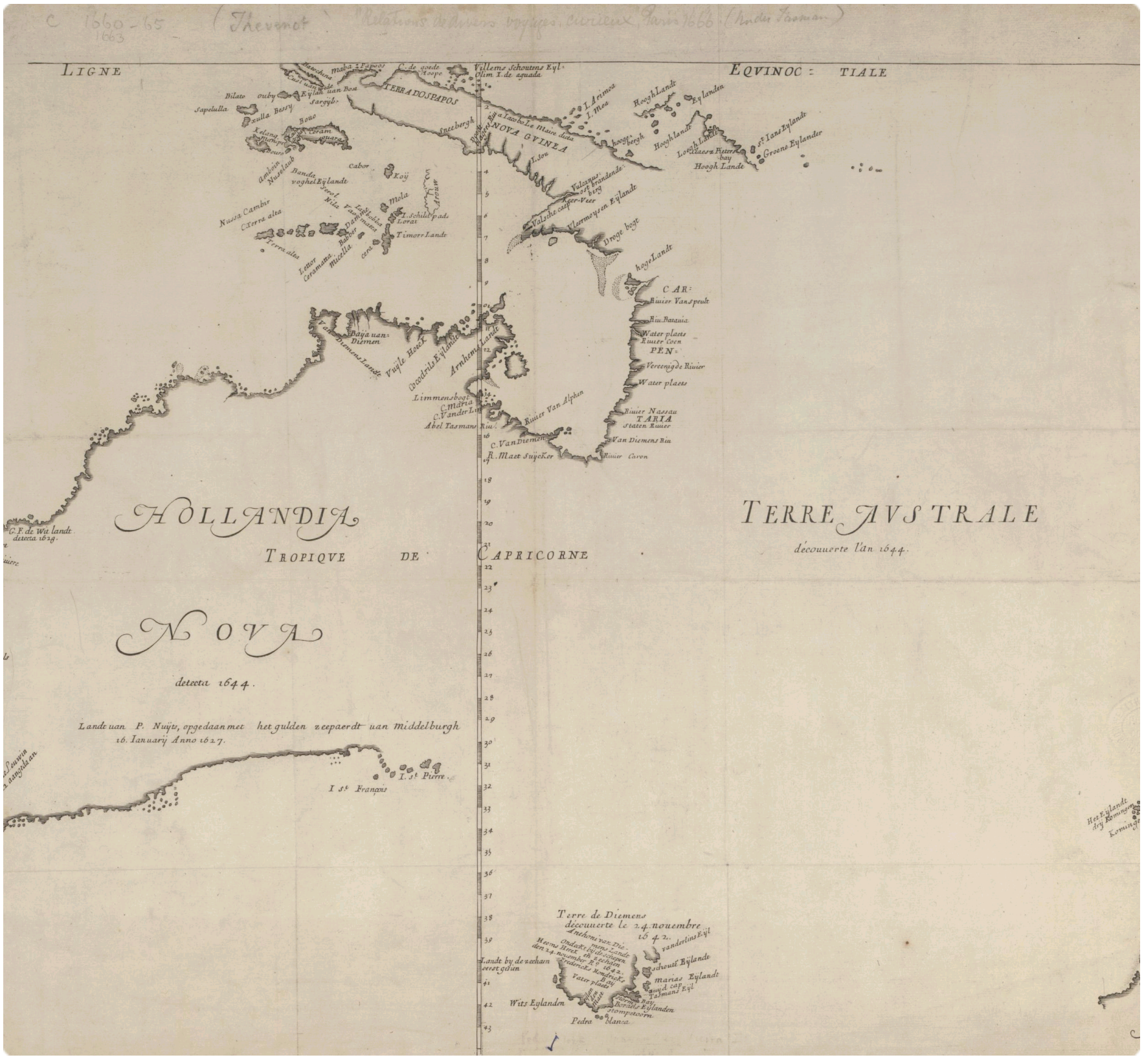
Ian Hughes

Starting Points



Illustrations:

1670 copy of a chart drawn on board the *Duyfken* during her voyage along the Australian coast in 1606 from the **Atlas Van der Hem** (**Wikimedia Commons** and **State Library of Queensland**: in the **public domain** because its term of copyright has expired. According to the Australian Copyright Council (ACC), ACC Information Sheet G023v17 (Duration of copyright) (August 2014).[1]

Melchisedech Thevenot (1620?-1692): *Hollandia Nova detecta 1644; Terre Australe decouuerte l'an 1644*, Paris: De l'imprimerie de Iaqves Langlois, 1663 Based on a map by the Dutch cartographer Joan Blaeu. Langlois, 1663. (Source: Thevenot's **Relations de divers voyages curieux**, Paris, (**Wikimedia Commons**, identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighboring rights.).

James Cook's Three Voyages (**Wikimedia Commons**, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.)

A story needs a starting point, and the pages hereabouts abound in stories.

Some operate on extended time scales and come with obvious starting points. Others are shorter, with a narrative that suggests multiple entry points.

Looking at today's North Queensland landscape, you see an ancient landscape: a remnant of something that goes way back.

Riding the *Savannahlander* between Einasleigh and Forsayth, the driver pointed out that we were about to climb onto the Newcastle Range.

These days it's a slight bump on a reasonably flat landscape, but it used to be much more imposing, even impressive.

Dig into the geophysics, [1] and you're in eastern Gondwana.

The fabled supercontinent tracked from the Equator and the subtropics during the Late Devonian into high latitudes in the Early Permian.

So that landscape we were passing was once a very long way away from where it is now.

Where should an ambitious author start that story?

You could start with Gondwana, but that particular supercontinent had its predecessors.

