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A Voyage to Arabia Felix through the Eastern Ocean: Also a Narrative Concerning the Tree and Fruit of Coffee (Arabia Past Present)

Jean DE la Roque

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Jean DE la Roque : A Voyage to Arabia Felix through the Eastern Ocean: Also a Narrative Concerning the Tree and Fruit of Coffee (Arabia Past Present) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Voyage to Arabia Felix through the Eastern Ocean: Also a Narrative Concerning the Tree and Fruit of Coffee (Arabia Past Present):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. France and the Yemeni Coffee TradeBy Robert LeblingThis unusual reprint sheds light on a little-known corner of history - 18th-century France's maritime trade with Arabia. Its specific focus: the beginning years of the Yemen coffee trade.In those days, Yemen was the world's only commercial cultivator of the coffee plant, and most exports of the precious bean were shipped to the Levant and Europe through Turkish and Egyptian merchants. France occasionally bought coffee also from the Dutch and English. Coffee had been first introduced to France only four decades earlier by a visiting emissary from the Ottoman sultan. Levantine businessmen then opened a few coffee shops in Paris, and before long, the beverage became a national rage.The only problem was that coffee beans were sometimes hard to find and very expensive. The two merchant ships that set sail from the Breton port of St. Malo in 1708 were France's first bid to bypass the coffee middlemen of the Mediterranean, thus assuring regular supplies and cutting their costs significantly.La Roque's account of this first commercial voyage

around Africa to the Yemeni ports of Aden, Mocha and Bait al-Faqih, translated into English in 1732, is attractively reproduced in facsimile - the first new edition of this work in 260 years. volume also includes four other related works, including La Roque's fascinating treatises on coffee, covering its cultivation, customs and history. Also featured is M. Cloupet's *New Travels in Arabia Felix* (1788), offering some perspective on the coffee trade from near the end of the century. Archeologist and Arabian specialist Carl Phillips provides helpful introductions to the texts as well as two solid bibliographies. [A version of this review appeared in *Saudi Aramco World*, Sep/Oct 2004.]