the savages making signs to us all the while. At nine o'clock in the evening we cleared Cape Virgin, and left the Straits. [...]

Extract of the Journal of M. de la Gyraudais commanding his Majesty's Pink, l'Etoile, going from the Malouine Islands to the Straits of Magellan, 1766. [Pernety 1771, pp. 285-294]

I believe there is a greater distance between the Malouine Islands and the main land of Patagonia, than is marked upon the charts; for the Eagle found herself by her reckoning eighteen leagues ahead of the ship, as well in going as in coming back. We sounded frequently, and found sixty fathoms, mixed bottom, with white coral, and a gun flint, which was remarkable enough. Here we saw several whales, some sea-larks, larger than common, some penguins, divers, petrels, ospreys, and large gulls.

From the twentieth to the first of May we had thick weather, which hindered us from seeing land, when we were more than half a league distance from it: the sea seemed agitated as if we had been in a race. The water was here discoloured at eight leagues from the shore, but more so at the mouth of the Straits. At ten, the weather clearing up, we saw land, distance four leagues. By our reckoning we still found the Malouine Islands farther off from the main land, than is lain down by our charts.

On the fifth instant, about four in the afternoon, we saw a fire on the coast of Patagonia. Upon coming nearer, we saw seven men with their horses. We could not discern whether they were naked or clothed. When they perceived that we had got beyond the place where they had made their fires, they followed along the coast, mounted upon their horses, and dogs after them. Seeing that we continued our course, they shouted, but we could not comprehend their meaning. The wind and tide being in our favour, we lost sight of the Patagonians and passed the first narrows. It was a league and a half over. Between five and six we anchored in the Bay Boucaut, at three leagues from Cape Gregory, with ten fathoms water, muddy bottom of sand and small shells, at the distance of a full league from the land. One should not cast anchor in lesser depth of water; for the sea fell three or four fathoms in the night- time. The coast is well laid down in M. de Gennes' plan.

[Bay Boucaut: first encounter]

From the 6th to the 7th, in the night, we again saw fires on the Patagonian coast. At eight o'clock this fire was of one side of us, and we

distinguished some Patagonians on shore, by means of our spying glasses. The Eagle and myself put out our yawls to sea, and sent them with fifteen men well armed, including the officer, to the spot where we saw seven of the savages. They paid our people some compliment in their own language. Our seamen could not understand them; but imagined their faces and behaviour expressed a satisfaction at seeing us. After the first compliments, they conducted our people to their fires.

Here they examined the Patagonians at their leisure, and found them to be men of the highest stature: the least of them was five feet seven inches (French measure), and of a bulk beyond the proportion of their height, which made them appear less tall than they are. They have large strong limbs, and broad faces; their complexion is extremely tanned, their forehead high, their nose flat and broad; their cheeks are full, and their mouth large, their teeth are very white, and well ranged, and their hair black. They are stronger than our Europeans of the same size.

The words they pronounced were, Echoura, Chaoa, Didon, ahi, ahi, ohi, Choven, Quécallé, Machan, Naticon, Pito. These were the only words our people could gather, while they were warming themselves at their fires.

M. de St. Simon, an officer, who by order of the ministry embarked with us for the Malouine Islands with presents for the natives, acquitted himself extremely well of his commission. He gave them some harpoons, bludgeons, bedding, woollen caps, vermilion, and in short every thing he thought would be most agreeable to them. They appeared very well pleased.

They are clothed with the skins of guanacos, vicuñas [this is puzzling: the present-day vicuña does not range this far south, Ed.], and other animals, sewed together in form of square cloaks which reach below the calf of the leg almost to the ankle. They have a sort of buskins or half-boots, made of the same skins, with the shag on the inside, as it is also in their cloaks, which are very well sewed together in regular compartments, and painted on the outside with blue and red figures, bearing a resemblance to Chinese characters. The figures however are almost all alike, and divided by straight lines which form sorts of squares and lozenges /•/. They have something like hats ornamented with feathers, much in the same manner as ours. Some of these hats resemble very much the Spanish caps.

