COOK AND THE VOYAGE OF *ENDEAVOUR*

'A man, who has not the advantages of Education [...] who has been constantly at sea from his youth, and who, with the Assistance of a few good friends [has] gone through all the Stations belonging to a Seaman, from a prentice boy in the Coal Trade to a Commander in the Navy'

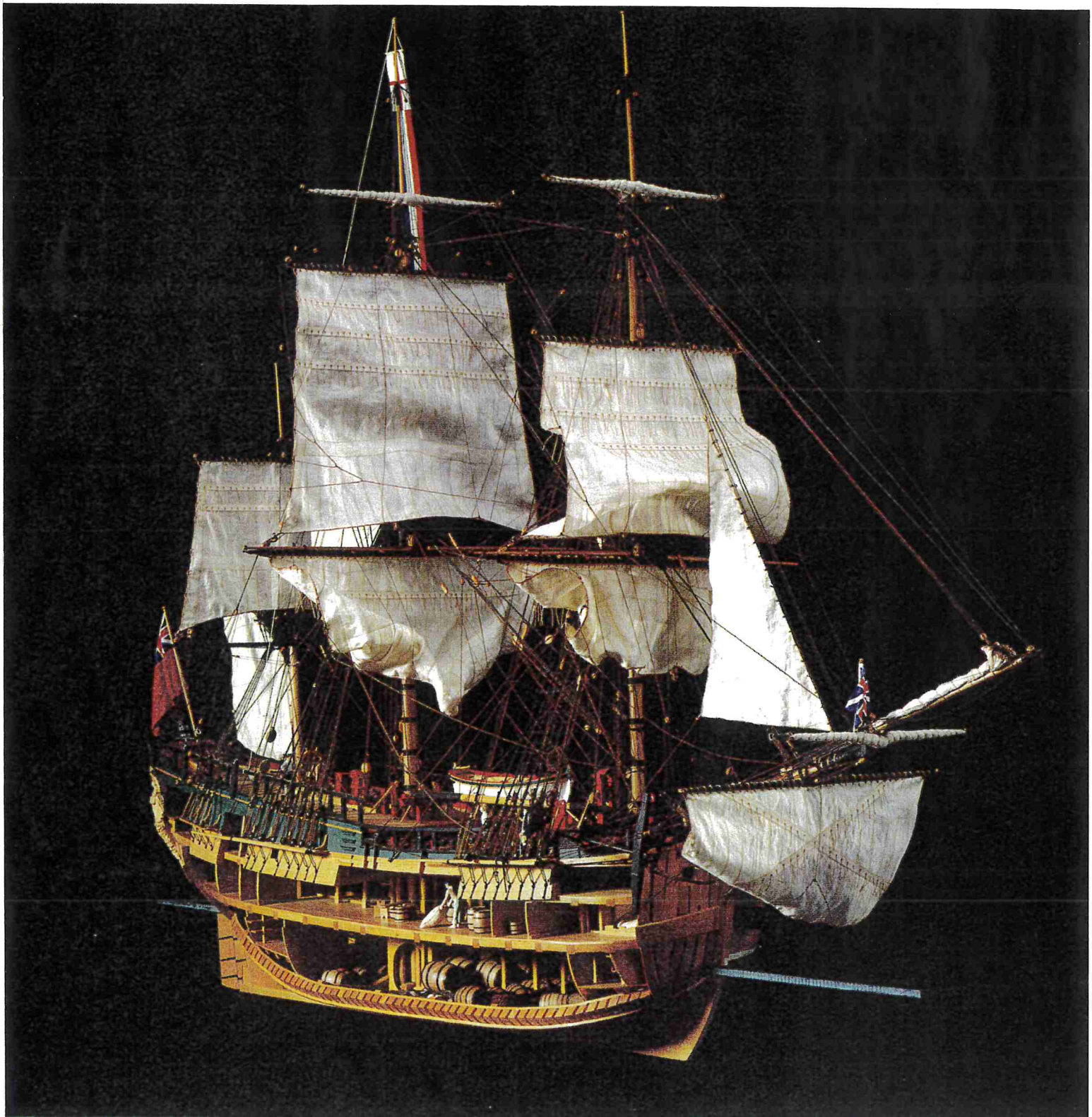
COOK'S DESCRIPTION OF HIMSELF, *c.*1775

IN JUNE 1766 the Council of the Royal Society of London resolved to send observers to various parts of the world to record the six-hour transit of the planet Venus across the face of the Sun, predicted for 9 June 1769. This rare event, first recorded in 1639, was the subject of widespread but imperfect observation on its next occurrence in 1761, and would not be repeated until 1874. The purpose of the observations, which had to be made from widely separated latitudes on the Earth's surface, and precisely timed, was to calculate the distance from the Earth to the Sun. The result would give a unit for estimating the size of the universe.