Fit them into the tale, and you're back at the point where Earth's surface had cooled enough for plate tectonics to kick in.

On that basis, it almost makes sense to go back to where everything began.

Start with the Big Bang, track forward through emerging galaxies and planetary accretion and the Hadean Earth and settle into a more detailed narrative as various supercontinents around the surface.

Other stories hereabouts operate on a much shorter timescale.

My interaction with The North started when the Hughes family moved from Brisbane to Townsville in 1963.

It was quite a change.

We moved from a settled suburban environment that almost oozed gentility to an outer suburb of a city about to hit a significant growth spurt.

---

[1] Kari L. Anderson et al., *Paleomagnetism of the Newcastle Range, northern Queensland: Eastern Gondwana in the Late Paleozoic*).

There were no chonky apple trees [2] in suburban Auchenflower.

In Townsville, the vacant land between our kitchen window and Ross River wasn't *quite* covered with them.

Still, they were a ubiquitous feature of the landscape.

If I recall correctly, seeing what happens to fermenting chonky apples was an early expression of my eight or nine-year-old brother's interest in science.

Auchenflower and Aitkenvale come with their own backstories.

The latter slots into a more extensive account of a developing city.

However, most of the content on these pages looks back to or loops around **Mapping The North**, an attempt to trace how visitors who arrived here after 1606 recorded what they encountered.

Those visitors, in turn, come with backstories,

So these pages abound in stories, back stories, interesting side stories and the like.

They need an overview: something to bring them together.

Fans of J.R.R. Tolkien's literary works [3] might detect elements of *one ring to rule them all*.

Others may find the comparison fanciful.

But I need somewhere to start a broader narrative that introduces the various strands that sprawl across these pages.

It starts with a blank sheet of paper.

At least, that was the notion that started **Mapping The North**.

As I saw it, the first stage of producing a map of North Queensland is an outline of the coast.

I trace the process that delivered an outline in **Six Voyages**.

Each voyage comes with its own back story.

Towards an Outline pencils in some of them; others appear under **Antecedents**.

---

[2] *Ziziphus mauritiana*, a.k.a. chinee apple (or Indian jujube, a restrictive, invasive plant species native to southern Asia and eastern Africa, first recorded in the Torres Straits in 1863 and in Townsville in 1916. See the fact sheet here for further details.

[3] I first read **Lord of the Rings** in 1965 and re-read the trilogy almost annually until Peter Jackson's cinematic reworking of parts of Tolkien's narrative arrived. As an unashamed traditionalist in such matters, I subsequently laid the whole thing aside. Mileages, of course, may vary.

The narrative that delivers the outline is, in effect, a history of world exploration, focussing on the southern hemisphere.

In a way, that's an expression of the mindset that produced *McArthur's Universal Corrective Map of the World*. [4]

Perceptions and Misconceptions starts with the Ancient Greek view of the world.

Contrary to popular opinion, Greek thinkers (and almost everybody else of significance who came after them) knew that the Earth was round.

At the Library of Alexandria, Eratosthenes came up with a remarkably accurate estimation of the planet's circumference.

Subsequent calculations by Claudius Ptolemy produced a much smaller figure. [5]

And the Greeks knew that their *oikoumene* [6] was a fraction of the northern hemisphere.

Greek geographers may have had ideas about what might lie south of the Equator. However, they had no way of verifying their hypotheses. [7]

So consider the southern hemisphere as a blank sheet.

Portuguese explorers delivered an outline of Africa's southern coast in the late fifteenth century and encountered Brazil. [8]

By the time Vasco da Gama reached India in 1498, they knew there was no continental land mass in the South Atlantic.

The Portuguese route to India added Madagascar to the map and sliced more ocean off the hemisphere's unknown portion without adding another significant land mass.

Magellan's voyage into the Pacific set westward limits to the American landmasses.

Portuguese sailors may have encountered Australia around the same time, but if they did, the knowledge remained highly classified. [9]

---

[4] After taunts about "coming from the bottom of the world", Stuart McArthur published the first "modern"south-up map and launched it on Australia Day, 1979 (**Many Ways To See The World**). See also the **Wikipedia** discussion of the South-up map orientation (here) for some antecedents.

[5] That suited Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan, allowing them to extract the support from the Spanish Crown that made their two voyages possible.

[6] The inhabited portion of the globe that they knew.

[7] As far as we know, the first European traveller to cross the line was Lopes Gonçalves (a.k.a. Lopo Gonçalves). He tracked along the West African coast with Rui de Sequeira to the point where it turns south. The pair reached modern-day Gabon, crossed the Equator, passed Cape Lopez and reached Cape St. Catherine (about 2 degrees south) before returning.

[8] See **Outward Bound: Portuguese** for a detailed account of the process from the time of Henry the Navigator.

[9] See **The Portuguese Question** for my attempt to establish a circumstantial case to suggest they did.

