Semyon Ivanov Dezhnyov Encyclopedia Article

Semyon Ivanov Dezhnyov

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Semyon Ivanov Dezhnyov

c. 1605-1673

Russian explorer who discovered the Bering Strait, but whose discovery did not become widely known until after the time of Vitus Bering (1681-1741). A Cossack, Dezhnyov—sometimes rendered as Dezhnev—explored Siberia in the 1640s, and in 1648 reached what is now known as the Bering Strait. Thus he confirmed that the Asian and North American continents are separated, but his findings were lost until German historian Gerhard Friedrich Müller uncovered them in 1736. By then Bering, whose 1728 voyage attracted far more notice than Dezhnyov's 80 years before, had been credited with the discovery.