The difficulties involved in ensuring observers were appropriately placed in the northern hemisphere were manageable. Finding a suitable, cloudless, daytime and safely accessible dry-land observation point south of the Equator was another matter. In November 1767 the Society set up a Transit Committee, which shortlisted a number of locations and potential observers. As far as the Pacific was concerned, the Reverend Nevil Maskelyne, Astronomer Royal and leading Transit Committee member, could only suggest a desirable general area, defined by latitude and longitude, where as yet unknown islands might exist. Among individuals discussed, Alexander Dalrymple was proposed as 'an able Navigator and well skilled in Observation' who might be sent out in a ship which the government would be asked to provide.

Dalrymple (1737–1808) was a man of talent and ambition who was to become the Navy's first official hydrographer in 1795. Having gone to India in 1752 as

This 1970s cutaway model, based on the Navy's original plans of the *Endeavour*, shows its general internal arrangements after fitting-out for Cook's first voyage of discovery, 1768–71.



an East India Company official, he there acquired a remarkable knowledge of early European exploration in the Indies and the Pacific. He rose to become the Company's deputy-secretary at Madras in 1758, and from 1760 to 1764 himself led several voyages through the Indonesian islands, with a professional sailing master. These opened new trading opportunities and Dalrymple returned to England to press for Company support to develop them. In putting himself forward to observe the transit in the Pacific, Dalrymple also intended to be the expedition commander, with a greater personal mission in view. This mission was to prove the existence of Terra Australis Incognita, the inhabitable but unknown 'southern continent' which geographers since Classical times had suggested must exist around the South Pole in order to balance the land masses in the northern hemisphere. His research had made him a leader in this still widely accepted belief, which was a central tenet in his important edition of early Pacific voyage accounts, *A Historical Collection of Voyages ... in the South Pacific Ocean*, published in 1770–71.

The British authorities, less convinced, were at least alert to the potential benefits of such a continent and aware of rival French and Spanish interest. In 1764–66, they sent out Commodore John Byron to probe for it. He was instructed to examine and formally claim the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic and to find a supposed 'Pepys Island' which, he rightly concluded, was a mis-sighting of the Falklands. Byron judged that his ships *Dolphin* and *Tamar* were unfit to pursue his further objective of seeking an equally fabled 'north-west passage' back to the Atlantic from the Pacific coast of Canada, and he encountered only Pacific islands, not continental land, as he took a circumnavigating route homeward via the East Indies. The *Dolphin* was then quickly sent out again in August 1766, under Captain Samuel Wallis, accompanied by the smaller *Swallow* under Philip Carteret, expressly to seek any land mass in the Pacific to the south of Byron's track.

Neither had returned when, in February 1768, the Royal Society petitioned George III for £4,000 to mount the proposed transit expedition. It was to be a voyage of scientific prestige, not a continental search, and cited the well-proved case that advances in astronomy brought benefits to practical navigation – the basis of British sea trade and power. Maskelyne's first publication of the *Nautical Almanac* in 1766, and the 'lunar distance' method of finding longitude which it facilitated, were important recent examples. The King agreed to grant the money and the Admiralty supplied a ship, bought for a further £2,800 in the form of a stout Whitby collier. The admirals, however, refused to have a civilian rather than a naval officer in overall command. Dalrymple was neither a naval officer nor a professional seaman: compromise was impossible and he withdrew from the project.

The Board of Admiralty could have chosen a commander from many commissioned sea officers but accepted its secretary's recommendation to appoint the master of the schooner *Grenville*, a well-regarded warrant officer and notable

marine surveyor. He was a steady married man of 39 who had proven navigational and astronomical skills and had shown much expertise in charting difficult waters, most recently in his thorough surveys of the coast of Newfoundland. His name was James Cook.