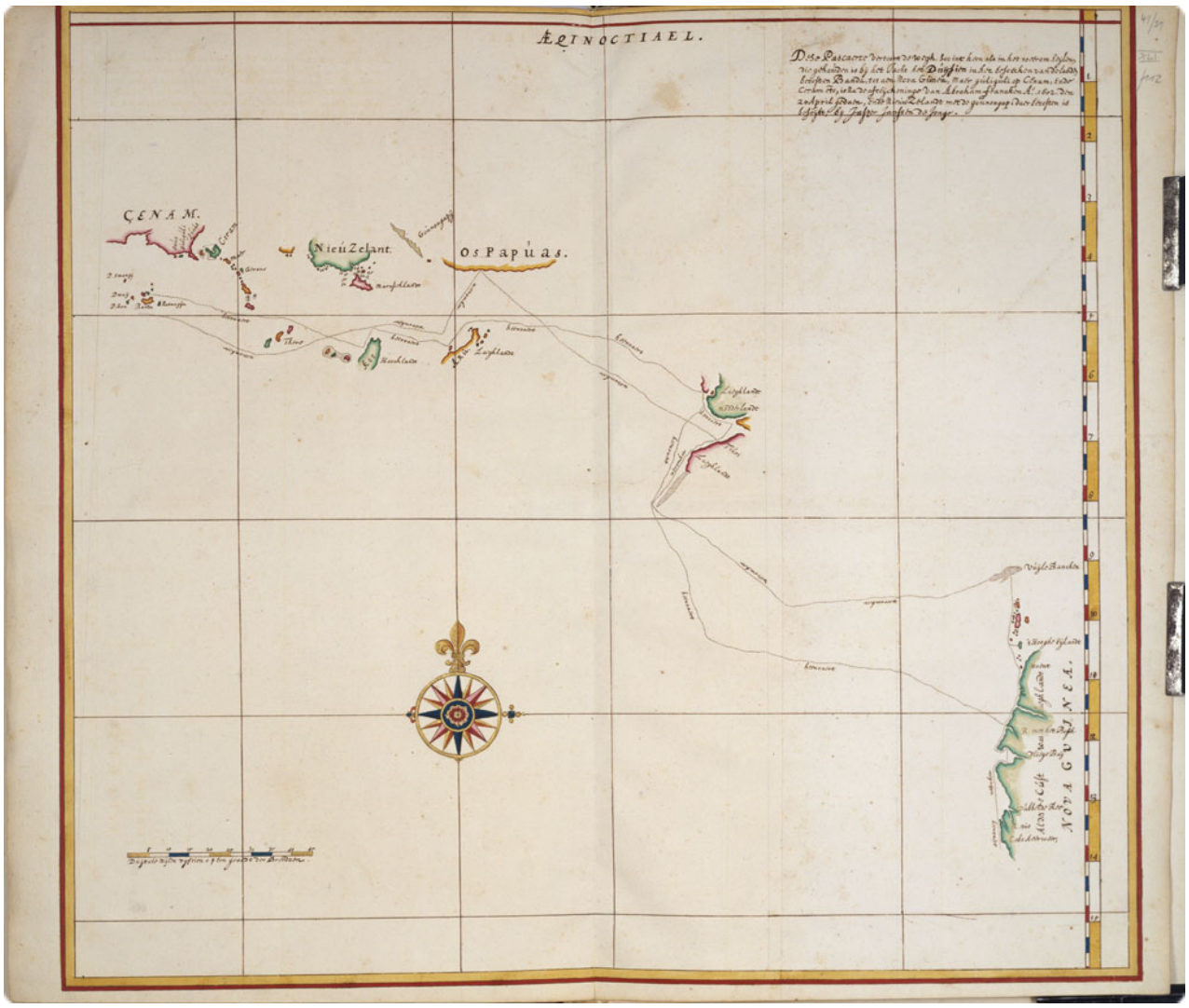
Two sixteenth-century Spanish voyages across the South Pacific tracked just south of the Equator and located a handful of islands east of Australia. The islands remain the subject of speculation until James Cook's time.

A third Spanish voyage early in the seventeenth century splits when a mutiny sees the commander forced to turn back to Mexico in the flagship.

Luis Vaez Torres in the *San Pedro* and *Los Tres Reyes* (1606) takes the expedition's other two vessels to Manila via New Guinea's south coast and Torres Strait.

Since Torres fades into obscurity from the time he reaches his destination, the voyage remains a matter of rumour and speculation for another hundred and fifty years. However, there we have the first of **Six Voyages**.

A few months earlier, a Dutch expedition tracked down New Guinea's west coast, crossed Torres Strait and encountered Cape York's west coast on the second of the **Six Voyages**. [10]



1670 copy of a chart drawn on board the *Duyfken*.

[10] Chronologically, the first, but I give the nod to Torres since he comes at the end of a forty-year process that predates the Dutch arrival in the East Indies,

Further Dutch activity delivers an outline of Australia's coast running from New Guinea's Bird's Head to the head of the Great Australian Bight, along with Tasmania's southern coast.

Melchisedech Thevenot (1620?-1692): *Hollandia Nova detecta 1644; Terre Australe decouuerte l'an 1644*, Paris: De l'imprimerie de Iaqves Langlois, 1663 Based on a map by the Dutch cartographer Joan Blaeu. Langlois, 1663. (Source: Thevenot's **Relations de divers voyages curieux**, Paris, (**Wikimedia Commons**).

That Dutch activity includes two more of those **Six Voyages.** [11]

A later Dutch voyage [12] provides matter for discussion without adding to the map.

Further Dutch voyages [13] add some minor detail to the west coast, including the site of modern-day Perth.

As a classroom teacher, delivering content from the syllabus, that niggled.

---

[11] **Jan Carstensz in the *Pera* and *Arnhem* (1623)** and **Abel Tasman in the *Limmen*, *Zeemeeuw* and *Bracq* (1644)**. My account of Tasman includes the earlier voyage that encountered Tasmania and New Zealand.

[12] **Jean Etienne Gonzal in the *Rijder* and Ludowijk Van Asschens in the *Buijs*** (1756).

[13] Especially **Willem de Vlamingh** in 1697.

Dutchmen found the Swan River and Rottnest Island, and Dutch ships came to grief off Australia's west coast.

Why didn't the Dutch establish a settlement in the Swan River's estuary?

Wasn't scurvy an issue on eighteenth-century voyages?

Mightn't a settlement find something of value that wasn't apparent to the passing casual observer?