/•/ M. de la Gyraudais received as a present from these Patagonians, when he visited them at his return to the Malouine Islands, several of their cloaks, some of their weapons, some slings armed with stones, and some necklaces of shells from their women. He brought them to Paris, and gave part of them to M. d'Arboulin, who had some of them presented to the King, and kept the rest. I examined them at leisure, and although I am rather more than five feet seven inches (French measure) one of these cloaks thrown on my shoulders, (as the Patagonians wear them) trailed on the ground at least a foot and a half.

Several of our people went a-shooting at some distance, where they killed a few partridges, and saw some carcasses of vicuñas.

The country they went over is uncultivated, barren, and dry. There is nothing but heath upon it, and very little grass. The horses of the savages seem to be very bad, but they manage them with great dexterity. The Patagonians made some presents to our people who were returned from sporting. These were round stones, of the size of a two-pounder ball. They are placed in a strap of leather, fastened and sewed to the end of a string of catgut twisted like a rope. It is a kind of a sling, which they use very dextrously for killing animals a-hunting. On the end, opposite to that which fixes the round stone, there is another stone placed, half the size of the former, and closely covered all over with a kind of bladder. They hold the small stone in their hand after having passed the cord between their fingers; and then making a turn with the arm, as in calling a sling, they throw the weapon at the animal, whom they can reach, and kill at the distance of four hundred feet.

The complexion of the women is tolerably clear, for they are much less tanned than the men, yet they are proportioned to them in size. They are also dressed in a cloak, wear buskins and a kind of small apron, which only hangs down half the length of their thighs. They certainly pluck out their eyebrows for they have none. Their hair is dressed in front, and they have no hats.

These Patagonians are ignorant of the passion of jealousy, at least there is reason to think so, from their encouraging our people to handle the breasts of their wives and daughters, and making them lie promiscuously with them, when I paid them a visit on my return to the Malouine Islands.

We gave them bread which they ate, and some tobacco for chewing and smoking. By their manner of using it, we saw plainly it was no novelty to them. They would not drink any wine. When we had been five or six hours with them, they grew more familiarised. They were very curious, searched our pockets, were very desirous of seeing every thing, and examined us with attention from head to foot.

We mounted their horses, which were equipped with bridle, saddle and stirrups. They use both whip and spurs, and seemed satisfied and well pleased to see our people ride their horses. When I had a gun fired for signal to bring our people back, they showed not the least emotion or surprise. When we went away they entreated us much to stay with them, giving us to understand by signs, that they would supply us with food, and though they had nothing to offer us at present, yet they soon expected some of their people to return from sporting. We answered them also by signs that we could not possibly stay; and that we were going directly to a certain place, which we attempted to point out to them, endeavouring at the same time to make them comprehend that we wished them to bring us some oxen and horses. We know not whether they understood us.

On the eighth, having set sail from Bay Boucaut, and anchored under Cape Gregory, we went a-shooting on shore, and the soil appeared the same as on the last spot. After we had walked about a league, we met with two herds of vicuñas, each consisting of three or four hundred, of which we could not kill more than one with a musket charged with ball. I also shot a Stink-bingsem [probably the Patagonian skunk, *Conepatus humboldtii*, Ed.], which I left on account of its offensive smell. I likewise fired at a wolf, but all these animals are very wild, and will not suffer any one to approach them.

[Further into the Strait: loading timber]

At half past six in the morning of the ninth, we got under sail in very pleasant weather. M, de Gennes in his draft lays down the second narrows East and West corrected by the globe, but he has marked it two points too much to the West. I would advise to keep the Patagonian shore till you come to the North and South of Elizabeth's Island; on account of the strong tide which runs upon St. Bartholomew and Lyon Islands, and upon some shoals lying off those islands. We coasted close to Elizabeth's Island, till we came to Cape Noir [modern Cabo Negro, Ed.], where we

anchored in eight fathoms water, sandy and muddy bottom, with broken shells.

From Friday the ninth to the tenth, we kept along the Patagonian shore at the distance of a league and an half. The coast appeared woody, but on the return of our boat we were told the wood was not good for much. Being near a low point we sounded, and no ground at fifty fathoms. An instant after we saw the bottom, which was sandy, and at four fathoms water; this obliged us to haul off.