Cook's Early Years

James Cook was born on 27 October 1728 at Marton-in-Cleveland, a small country parish in the North Riding of Yorkshire, his father – also James – being an agricultural day-labourer of lowland Scots origin. His mother, Grace, was a young Yorkshire woman. Young James was the second child and second son in a family of eight, but only he and two sisters lived beyond 1750.

Cook's father was a poor man and James was fortunate in gaining a modest education in reading, writing and arithmetic, principally at the charitable Postgate School at Great Ayton where James senior became a farm foreman in 1736. In 1745, at the small Yorkshire fishing port of Staithes, 17-year-old James junior began a trial employment as shop boy to William Sanderson, a grocer and haberdasher, but after 18 months both realised that this was not his métier. Supported by Sanderson, Cook instead went over to nearby Whitby and entered a three-year apprenticeship to become a seaman in the coastal colliers of John Walker, a respected Quaker sea captain and ship owner. Walker was to become Cook's lifelong friend, and their association was also responsible indirectly for the start of another – that of Cook and the greatest British voyages of scientific exploration with the local 'cat-bark' colliers, the workhorses of the east coast and North Sea trade.

Cook, like most boys apprenticed to become seamen, entered as a 'servant' and his first voyage (with nine fellow apprentices in a crew of 19) was in the *Freelove*, a 341-ton Yarmouth-built ship, under John Jefferson. Two years later he helped Jefferson fit out a new ship of Walker's, the *Three Brothers*, and sailed in her from June 1748 to December 1749, initially carrying coal and then taking troops home from Flanders to Dublin and London under government contract. In April 1750 Cook completed his apprenticeship and continued as an able seaman in this and other ships until December 1752. He then rose to be mate of the *Friendship*, a new Walker vessel, in which he remained for another two and a half years under three successive masters, one from Whitby, one from Norway and one from the Netherlands. In the *Friendship*, there is no doubt that his skills expanded into mature competency in North Sea coastal navigation and pilotage, since Walker invited him to become the ship's next master.

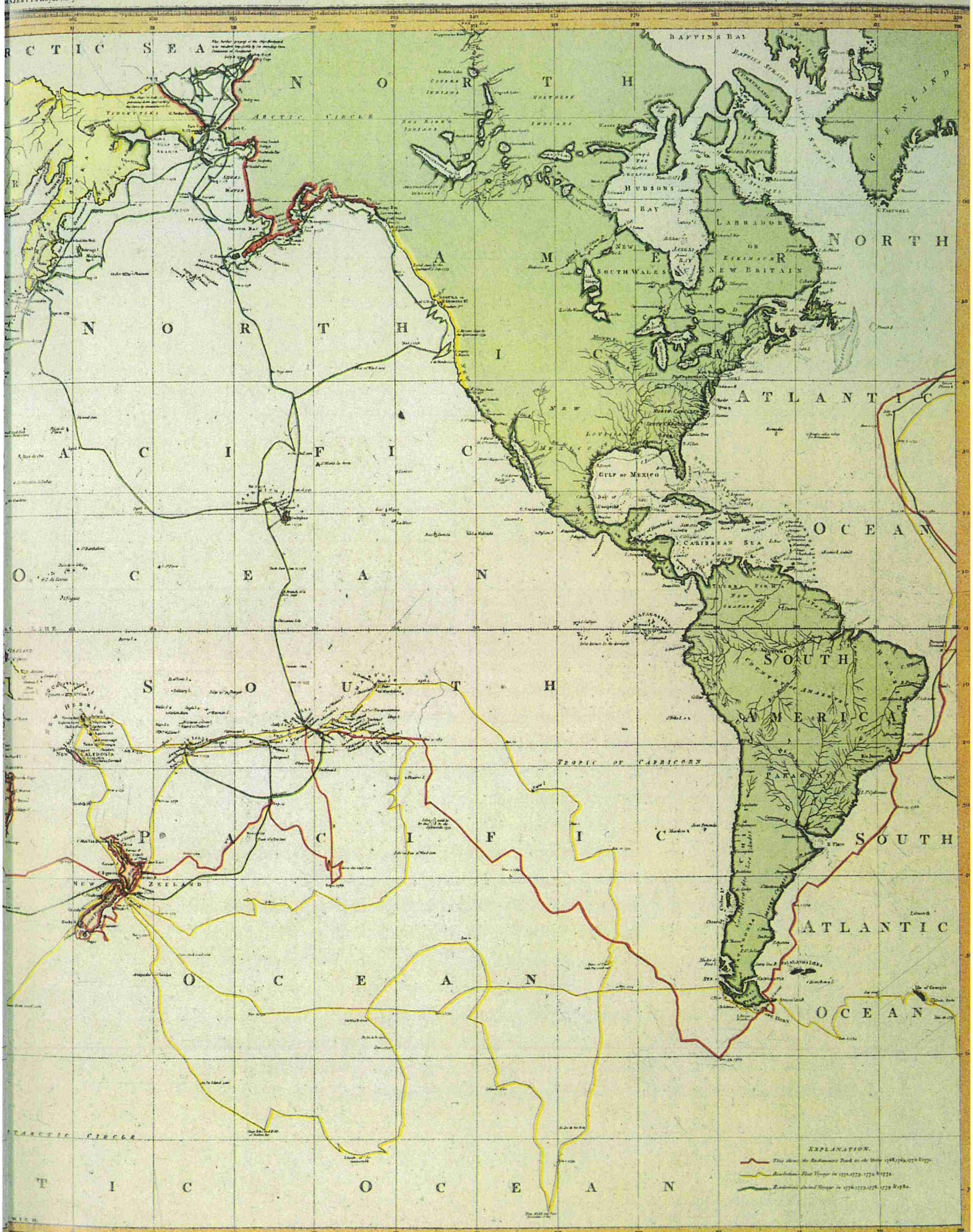
Astonishingly, it was an offer Cook declined. He instead decided to enter the Royal Navy, volunteering as an able seaman at Wapping, London, on 17 June 1755.