The Inquisitive Reader might be inclined to ask the same questions. However, when one investigates the big picture, several points become apparent.

For a start, all the activity described above is associated with a commercial enterprise.

In March 1602, the Dutch States General merged six existing companies into a single entity. [14]

The United Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, hereafter the VOC) received a monopoly of Dutch trade and navigation east of the Cape of Good Hope and west of the straits of Magellan. [15]

Its remit extended well beyond the commercial sphere.

Through its agents in the field, the Company's board of seventeen directors (the *Heeren XVII*) could make treaties of peace and alliance, establish ports and build fortresses and strongholds, maintain armed forces and wage defensive war, [16] coin its own money, dispense justice and enact laws.

The VOC's military and naval commanders, diplomatic agents, and other employees were required to swear double oaths of allegiance to their employer and the States-General of the United Provinces.

The Company was, in effect, a state within a state, subject to supervision by the States-General. [17]

Second, the three voyages into the Gulf of Carpentaria reflect specific stages of the VOC's involvement in the East Indies.

---

[14] Operating independently between 1595 and 1602, various *voorcompagnieen* (predecessors) sent out fifteen fleets comprising sixty-six ships. (Jan Lucassen, *A Multinational and Its Labor Force: The Dutch East India Company, 1595-1795*).

[15] Initially, for twenty-one years. The term was repeatedly extended until the Company was dissolved on 31 December 1799, and it had been nationalised three years earlier.

[16] However, the charter "stressed that the VOC's purpose was not just to enable all subjects of 'these United Provinces' to invest in the East India traffic, but also to attack the power, prestige, and revenues of Spain and Portugal in Asia. (Jonathan I. Israel, **Dutch primacy in world trade, 1585-1740**, p. 71.

[17] C. R. Boxer, **The Dutch Seaborne Empire**, p. 24, Jonathan I. Israel, **The Dutch Republic: its rise, greatness and fall, 1477-1806**, p. 322)

Janz and the *Duyfken* conducted a preliminary reconnaissance, chasing a rumoured location before addressing other matters on an extensive *to-do* list.

After Governor-General Coen established the VOC headquarters at Batavia, a more thorough survey of lands to the south seemed justified in the wake of Australia's first shipwreck. [18]

The task was initially assigned to Jan Vos and two yachts: the *Hasewint* and *Haring*.

Although the expedition left Batavia in September 1622, they met two distressed Dutch vessels in Sunda Strait. [19]

Vos escorted them to Batavia where his expedition was cancelled.

However, Vos's orders became the basis of instructions issued to Carstensz. He would combine a commercial mission to islands east of the Moluccas with a reconnaissance of the coast the *Duyfken* had encountered.

Twenty years later, Tasman's expedition is supposed to investigate *Terra Australis Incognita* and the rumoured passage between the Indies and the South Pacific.

Although Tasman discovers Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand, without a shortcut into the Pacific, the VOC cannot exploit whatever commercial opportunities his discoveries might deliver.

Third, Dutch activity along the Australian coastline was more extensive than the standard abbreviated historical account suggests.

A rough count produces [20] about thirty cases where Dutch ships and what they came to call *the South Land* [21] intersected.

Faced with *about thirty*, The Reader may raise an eyebrow.

Thirty? Really? I didn't expect it to be that many?

---

[18] The English East India Company's *Trial* (a.k.a. *Tryal*, Captain John Brookes) struck reefs near the Montebello Islands. Brookes and forty-five crew members managed to sail two longboats to Batavia, leaving ninety-three more men behind. Their fate remains unknown.)

[19] "These ships had had a bad voyage and their crews were so weak they were unable to set the sails to finish the journey." (J. C. H. Gill, **The Missing Coast: The Queensland Coast Takes Shape**, p. 42.

[20] See Table 1 *Timeline of exploration and survey of the Australian coastline*, in Michael Pearson, **Great Southern Land: The maritime exploration of Terra Australis** (PDF downloadable here: http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/1d81cefa-77ad-4bc7-a695-4ce0789307ff/files/great-southern-land.pdf) for a complete listing.

[21] While VOC employees referred to *New Holland,* the Dutch West India Company applied the same moniker to Brazil. The Dutch settlements that later became New York were *the New Netherlands*. (D. W. Davies, **A Primer of Dutch Seventeenth Century Overseas Trade**, Chapters III, XIV.

Between 1595 and 1795, more than 4,700 ships departed from the Netherlands for Asia. [22]

Some made more than one outbound voyage, and around 3,400 made the return voyage.

As it turns out, after the VOC made the route mandatory, most Dutch ships managed to avoid that coast altogether.

Four [23] of the thirty-odd that sighted Australia came to grief on the dangerous coastline.

So the Company's losses through shipwreck on Australia's western shore did not justify the expenditure involved in establishing another way station *en route* to the Indies.

The *Heeren XVII* were reluctant to establish a way station at Cape Town. After Jan van Riebeeck founded the settlement there in 1652, they sought to keep it as small as possible to save costs. [24]

However, the settlers at the Cape were the beneficiaries of substantial passing trade.

According to a 1772 visitor, it *may with propriety be stiled an inn for travellers to and from the East Indies, who, after several months' sail may here get refreshments of all kinds, and are then about halfway to the place of their destination, whether homeward or outward bound*. [25]

Above all else, it was clear that Australia offered nothing of commercial value to an eighteenth-century corporation whose commercial footprint extended from Cape Town to Japan.

If Jansz, Carstensz or Tasman had managed to find the shortcut to bring the South Pacific into commercial calculations, [26] things might have been different.

Since they didn't, that outline drawn by the Dutch remained in place until British expeditions began to snip away at the unknown portion's eastern fringe.

