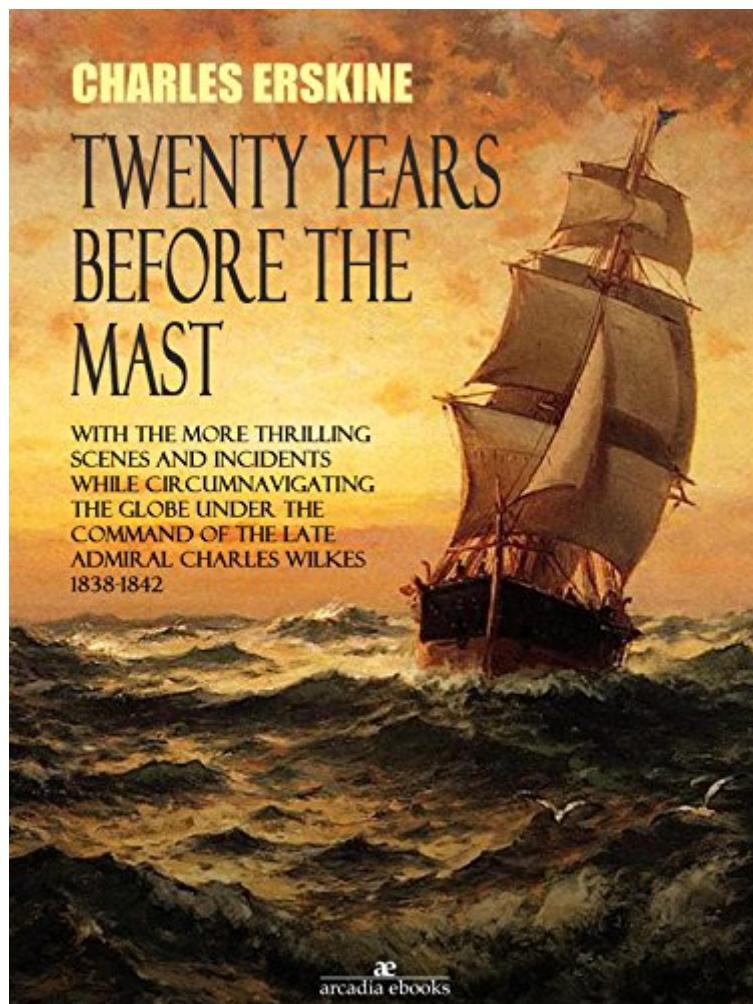


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# Twenty Years Before The Mast



## **Synopsis**

In 1838 the able-bodied seaman Charles Erskine joined the exploring expedition of Charles Wilkes who was setting out on a voyage of discovery around the world. From the Pacific to Antarctic to Atlantic, Erskine would travel with this expedition to the furthest corners of the Earth. He would go on to travel to some of the most unexplored regions, meeting men and women who had never seen westerners before. Along the journey the crew meet Patagonians, Fijians, Tahitians, Aborigines, and many other peoples.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

An other excellent book written from a working-class perspective. My only complaint is that the author was quite old when he wrote it and the story tends to be a bit underwhelming. It lacks the fire and urgency of youth. This is an amazing edition, as well. It's got all the old antique-printing touches even though it's printed in 2006. There are a ton of great illustrations. The end notes are all excellent and helpful. There's also a great, informative historical introduction. There's even an index. The publisher's forward is a bit overbearing, what with it trumpeting R.R. Donnelley's global

stature and prowess. I'd recommend not bothering to read it. And there are some real cheap copies available. Mine was only \$0.63! And it came brand-new, wrapped in plastic! I have some roots in Boston, as well, which made this book even more of a treat. Really wonderful. One in a million.

As an history buff, whenever possible, I go to first person accounts to gain depth and background information that has not been given the "Reader's Digest" treatment by a hack with a political agenda. This book is not literature, nor intended to be, but provides a wealth of information to those seeking to expand their knowledge of the time of sail. Highly recommended.

If you appreciate windjammers and sailing this book is a must. It clearly presents what it was to be a sailor in the "Golden Age" of sailing. The book will enlighten sailing Romantics (Idealized sailing) and reinforce Realists (all the rest of us). Read it and enjoy. I did!

History accounts never fail to entertain and amaze me, . . . . the early maritime ventures were not a lot of fun, and even cruel in many respects; but the many miles at sea and ports-of-call; the related descriptions of inhabitants and their cultures, beyond comprehension at times! A great read for any historical 'seafarer' . . . . a female reader :o)

Very interest! Hard to imagine going through the hardships they encountered, much like settlers going west years ago. Seeing Antartica and the icebergs, fear of cannibals, wild gales, shipmates buried at sea... very good clean reading. I wish the author would have included the year of his birth as well as the year of various happenings. Appreciated the author's reverence for the almighty God of this universe.

If you enjoy the places that a young could travel to in the old sailing ships, you should love this book. It got better the more I got into it. The author does a fine job of describing the places and the people he met during his twenty years at sea.

This is a book I have been meaning to read for decades. It is a well written and meticulously documented story that spans 20 years. **HOWEVER**, at the beginning we are told the author is illiterate. After several years, he has a written vocabulary of only a few words! Nowhere in the book does he describe any schooling that could produce such a book. This is such an obvious contradiction that the scholars who have been recommending this book for at least a hundred years

must have addressed it. If you Google "Charles Erskine" you get only that he wrote this book. No biography, only a photograph of him and the statement that he had refreshed some of his memories of the few U.S. sponsored years of his total 20 years from the official publication of the expedition. If this is such an important book, why has no one created a biography of the author?

Mr. Erskine so incredibly eloquent in his depiction of his years before the mast. Although not normally the type of book I read, I could not put this one down. A great book to read while sitting on the shore enjoying the wind and waves. Or, perhaps curled up with your loved one with a cozy fire.

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