Exhibiting the DISCOVERIES made by Capt.n *JAMES COOK* in this and

By Lieut.t

preceding VOYAGES; with the TRACKS of the SHIPS under his Command.

AJESTY'S Royal Navy.



PREVIOUS PAGES A GENERAL CHART EXHIBITING THE DISCOVERIES OF CAPTN JAMES COOK...

The chart was prepared by Lt Henry Roberts, who sailed on Cook's third voyage, for publication in the official (1784) account of it. *Endeavour*'s track is in red, the second voyage in yellow and the third in green.

OPPOSITE THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE; engraving after Benjamin West, 1771.

As a surveyor, Cook played an important role in the naval operations which carried Wolfe's army up the St Lawrence River to take Quebec in 1759. West's painting of Wolfe's death had a huge influence on such representations of heroic sacrifice into the following century.

In terms of pay and status it was a backward step; for, as Nelson later said of his own experience in the 1770s, merchant seamen then had 'a horror of the Royal Navy'. Cook himself gave no reason for this decision except for a later hint, after his second Pacific voyage, that his 'ambition' led him to range further than other men. Although in 1755 he could not know how far and in what remarkable capacity this would be, the Navy was already embroiled in the undeclared phase of the Seven Years War with France (1756–63). Fought substantially in North America and India, this was to take Cook further than he had yet been and give him opportunities beyond those open to a provincial short-trade shipmaster.

He was assigned to the 60-gun *Eagle* at Portsmouth, and within a month was advanced to master's mate. On 1 October, after she was driven back to repair weather damage from a cruise in the western approaches, a fellow Yorkshireman who would play an important part in Cook's career took over command – the competent, energetic and experienced Hugh Palliser (1723–96). A week later, the *Eagle* sailed out again on a stormy and active cruise, taking part in the capture of one French warship before the end of the October and in the sinking, on fire, of another in November. In January 1756 Cook became her boatswain in addition to his mate's duties and that spring, while patrolling off the southern Brittany coast, Palliser gave him temporary command of the cutter *Cruizer*. He subsequently brought home a merchant prize, taken in the Bay of Biscay, and in January 1757 took part in a severe fight when the *Eagle* and *Medway* captured a well-armed French Indiaman south-west of Ushant. That June, after Cook's friend John Walker solicited his local MP to approach Palliser, the captain recommended Cook's promotion to master – the senior warrant officer of a ship of war, charged with her routine navigation and maintenance of her sailing capacity. By then he had also learnt the techniques of celestial navigation necessary for ocean voyaging. On 29 June 1757 he was successfully examined by Trinity House, Deptford, and the next day was appointed master of the *Solebay*, a 24-gun frigate patrolling Scottish waters.