---

[22] J.R. Bruijn, F.S. Gaastra and I. Schöffer, (eds) **The Dutch East India Company's shipping between the Netherlands and Asia 1595-1795** (database, here). The database includes details of a total of 8194 voyages.

[23] *Batavia* on the Houtman Abrolhos (1629); *Vergulde Draeck*, near Ledge Point (1656); *Zuytdorp*, north of Kalbarri (1712); *Zeewijk*, on the Houtman Abrolhos (1727) (**Shipwrecks of Western Australia**.

[24] C. R. Boxer **The Dutch Seaborne Empire**, p. 246. For example, they rejected Rijkloff van Goens' suggestion that a canal between False Bay and Table Bay would turn the Cape peninsula into an easily defended island. Although they changed their tune slightly in the 1680s and decided the advantages of "modestly encouraging white colonisation at the Cape outweighed the disadvantages" in 1695, the population only included about 340 free-burghers. (ibid., pp. 247-8.

[25] (fn: C.R. Boxer, The Dutch Seaborne Empire, p. 242, citing Carl Peter Thunberg, **Travels in Europe, Africa, and Asia, 1770-79**, Vol. 1 p. 228.)

[26] The VOC charter extended as far east as the Straits of Magellan.

After a gap of around a hundred and twenty years, [27]James Cook completed the outline when he tracked along the east coast.

He was bound for Batavia with a sidetrack to investigate Quirós' Espiritu Santo as a possibility if he happened to be somewhere in the supposed vicinity.

As the last of our **Six Voyages**, Cook's expedition always warranted a detailed discussion. However, Cook's iconic status tends to draw the passing historian's notice.

It did not take long to realise his three voyages have produced at least five substantially different versions of the man and the same sequence of events.

The first portrays the humble Yorkshireman as one of England's national heroes.

His three expeditions form the keystone of that narrative, emphasising his contribution to geographic knowledge. It places Cook in the same pantheon as iconic figures, including Alfred the Great, Henry the Eighth, Horatio Nelson and Winston Churchill.

A second 'Captain Cook' [28] turns up as 'Australia's founder (or father)'.

After all (this version suggests), his 'discovery' and the act of taking possession of 'New South Wales' for George III was the groundwork for the First Fleet and everything that followed.

Peter Fitzsimons' 2019 biography might be **James Cook: The Story Behind the Man Who Mapped the World**. Still, Cook's early life and his first voyage comprise the first 410 of my e-book's 452 pages. [29]

'Fitzy' isn't the only writer to skip past Cook's subsequent voyages and imply the 'discovery' of New South Wales as the man's most significant achievement.

However, if "every schoolboy knows Captain Cook discovered Australia", we shouldn't be surprised by a third or fourth Captain Cook.

We might have seen a little more of the third in 2020 if the COVID-19 pandemic hadn't upset the planned applecart.

One suspects that celebrations of the Endeavour voyage's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary would have prompted another round of the so-called History Wars.

---

[27] The interval between Tasman's expedition and Cook's voyage was one of the factors that prompted me to add *Australia's East Coast: Why did it take so long to 'discover'?* to **Themes and Variations**. I wondered why it took until 1770 for someone to sail along that coast. Every European power that sent expeditions into the South Pacific knew the coast had to exist. They all had a fair idea of where to find it.

[28] Acknowledging that James Cook was a warrant officer when the Admiralty slotted him to command the *Endeavour* and was promoted to Lieutenant before the expedition departed seems *de rigeur*. His subsequent promotions to Commander (August 1771) and 'post' Captain (commanding a 'rated' vessel) came much later.

[29] The endnotes start on page 453).

Alongside the predictable iterations of *Cook as the country's father*, we would have had a third Cook as the other side of the coin: *Cook as British colonialism personified*. [30]

A fourth Cook bears a slight resemblance to the historical figure and appears in various unlikely locations.

After all, 'everybody knows' Captain Cook was the first *migaloo*. [31]

That meansIndigenous narrators do not need to be too specific about the identities of early settlers in their district. [32]

So that makes four identifiable versions of the man and his achievements before we look at the numerous biographies that detail slightly varying interpretations of the same events.

I use *the historians' James Cook* as a blanket term to cover the portrayals that do not fit into those earlier expressions.

After all, the James Cook in J. C. Beaglehole's 1974 biography will not be the figure who appears in the later volume by Peter FitzSimons.

My version presents an ambitious man from an unlikely background with an uncanny ambition to find an influential patron who will help him move on to the next stage of an upward trajectory.

Others will ponder how the great navigator of Cook's first two voyages became the possibly deranged leader of the third.

Students of historiography can pick over the different versions to ascertain precisely how many different *James Cooks* exist in the literature. I'm happy with *at least five*.

Unlike the other titles grouped under **Six Voyages**, Cook's later voyages form a significant epilogue to **James Cook in the Endeavour (1770)**.

On one level, that should not come as a surprise.

---

[30] For an indication of what we might have encountered, see *Australia's 'history wars' reignite*.

[31] Aboriginal English: a white person. Australian Aboriginal: Biri (a language of the Mackay region) *migulu*: ghost, spirit). (**Macquarie Dictionary**).

[32] "Cook and his impact upon Aboriginal Australia has been widely incorporated into Aboriginal songs, stories and understandings in the aftermath of 1770. Anthropologist Deborah Bird Rose's books *Hidden Histories* and *Dingo Makes Us Human*, Japanese historian Minoru Hokari's *Gurindji Journey* and, even more recently, celebrated author Peter Carey's *A Long Way from Home* are just a few of the works that have drawn attention to the residual Aboriginal memory of James Cook. These accounts feature Aboriginal people in northern and remote Australia stating that James Cook had visited their communities and had been shooting people, raping their women and taking the land. Cook's impact was clearly far-reaching, and its memory persistent. Of course, we know that he did not visit Central Australia or the Kimberley, but this recognition illustrates how deeply the event has been burned into Aboriginal consciousness." (John Maynard, *'I'm Captain Cooked': Aboriginal perspectives on James Cook, 1770–2020*, National Library of Australia, ***Digital Classroom***.