From the 10th to the 11th we had much wind, and foggy weather, with a very rough sea. As we were no more than five leagues from Port Famine, I determined to go and anchor there. The Eagle followed us, and we soon had reason to be pleased with this resolution, for a quarter of an hour after we came to anchor, we could not discern any object at the distance of half a cannon-shot from us, and the wind still continued blowing very hard.

From the 11th to the 12th, the fog and rainy weather continued. Having walked round the bay, we met with some fine wood, and discovered a very rapid river, on the larboard point of the mouth of the bay. This stream makes the sea as dirty and as turbid, as a river overflowing from abundance of rains.

On the water-side there were seven or eight huts belonging to the savages, which they had but lately quitted. I fired a gun, and hoisted our flag, in order to attract the savages from the neighbouring parts.

From the 13th to the 14th there was a high wind, followed by a prodigious violent storm, which ended in a great fall of rain, succeeded by snow and hail, which lasted till noon, when the weather grew calm.

From the 16th to the 17th, we met with some very fine wood, and sent an officer and thirty men on shore, to pitch a tent, and cut roads through the woods. We were constantly employed in cutting and shipping our wood till the 17th, when we unmoored, leaving the Eagle to complete her cargo, and bring up ours to the Malouine Islands.

[Cape Gregory Bay: second encounter]

From the 29th to the 30th, at ten in the morning, we saw a fire on shore, which the savages had kindled on our account. We steered towards the fire, and saw some men and horses.

From the 30th to the 31st, the night coming upon us unawares, we came to our anchorage by the light of two fires which the savages had made for us, one upon a mountain, the other upon the sea-side. We anchored in nineteen fathoms, black muddy bottom, with small shells.

At day-break the savages shouted, in order that we should come to them. I put my yawl and longboat to sea well armed, and with presents, I went on shore, where I found three hundred savages, including men, women, and children. Not expecting to meet with so many, I was obliged to go on board again to fetch some more presents.

From the 31st to Sunday the first of June 1766, the wind having driven our yawl from shore, which was empty, our people were under some anxiety for fear of losing it. The savages perceiving this, one of them who was on horseback, spurred his horse, and plunged with him into the sea, to swim after the yawl. He got hold of it, and brought it back to our seamen. Perhaps we who pique ourselves so much upon our politeness, affability, and humanity, and who call these Patagonians savages, would hardly have done so much for them, in a similar circumstance.

At seven in the morning the longboat went to shore with the rest of the presents, which the stormy weather had prevented us sending sooner. It came back with thirteen of our people who had stayed with the savages since yesterday morning. They told us that these Patagonian giants had treated them with the utmost civility according to their manner, and given them marks of the sincerest friendship, even so far as to invite them to lie with their wives and daughters; that they had given them some flesh of the guanacos, several of their cloaks, and some of their slings, and the women some of their necklaces made of shells.

They also made me a present of twelve horses, which I could not keep for want of forage.

The piece of civility most troublesome to our folks, was that of being obliged to lie promiscuously among the Patagonians, who often lay three or four together upon one of our people, to keep the cold from them, so

that their muskets and other arms became useless. They would therefore have had no resource left but in their pocket-knives, which would not have been of much service for defending them, in case of necessity against five or six hundred men, including women and children, and all of them proportionally of an enormous stature, both in height and bulk. Each man or woman, had one or two dogs, and as many horses. They seemed to be of a mild disposition, and very humane. It would be easy to establish a very profitable trade with them, for their horses, and for the skins of vicuñas, which are so much valued, and bear so high a price in Europe. The skins of guanacos are also excellent, though not so fine.

From the 7th to the 8th, a very high wind, rainy and thick weather. The sea was terrible, the wind blowing always by squalls.

From Sunday the 8th to the 9th, the sea was very rough, with rain, hail, snow, and fogs. At nine we saw land without knowing what it was: at noon we found it to be Sebald de Wertz Islands [extreme NW of Falklands archipelago, Ed.], which bore S. E. distance ten leagues.

On the 15th we cast anchor in Acarron bay [modern Berkeley Sound, Ed.], in the same place from whence we set out.