In October 1757, at Portsmouth under Captain John Simcoe, Cook became master of the 64-gun *Pembroke*, which in February 1758 sailed as part of Admiral Boscawen's fleet for Halifax, Nova Scotia. This appointment was to make his name

in a major theatre of war, for the fleet and the troops it conveyed were being sent to help loosen the French hold on Canada, first by destruction of the fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island, guarding the Gulf of St Lawrence, and then by ascending the lower St Lawrence River and taking Quebec. The day after Louisbourg fell in July, Cook had a fortuitous meeting ashore with a military surveyor called Samuel Holland, whom he had watched busily taking angles with a surveyor's plane table. Holland was delighted to instruct him in its use. Cook's interest was actively supported and shared by his scientifically minded captain, Simcoe, and Cook himself conducted a small survey of the Bay of Gaspé in 1758. This became his first chart to be published, in London later that year, although Cook spent the long winter with the small squadron left at Halifax. There, under the joint guidance of Simcoe and Holland, he developed his skills as a cartographer and studied the higher reaches of navigational astronomy.

Simcoe unfortunately died in the spring of 1759, which saw the return of the main fleet from England under Admiral Sir Charles Saunders, bringing back

Major-General Wolfe for his second season's campaign. Then followed the difficult advance up the St Lawrence River to Quebec, in which Cook and the rest of the masters in the fleet were heavily involved, both as ship handlers and in surveying and recording the passage. Quebec fell to Wolfe's assault on 13 September, with himself and his opponent, Montcalm, heading the list of dead. Cook was shortly afterwards transferred to the *Northumberland* under Captain Lord Colville and again spent the winter at Halifax, although the great 'New Chart of the River St Lawrence' that Saunders published in England in 1760 included a large element of his work. A French counter-siege of Quebec was lifted that May, and when Montreal fell in September to British army assault from upper New York, Canada was secured. In January 1761, still at Halifax, Colville awarded Cook a bonus of £50 – over eight months' salary – for 'his indefatigable industry in making himself Master of the Pilotage of the River Saint Lawrence', and two years later in England he was even more warmly to recommend his 'Genius and Capacity' as a surveyor to the Admiralty. In the interim Cook gave further proof of this. He made detailed observations of the coast of Nova Scotia and took significant part as a surveyor and pilot in operations that repelled a French assault on St John's, Newfoundland, in the summer of 1762. He then returned to England with Colville.

The charting of Newfoundland, especially its southern and western coasts, was to occupy Cook from 1763 to 1767 – the first years of peace – and on a regular pattern: he would systematically survey ashore and afloat in the late spring and summer, and then return to London to work up and submit the results over the winter. He was to begin publishing them as charts in 1766. That year he also observed an eclipse of the Sun in Newfoundland – the subject of his first brief scientific communication to the Royal Society.

Set across the mouth of the St Lawrence, Newfoundland was sparsely populated but strategically placed and was the seasonal base for working the Grand Banks fishery – itself economically important to Britain. Many nations fished the Banks, but on and around Newfoundland the Royal Navy maintained jurisdiction through a naval governor sent out each spring. Charts of the island, and adjacent lesser ones, were poor and Cook was keenly sought to remedy this by the new governor, Captain Samuel Graves, who had recognised his expertise in the anti-French operations there of 1762. Palliser had also been involved and added his recommendations to those of Graves (whom he succeeded as governor, holding the position from 1764 to 1766). The Admiralty agreed and on 15 May 1763 Cook sailed from Plymouth, in Graves's *Antelope*, to begin his work, for which the schooner *Grenville* was locally bought. He had been back in London just over six months, but only six weeks had passed before he was married on 21 December 1762 to 21-year-old Elizabeth Batts of Barking, Essex. How and when they met is a mystery and, like many seamen's wives, she was to see little of her husband. Their six children were

born and largely raised (and three died) in his absence; all were dead long before she herself died, aged 93, in 1835 after a widowhood of 56 years.