None of Cook's predecessors in Northern waters went on to add exploratory detail to the world map.

After Willem Jansz took the *Duyfken* back from Cape Keerweer, he received a promotion, transferring to a larger ship [33] for the homeward voyage.

Meanwhile, in Amboyna, the *Duyfken* joined Cornelis Matelieff's five-ship squadron for the offensive against Portuguese and Spanish interests in the Moluccas.

Jansz was forced to abandon the disabled *West Friesland* near Mauritius but found his way back to Bantam aboard the yacht *Madagascar*.

He eventually made his way home as an upper merchant in January 1611.

From there, he shuffled back and forth between the Netherlands and the Indies. He served in various capacities, including terms as Governor of Fort Henricus on Solor and Banda.

Jansz distinguished himself in action against the English and the Spanish and took an eight-ship diplomatic mission to India and Persia (1628-9).

After he finally returned home, he reported on the state of the Indies before the Stadtholder and the States-General on 16 July 1629. He is believed to have died the following year.

So, distinguished service, but nothing of great importance as far as exploration is concerned.

In contrast, Torres vanished from sight after arriving in Manila in June 1608.

While the official account of the voyage [34] makes its way back to Spain, it remains filed in the archives for the next 175 years.

Like Jansz, Carstensz moved back and forth between the Netherlands and the Indies, with missions to the Persian Gulf, Taiwan, China and Mozambique.

Although there is more to his story, it does not add much new detail to the world map.

---

[33] The *West Friesland*.

[34] Written by the Quirós expedition's official second-in-command, Don Diego de Prado, who seems to have been happy to cede *de facto* command to Torres. De Prado returned to Spain with four charts from the voyage and retired to a monastery. While he produced his account of the journey (the *Relacion Sumaria*) and showed the work to historian Hernando de los Rios Coronel, it vanished from view. A copy turned up among documents sold at a London auction in the 1920s. (Miriam Estensen, **Discovery: The Quest for the Great South Land**, pp. 106-7.

Tasman received considerable kudos for his efforts. [35] He led diplomatic expeditions to Sumatra and Siam and an eight-ship squadron sent to intercept the Spanish Manila galleon in May 1648.

On his return, in January 1649, Tasman's conduct on the expedition saw him removed from office.

After a brief reinstatement in 1651, he retired from the VOC's service and turned his hand to commerce.

He was one of Batavia's largest landowners when he died there in October 1659.

The fifth of **Six Voyages** [36] remains a mystery as far as the participants are concerned. [37]

Once Cook leaves Possession Island on August 23rd 1770, our outline of the Northern coast is effectively complete. [38]

At that point, we should also say *goodbye* to notions of *Terra Australis Incognita*.

After completing the astronomical observations that were the official reason for the expedition, Cook opened a new set of instructions. [39]

---

[35] Tasman's efforts produced a promotion, back pay to the beginning of his 1642 expedition and a seat on the Council of Justice at Batavia.

[36] **Jean Etienne Gonzal in the *Rijder* and Ludowijk Van Asschens in the *Buijs* (1756)**

[37] A Google search for *Jean Etienne Gonzal* produced a single Dutch-language link and another to Noel Loos's article on *Aboriginal-Dutch Relations in North Queensland, 1606-1756* (requires log-in). Further searches for *Jean Gonzal Rijder* and *Ludowijk Van Asschens* delivered links to accounts of the voyage, devoid of detail of the protagonists' backgrounds or subsequent careers.

[38] The section between Cape Flattery and Providential Channel (off Lockhart River), including Princess Charlotte Bay, will remain blank until Lieutenant Charles Jeffreys passes through the area in 1818.

[39] *. . . the most important object of the voyage, as Cook's secret orders stated, was " the business of the Southern Continent". The Admiralty meant to settle the business, in spite of the jealousy of the Spanish government, and Venus was used to hoodwink them. The result has been to hoodwink those historians who believe there ever was such a thing as a purely scientific expedition. We cannot ignore the widespread belief . . . in the existence in a Great South Land . . . as astonishing, and commercially valuable, as what Columbus had found. The unknown world was still large enough for that.* (K. M. Dallas, **Trading Posts or Penal Colonies: The Commercial Significance of Cook's New Holland Route To The Pacific**, p. 25.

These secret orders directed him to investigate the "Continent or Land of great extent" there was "reason to imagine" lay south of Tahiti. [40]

Cook followed his directions as far as 40°S. With no sign of land and an ocean swell from the south, he doubted whether 'any such thing exists unless in a high latitude'. [41]

So he turned and made for New Zealand.

A glance at the red line on the map above should convince the modern-day reader that Cook was *on the money*.

His outward track through the South Pacific had already convinced him there was no significant landmass to his south. [42]

So the *Endeavour* sailed from Tahiti in early August and turned back after she passed the 40° on September 2nd.

