

The existence of the Admiralty group of islands<sup>1</sup> was first made known to Europeans by Le Maire and Schouten, who sailed along their southern side on the 4th July 1616, and named them the "Twenty-four Islands," but did not anchor or attempt to communicate with the shore; in fact they mistook the largest of the islands for Ceram, so uncertain was the method of obtaining the longitude in those days.

The next account of the group is from the voyage of Captain Philip Carteret in H.M.S. "Swallow," 1767, who sighted the southern side of these islands on the 14th September, and gave them the name by which they have since been distinguished. Twelve or fourteen canoes came off to Carteret's vessel, and the natives at once attacked him by throwing their lances into the midst of his crew, whereupon Carteret replied by firing some muskets and a swivel gun at the canoes, which caused them to disperse. One of the boats was afterwards captured and found to contain six fine fish, a turtle, some yams, and a cocoanut. This canoe, which was rudely made out of a tree and furnished with outriggers, was 50 feet in length.

Bougainville, in August 1768, passed northward of the Admiralty Islands without seeing them, but sighted the Anchorite and l'Echiquier groups.

Francisco Maurelle, captain of the Spanish frigate "Princessa," was the next to sight the Admiralty Islands, on his passage from Manila to San Blas. He appears to have been well acquainted with Bougainville's discovery, but knew nothing of Carteret's, and thought he was the first European to see this group. Having first observed the Hermit Islands on the 8th January 1781, he passed between them and Anchorite Island, and on the 10th, saw the main Admiralty Island, which he named "Bosco." On the 11th some natives came off to his vessel, who, according to his account, were in a most miserable condition, and fought for some biscuits and cocoanuts which he threw amongst them. Steering along the northern shore of the main island, Maurelle gave the name of "Los Negros" to the islets lying off the northeast point, and the names of "San Gabriel," "San Rafael," "Los Reges," "Jesu Maria," and "San Miguel" to those to the east and southeast.

A little confusion of names appears to have arisen regarding these various islands, that at present named "Commerson Island" is in all probability the Anchorite Island of Maurelle, seen by Bougainville from the masthead, whilst the present Anchorite Islands are those which he named "Los Monjos." Again, it is probable that the isle marked Low Island, southeast of Admiralty Island, was the one seen and named "San Miguel" by Maurelle, for the present San Miguel Islands are said to be only 15 feet high, whilst Low Island is marked as being 700 feet high. An account of Maurelle's voyage is given by Espinosa and La Perouse.

The Admiralty Islands appear to have been next sighted by Captain John Hunter of H.M.S. "Sirius," who, having lost his vessel at Norfolk Island in March 1790, took passage

<sup>1</sup> Burney's Voyages, Hawkesworth's Voyages, Bougainville's Voyage, La Perouse's Voyage, Espinosa's Memoires Astronomique.