Endeavour: THE VOYAGE OF 1768–71

On 29 March 1768, the Navy Board reported that it had bought, in the Thames, the Whitby-built collier *Earl of Pembroke*; 14 months old, of 368 tons burthen, and 106 feet long overall. The ship was seaworthy and strong, roomy for its small size, and capable of being beached upright on a flat bottom. The Admiralty directed that the name be changed to '*Endeavour*, bark' (there was already an *Endeavour* in the navy list) and that the vessel be armed and fitted at Deptford Dockyard to sail for the South Seas. Cook was appointed to command only in April, and as the proposed complement rose to 70 (deaths being expected) the Admiralty decided to commission him as a lieutenant, and gave him a second lieutenant in Zachary Hicks. It later added a third, John Gore, who was formerly a master's mate under both Byron and Wallis in the *Dolphin*. Others of note who had also sailed with Byron were seaman (later Lieutenant) Charles Clerke, and Richard Pickersgill, master's mate. The official naval and Marine complement was eventually 85, but additions made the total company 98 when they finally left England, although over 170 men – including five Tahitians – passed through *Endeavour*'s books during the expedition, most replacing fatalities to illness in 1770–71. One of these losses was the Royal Society's civilian astronomer Samuel Green, who, with Cook, observed the transit of Venus and who had arrived with his servant in July 1768. So did a further party of nine, or possibly ten, for the already crowded ship. Joseph Banks, FRS, aged 25 and 'a Gentleman of large fortune … well versed in natural history', had persuaded both the Society and the Admiralty that the botanical and natural sciences would be well served by his inclusion – at his own expense – and came aboard with a 'suite' of eight: the Swedish botanist Daniel Carl Solander, a pupil of Linnaeus; the artists Alexander Buchan and Sydney Parkinson, to perform the recording roles that would today be achieved by photography; also Banks's Swedish secretary, Dr Herman Diedrich Spöring, and four servants (two black), as well as two greyhounds. A boy called Nicholas Young, while first noted as being on board at Tahiti, seems to have been one of those who arrived with Banks and was later the first to sight New Zealand, where he is commemorated by 'Young Nick's Head'. A famous addition – among the usual livestock that all ships carried – was a milking goat, just home from its first round-the-world voyage in the hard-worked *Dolphin*, with Captain Wallis. Wallis returned to England in May 1768 as the first European discoverer of an earthly paradise that he called 'King George's Island', right in the centre of Maskelyne's prescribed area for the transit observation.

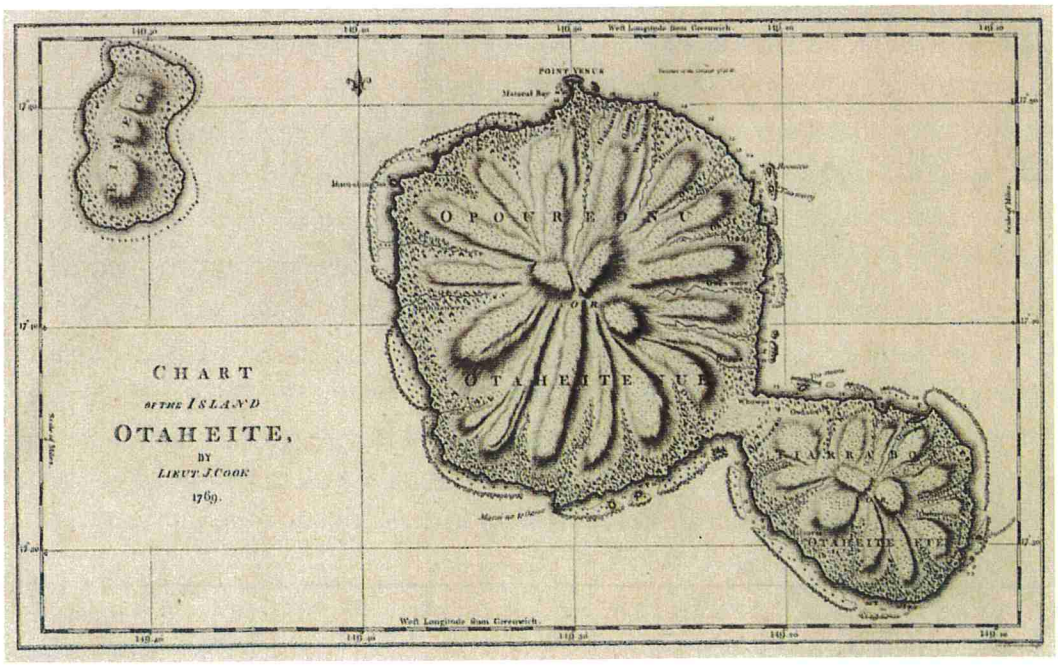
OPPOSITE SIR JOSEPH BANKS BT; engraving by John Raphael Smith after Benjamin West, 1788.

