

(1st Prize)

(3 + +)

Royal Empire Society Essay Competition.
CLASS B.

well
informed
and clear

Name:- George Miles.

School:- Bristol Cathedral School.

Address:- "The Burrows"

Mayfair Avenue,
NAILSEA.
Nr. Bristol.

Date of Birth:- [REDACTED]

The Achievements of 3 Explorers
of the
Commonwealth & Empire.

James Cook.

James Cook was born at Marton in Yorkshire, in 1728. His father was an illiterate peasant. James worked on a farm until he was taught to read by an old lady of the village. He then attended the village school until he was seventeen, when he was apprenticed to a grocer and haberdasher at Staithes, near Whitby. But James had different ideas. At nineteen, he ran away to sea. For several years he served on the East India line, and later in the Baltic. In 1752 he became mate of the collier "Friendship." He refused command in 1755 to join the Navy. In June of that year he enrolled as an able seaman and joined the "Eagle." The "Eagle" sailed from Plymouth and captured several prizes. Within a month of his enrolment he was appointed Master's mate. By the January of the following year he was boatswain; he obtained a Master's Warrant a little later, and became Master of the "Pembroke." The Master was responsible for the sailing of the ship, the Captain for the fighting. In this capacity, he patrolled the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and piloted Admiral Saunders' fleet with Wolfe's army on board up this river to Quebec. He was then given the job of checking the captured French charts of the area. Cook spent several years in the area, continuing this work. In 1766 he observed the eclipse of the sun from one of

2
new paragraph.

the Burges Islands, and from his observations the longitude of Newfoundland was accurately determined. Cook had taught himself surveying, mathematics, and new astronomy, which was truly a great achievement. But Cook was seen to become an explorer. For after the Treaty of Paris, 1763, the Royal Society decided to sponsor an expedition to the South Seas to observe the transit of Venus across the face of the sun from the island of Tahiti. The command of this enterprise was given to Cook, who, in May 1768, had been granted a lieutenant's commission. The farm labourer's son from Yorkshire was now a fully fledged officer with a great reputation.

Cook sailed from Plymouth in August 1768, in an old Whitby collier which had been renamed the "Endeavour." He sailed into the Pacific in January, 1769. On the evening of 10th. April, Tahiti was sighted. Cook was pleased to have arrived, but he was far more pleased on another account. He was eight months out of Plymouth, and four and a half out of Rio, and had defied the scurvy. He had used all the known remedies, plus discipline and example. Another wonderful achievement.

The transit of Venus was observed on 3rd. June, 1769. Cook now opened the secret orders which had been given to him before his departure. He was to proceed southwards to seek the "Southern Continent," if such a place existed. The "Endeavour" was overhauled, and on 16th. August, 1769, Cook sailed southwards. For five months he sailed amidst severe cold and high winds, surveying the vast archipelago thoroughly.

On 7th. October, the eastern coast of New Zealand was sighted. Cook proceeded to survey and chart its 2,400 miles of coastline with incredible accuracy by circumnavigating its two islands over a period of six months. But still he could not find the "Southern Continent." He sailed from New Zealand on 31st. March, 1770, and continued westward until the southern-most point of New Holland (later renamed Australia) was sighted. Sailing northward, Cook landed at Botany Bay on 13th. May. He followed the coastline, making his survey with the same accuracy as he had in New Zealand. He took possession of the whole of Eastern Australia in the name of George III. Then, after one or two mishaps on the Great Barrier Reef, he sailed for home, arriving on 12th. July, 1771.

3
A year later Cook, now a Commander, sailed from Plymouth on his second voyage of discovery, in which he hoped to determine whether the great "Southern Continent" existed, or not. After three searches he satisfied himself that if such a place existed, it was too near the Pole to be of use to man. He returned to New Zealand, and after a month's sojourn there, his ships, the "Resolution" and "Adventure," sailed for America. Cook intended to search the seas south of Cape Horn for land, with the resulting discovery of South Georgia and several other islands. He then sailed for England, and anchored off Plymouth after three years' absence. He had completed the first circumnavigation of the globe eastwards, with the loss of only three men, again proving that with care scurvy could be prevented.

Having been promoted to the rank of Captain, Cook set out in 1776 to try to find the North West Passage. Finding his way blocked by a huge wall of ice, he set sail for home, but was forced to put in at Hawaii. Here, after some of his men had been involved in a scuffle with the natives, Cook was murdered while trying to make peace with them. So ended the life of the Yorkshire lad who became one of the greatest explorers the world has known. He explored and mapped a greater area of the globe than any other man.

John Cabot.

John Cabot - his Italian name was Giovanni Caboto - was a native of Genoa. He was born about 1450. However in 1476, he moved to Venice, where, as he was an adventurer, he was admitted to full rights of citizenship. He came to Bristol in 1490.

Little is known of his early career. It is known, however, that he led several expeditions into the Atlantic, and it is possible that he sighted the American coast as early as 1494. In December, 1495, hearing of Columbus's success, he went to London, where he said he might "propose to the King of England an enterprise like that of the Indies." The Spanish authorities, having heard of Cabot's intentions, replied that if he did such a thing, he would be violating the Bull of 1494, by which the Pope had divided the rest of the world besides Europe between Spain and Portugal. The warning arrived too late, however, for Henry VII

Report from Spanish
Ambassador to Madrid.
Great Navigators and Discoverers.

had already given his support to Babot. He authorised John, with his sons Lewis, Sancius, and Sebastian, "to sail to all places, lands and seas, of the East, West, or North." They were to sail from Bristol, ^{and} to return to the same port. They were also to pay all expenses, and Henry was to receive one ^{10th} share of all the profits of the enterprise.