Cook had followed his instructions to the letter and might have done more to prove a point if the weather was more favourable. [43]

---

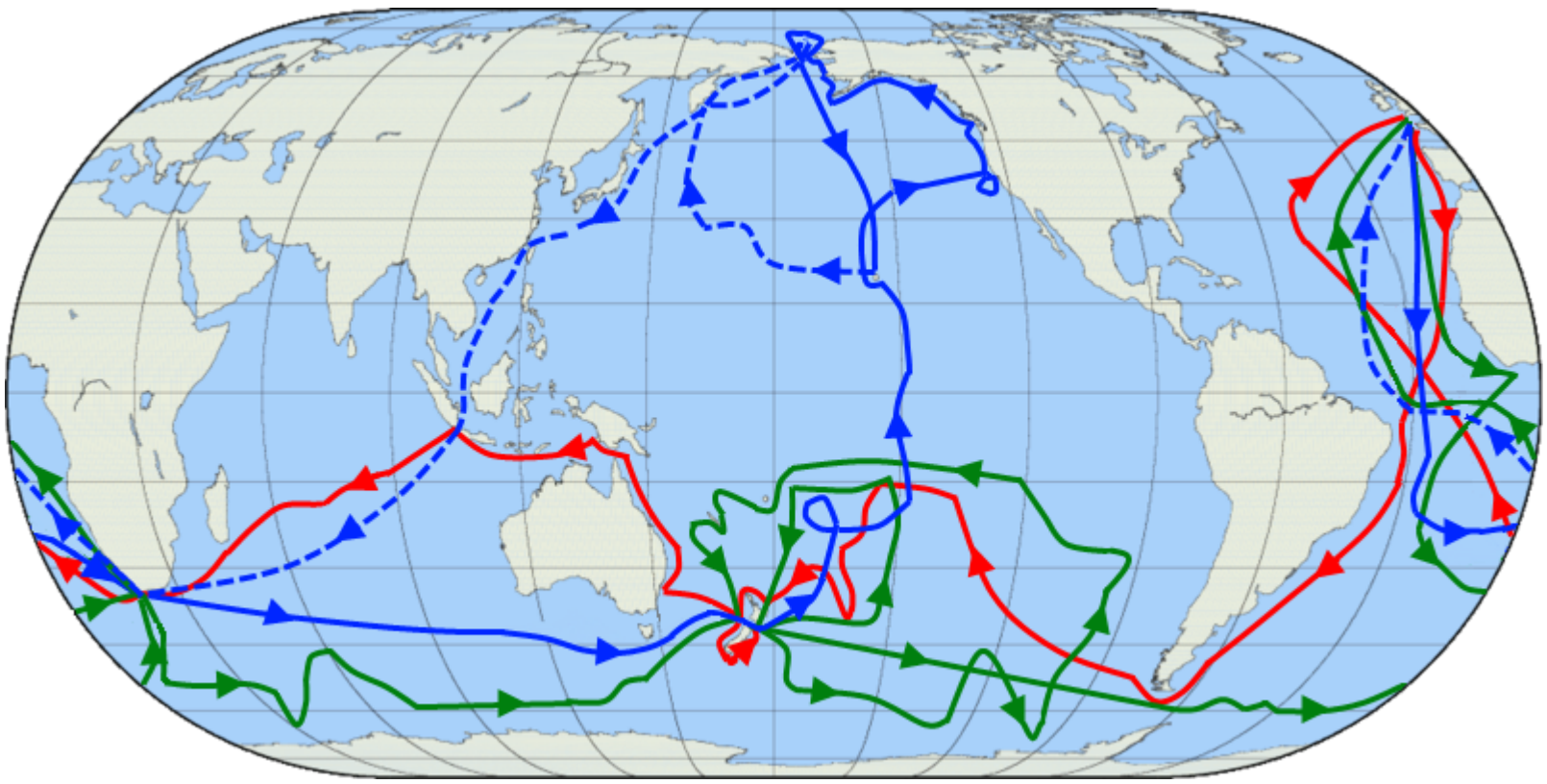
[40] *You are to proceed to the Southward in order to make discovery of the Continent abovementioned until' you arrive in the Latitude of 40° unless you sooner fall in with it.*
But not having discover'd it or any Evident sign of it in that Run you are to proceed in search of it to the Westward between the Latitude beforementioned and the Latitude of 35° until' you discover it, or fall in with the Eastern side of the Land discover'd by Tasman and now called New Zeland.
If you discover the Continent abovementioned either in your Run to the Southward or to the Westward as above directed, You are to employ yourself diligently in exploring as great an Extent of the Coast as you can, carefully observing the true situation thereof both in Latitude and Longitude, the Variation of the Needle; bearings of Head Lands Height direction and Course of the Tides and Currents, Depths and Soundings of the Sea, Shoals, Rocks &ca and also surveying and making Charts, and taking Views of Such Bays, Harbours and Parts of the Coasts as may be useful to Navigation. (**Secret Instructions to Lieutenant Cook July 30th 1768)**

[41] cited Felipe Fernandez-Armesto (ed.) **The Times Atlas of World Exploration**, p. 177.

[42] Cook's Journal: **Tuesday, [February] 28th**. . . *The South-West swells still keep up, notwithstanding the Gale hath been over about 30 Hours, a proof that there is no land near in that Quarter.*
Wednesday, March 1st. . . . *we have had no Current that hath Affected the Ship since we came into these Seas. This must be a great Sign that we have been near no land of any extent, because near land are generally found Currents. It is well known that on the East side of the Continent in the North Sea, we meet with Currents above 100 Leagues from the Land, and even in the Middle of the Atlantic Ocean, between Africa and America, are always found Currents; and I can see no reason why Currents should not be found in this Sea, supposing a Continent or lands lay not far West from us, as some have imaggin'd, and if such land was ever seen we cannot be far from it, as we are now 560 leagues West of the Coast of Chili.*
Saturday, 4th . . . *The South-West swell still keeps up, notwithstanding it hath been Calm 24 hours.*
Captain Cook's Journal During His First Voyage Round The World Made In H.M. Bark "Endeavour", Chapter 2.