The engraving shows Banks draped in a cloak of *tapa*, the Polynesian cloth made from the mulberry tree, and surrounded by curios from the *Endeavour* voyage. At his feet is a sketch of the New Zealand flax plant, which was considered to have considerable commercial possibilities. Although Banks withdrew from Cook's second voyage, he remained a staunch supporter of maritime exploration, frequently consulted by the Admiralty.

BELOW Cook's chart of Tahiti; engraving from John Hawkesworth's *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken ... for Making Discoveries in the South Seas, 1773.*

He also had an accurate latitude and longitude for it (17° 30 S, 150° W), the latter calculated by his mathematically inclined purser using 'Dr Masculine's method, which we did not understand' – that is, by lunar-distance observation. This island now became Cook's intended goal. Its local name was Tahiti.

Although only the Admiralty took note of it from the official voyage journals (all handed in as restricted documents, as were Cook's), some of Wallis's men also reported seeing extensive high land well south of the new island. Investigating this latest rumour of Terra Australis headed the supplementary 'Secret Instructions' Cook was to fulfil after completing the transit work. He was also to claim possession, in European legal terms, of useful places he discovered, although friendship with all Pacific peoples was to be cultivated. They were to be treated with respect, civility and caution, their ways observed and, where possible, fair trade conducted for fresh food and other items. Lord Morton, President of the Royal Society, also supplied an enlightened and perceptive memorandum on observations to be made and cultural



and moral issues likely to arise in encounters with 'primitive' populations. All this Cook absorbed, not as a romantic self-motivated adventurer, but as a professional seaman determined to achieve objectives laid down by others. Humanity in his general dealings and a conscientious pursuit of the aims set for him were to be the hallmarks of all his Pacific voyages, albeit with some lapses under stress. His genius lay in the exceptional judgement with which he interpreted his instructions, and in the professional skill with which he met and surpassed their expectations.

The crowded *Endeavour* left Plymouth on 26 August 1768 and reached Rio de Janeiro on 13 November. At Madeira, Cook obtained onions and distributed them among the crew, and flogged two men for refusing to eat fresh meat – the start of an insistence on fresh food and greens of any palatable sort to prevent scurvy (Vitamin C deficiency); he was equally strict in his demand for cleanliness of both ship and crew. *Endeavour*'s voyage was unprecedented in having few cases of scurvy and no deaths from shipboard-generated illness, and as such it became the model for both Cook voyages that followed. Leaving Rio on 7 December after problems with the authorities, they landed briefly on Tierra del Fuego, where an unwise foray resulted in Banks's two black servants, Thomas Richmond and George Dorlton, being frozen to death in a snowstorm (through falling asleep in it while drunk), and Solander only narrowly escaped. Cook then passed through the Strait of Le Maire and rounded Cape Horn on 27 January 1769. He reached his furthest point south in *Endeavour* three days later, in latitude 60° 4'S, before altering course north and then west for Tahiti. This was sighted on 11 April after *Endeavour* passed through, and Cook recorded, much of the Tuamotu Archipelago.

On 13 April they found the *Dolphin*'s anchorage in idyllic Matavai Bay, on the north-west coast near modern Papeete. Welcoming Tahitian canoes came out as soon as the ship was sighted and, despite the language barrier, trade and cordial relations rapidly began. The endemic South Seas problem, based on different values and common to nearly all the islands Cook visited, was the inhabitants' persistent thievery and expertise at it. Iron of any portable sort vanished, especially nails (the common currency of trade); also stolen were clothes, a gun, a valuable quadrant and many other items. Those of any significance were mostly recovered as the expectations and firepower of the visitors became clear, though one Tahitian was shot dead in a rare lapse of control, which Cook greatly regretted. He also began to develop his practice of 'detaining' local property, and sometimes people, against restitution of purloined items and flogged his own men when they could be identified for theft, or for abetting it. The usual reason the latter stole was to trade for the sexual liberality of the Tahitian women. Cook was well aware of the dangers of this and of his duty to his hosts: the Tahitians (though not all Pacific islanders) suffered from yaws, which gave immunity to syphilis, but not to gonorrhoea. Anyone suspected of infection was confined to the ship until pronounced

clear although, as soon became apparent, it had already reached the island through Hitaa on the east coast. Cook suspected a Spanish source but it was in fact the French, from when Bougainville's *Boudeuse* and *Etoile* had stopped off there, shortly after Wallis, whose own crew was another possible source of the disease.