John and Sebastian sailed from Bristol with a crew of eighteen men on board the "Matthew" on 2nd. May, 1497. It is not known how many ships accompanied the "Matthew," but there was almost certainly one. The "Matthew" seems to have been the only one to complete the crossing. They sailed along a straight course west until on 24th. June, land was sighted. It was thought to be Asia, but it was probably Cape Breton Island, and the nearby island of Newfoundland. They saw no people, but found evidence of habitation in felled trees.

The Babot's sailed on up the coast of Labrador as far as Cape Chudleigh, where their crew mutinied at the sight of ice-bergs and continuous daylight. Accordingly they were compelled to abandon the venture and to return to Bristol. John was enthusiastically acclaimed, and the Venetian ambassador wrote: "The English run after him like made people." The King however did not reward him as generously.

In the privy purse expenses, under the date of 10th. August, 1497, appears "To him that found the new isle, £10."

The waters around Newfoundland were rich in fish, and this fact made its discovery important. From 1501 onwards, fleets from Barnstaple, Bristol and many other South Western ports, paid regular visits to Newfoundland. The profits from these expeditions increased annually. They became more profitable to England than the capture of American treasure did to Spain. The fisheries continued to bring in large sums, and for a long time were one of England's chief industries.

In 1498, the two adventurers again crossed the Atlantic. One ship, much battered by storms, put into an Irish port sometime later. It is not known what happened to the other ships, nor what happened to John Babot. He failed to return and so it must be supposed that he perished on the high seas sometime in 1498.

John and Sebastian, as a result of these voyages, discovered the land which became the first British colony, and also laid the foundation of the great Dominion of Canada.

David Livingstone.

~~Blantyre~~

David Livingstone was born at ~~low~~ Blantyre, Lanarkshire, on 19th. March, 1813. His father was a poor tea-merchant, and a Deacon in the Independent Church in Hamilton. At the age of ten, Livingstone went to work in a nearby mill, where he studied while he worked. He attended night-school, and by sheer hard work, entered Glasgow University. He studied Theology and later Medicine. He passed his examinations and applied for a post to the London Missionary Society. He was provisionally accepted and sent for special studies to Exeter. His application was finally accepted and he was sent to South Africa. He sailed for Capetown in 1840. From Capetown he journeyed 700 miles to Kuruman, and began work with Hamilton and Edwards, two missionaries. But Livingstone was not content. He made several journeys north of Kuruman, hoping to find a suitable site for a mission station. When permission came to erect such a station, Livingstone chose Mabotsa. In due course he moved to Mabotsa, but immediately set out on his journeys again, making two into the Transvaal. During one of these he met two hunters, one of whom, Oswell, was to become his companion on future safaris. Together, these three discovered Lake Ngami.

Livingstone returned to Mabotsa, where he quarrelled with Edwards and left the station. After wandering for a while, he rushed northwards accompanied by his family. He was compelled to turn back, however, because of fever. A little later he once more started north, and at length reached the Makololo tribe. After three months' delay, he marched further north, and at Seheke he discovered the upper waters of the River Zambesi. The party retraced their steps, and returning to Capetown, Livingstone sent his family back to England. He then conducted another expedition into the interior, and after some trouble with his porters, traced the Zambesi from its source to the point where it enters the Indian Ocean, finding en route the Victoria Falls. He was the first white man to cross Africa.

In 1857, Livingstone broke with the London Missionary Society, and was appointed British Consul in 1858. Accompanied by six men, including his brother Charles, he set out to explore the mouth of the Zambesi. This plan was later abandoned in favour of

an exploration of the Rivers Shire and Rovuma. With Dr. Kirk as his companion, he explored these rivers and discovered Lake Nyassa. In 1865 he set out on an expedition to find the source of the Nile. He was found in 1871 by H.M. Stanley, an American newspaper reporter, in dire need and poor health. Livingstone refused to return with Stanley, and continued his searches. At Ulala he was found dead by his native servants, on the 1st. May, 1873.

Livingstone may be criticised for neglecting his duties to the London Missionary Society in order to further his explorations; but if he had not had such unwavering faith in Almighty God, we should almost certainly not know as much about Africa as we now do. If the white men in Africa today were of the same calibre as Livingstone, the racial problems would not exist.

The Exploration which interests me most.

Livingstone's explorations interest me most. He received more opposition to his explorations, both from the natives and his fellow white men, than either of the others. Yet, because of his faith in God, he was given strength to continue spreading the Message and exploring the "Dark Continent".

Books consulted.

Six Great Explorers — D. Divine.

Great Navigators and Discoverers — J.A. Brendon.

Volume III of Boccaccio's History of the British People.

Volume VIII of Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopedia.

Solid and sound but difficult to assess how much is original;
little personal reflection on subject. On the other hand well written
of set-out.

Certificate standard - ~~fair~~.

79