[43] **Saturday, 2nd.** *Very strong Gales, with heavy squalls of Wind, hail, and rain. At 4 p.m., being in the Latitude of 40 degrees 22 minutes South and having not the least Visible signs of land, we wore and brought too under the Foresail, and reef'd the Mainsail, and handed it. I did intend to have stood to the Southward if the winds had been Moderate, so long as they continued Westerly, notwithstanding we had no prospect of meeting with land*. **Captain Cook's Journal**, Chapter 4.

So that should have been curtains for *Terra Australis Incognita*. However, some of its enthusiasts remained unconvinced. [44]



James Cook's three voyages: with the first **(1768–1771)** in **red**, the second **(1772–1775)** in **green**, and the third **(1776–1779)** in **blue**. The dashed blue line shows the route Cook's crew took following his death.

Eliminating any remaining possibilities above the Antarctic circle explains the green line on the map above.

Cook's loop through the South Pacific effectively said, "See? It's not here, either."

After that, there wasn't much left for seaborne explorers to discover in temperate waters.

The prospect of a passage around North America drew Cook out of retirement, and his last great 'discovery' [45] brought about his demise.

---

[44] Alexander Dalrymple, one of the continent's leading advocates, was slated to head the Endeavour expedition until the Admiralty refused to allow a civilian to command one of its vessels. Dalrymple's criticism of John Hawkesworth's account of the voyage cast him as Cook's implacable opponent. Although the command of the expedition inevitably left a residue of bitterness, Dalrymple felt he was misrepresented in a work that was certain to be an international best-seller. Dalrymple's criticisms of Cook centred around his failure to make a thorough investigation of the waters between Cape Horn and Tahiti and to the east of New Zealand. After Cook's second voyage, Dalrymple had no further grounds for complaint. "[T]he south Pacific had now been very thoroughly investigated . . . in the most masterly manner imaginable. (Andrew S. Cook, *Alexander Dalrymple* (1737–1808**);** Howard T. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple and Captain Cook: The Creative Interplay of Two Careers*).

[45] The possibility that Ruy López de Villalobos' six-ship flotilla bound for the Philippines encountered the islands in 1542 is discussed in **Themes and Variations**: *When is something 'discovered'?* The Manila Galleon's outward leg passed south of the islands. With the homeward leg tracking north of them, the islands would have been an ideal base for anyone looking to intercept one.

Polishing off notions of *Terra Australis Incognita* and 'discovering' Hawaii are part of why the last of our *Six Voyages* comes with a *coda*. [46]

That *coda* also has quite a deal to do with what subsequently happens to the east coast Cook had outlined.

---

46 An independent and often elaborate passage introduced after the end of the main part of a movement; A concluding event, remark, literary passage, etc. (**Shorter Oxford Dictionary**).

References:

Kari L. Anderson, Mark A. Lackie, David A. Clark, Phil W. Schmidt, *Paleomagnetism of the Newcastle Range, northern Queensland: Eastern Gondwana in the Late Paleozoic*, ***Journal of Geophysical Research***, Volume108, Issue B6, June 2003 (https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1029/2002JB001921

Bruce Bennett, *Politics and Spying: Representations of Pre- and Early Australia*, ***Antipodes***, Vol. 22 No. 1 June 2008

C. R. Boxer **The Dutch Seaborne Empire** London, Hutchinson, 1965

J.R. Bruijn, F.S. Gaastra and I. Schöffer, (eds) **The Dutch East India Company's shipping between the Netherlands and Asia 1595-1795** (database, here)

Andrew S. Cook, *Alexander Dalrymple* (1737–1808) in **Oxford Dictionary of National Biography**, Oxford, Oxford U.P. 2004.

K. M. Dallas, **Trading Posts or Penal Colonies: The Commercial Significance of Cook's New Holland Route To The Pacific**, Hobart, Fuller's Bookshop1969.

D. W. Davies, **A Primer of Dutch Seventeenth Century Overseas Trade**, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1961.

Miriam Estensen, **Discovery: The Quest for the Great South Land**, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1998

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto (ed.) **The Times Atlas of World Exploration**, London, Harper Collins, 1991

Peter Fitzsimons, **James Cook: The Story Behind the Man Who Mapped the World**, Sydney, Hachette, 2019

Howard T. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple and Captain Cook: The Creative Interplay of Two Careers* in Robin Fisher & Hugh Johnston (eds) Captain James Cook and his times Canberra : Australian National University Press ; 1979

J. C. H. Gill **The Missing Coast: The Queensland Coast Takes Shape**, Brisbane, Queensland Museum, 1988

Jonathan I. Israel, **Dutch primacy in world trade, 1585-1740**, Oxford, Clarendon Press 1989

Jonathan I. Israel , **The Dutch Republic: its rise, greatness and fall, 1477-1806**, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995

Jan Lucassen, *A Multinational and Its Labor Force: The Dutch East India Company, 1595-1795*, ***International Labor and Working-Class History***, No. 66, New Approaches to GlobalLabor History (Fall, 2004), pp. 12-39

John Maynard, *'I'm Captain Cooked': Aboriginal perspectives on James Cook, 1770–2020*, National Library of Australia, ***Digital Classroom***).

Michael Pearson, **Great Southern Land: The maritime exploration of Terra Australis** (PDF downloadable from here: http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/1d81cefa-77ad-4bc7-a695-4ce0789307ff/files/great-southern-land.pdf)

Secret Instructions to Lieutenant Cook July 30th 1768

W.J.L. Wharton (ed.), **Captain Cook's Journal During His First Voyage Round The World made in H.M. Bark "Endeavour" 1768-71**, London, Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row, 1893