Banks and Solander were in heaven, collecting and recording plants – although their ethnographic and landscape artist Alexander Buchan had died of an epileptic fit just after arrival – and in the fort and observatory that Cook built on 'Point Venus', Green set up equipment to observe the transit. This was successfully done on 3 June in a daytime temperature of 119°F (48.3°C), with two parties under Hicks and Gore also recording it from other positions as back-up.

Endeavour sailed from Tahiti on 13 July to explore islands to the north-west, which Cook named the 'Society Islands' from their close grouping. He surveyed Huahine and made a particular friend in Ori, the chief there. Pressed by Banks, he had agreed to take on board a young Tahitian chief and priest Tupaia, who wished to see England, and his servant boy, Taiata. Neither survived the voyage but Tupaia quickly proved an asset as an interpreter and pilot, naming well over 100 central Pacific islands, of which Cook managed to sketch a chart of 74. Among drawings from the voyage originally held by Banks (and now in the British Library) are a few naively stylised but striking watercolours, whose painter was a mystery for over 200 years. Eventually, in the 1980s, he was called the 'Artist of the Chief Mourner', from one that showed a Tahitian in the ritual dress of that role. Finally, in 1997, a note by Banks was found clearly identifying them as by Tupaia, probably using Parkinson's colours and with a little guidance from him or Spöring.

On 9 August, complying with his 'secret instructions', Cook sailed south. He had already scotched earlier reports of continental land further east in his southern sweep from Cape Horn. By 2 September he had crossed well beyond latitude 40° south but there was no sign of the land reported by *Dolphin*, nor did the long ocean swell from that direction suggest the presence of any. As also instructed, he then cast westward to seek the eastern side of New Zealand, whose western coast was first discovered by the Dutch navigator Abel Tasman in 1642.

On 6 October they sighted land, but on reaching it two days later, they found the Maori inhabitants unfriendly and unwilling to trade, although Tupaia was understood by them. Three approaches were violently repulsed and, to Cook's grief, several Maori were killed as he and his men defended themselves. Empty-handed, the *Endeavour* left Poverty Bay, as Cook named it, heading south and finding only further hostility ashore. Having reached beyond latitude 40° south once more, with the coast still running south and west, Cook named the point they had reached 'Cape Turnagain' and reversed his course there. The ship then made a sweep northward to replenish water among more friendly people below East Cape, before heading north-west across the Bay of Plenty. They stayed for 11 days at

OPPOSITE Cook's Chart of New Zealand, engraved by J. Bayly (1772), with a modern overlay in red by the Hydrographic Office (1968) showing the remarkable accuracy of Cook's initial survey. The orange overlay, upper left, shows fragments of Tasman's positioning from the 1640s.

Mercury Bay, so named because Cook and Green observed the transit of Mercury there, which gave them an accurate longitude. Despite one more fatal incident they established friendly relations with the people, visited an impressive Maori fortified village, or *pa*, and found strong evidence suggesting that the Maori were cannibals, though this was later questioned in England. Over 80 years later a local chief, Te Horeta, who had visited *Endeavour* as a child and met Cook, could recount a vivid memory of the occasion. The ship headed north after a further edgy landing in the Bay of Islands, but Cook's running survey of the heavily fragmented coast was interrupted by a sustained gale on 13 December. This blew him out of sight of land, but on 15 December its resighting, and an increase in the south-western swell, showed that they had passed Cape Maria van Diemen, the northern point of New Zealand.

Cook managed to plot this from a distance and with great accuracy before continuing his running survey down the dangerous west coast. On 14 January 1770 a huge bay opened to the eastward, on the south side of which Cook found what was to become a favourite harbour, Ship Cove, in the narrow Queen Charlotte Sound. Surrounded by plentiful wood, water, greenstuff, exotic birds and a friendly, if possibly cannibalistic people, the *Endeavour* was here thoroughly overhauled. By climbing a hill Cook also confirmed what Tasman had suspected: the bay he had entered was in fact the wide strait that now bears his own name, dividing the two islands of New Zealand. On 6 February he sailed into it, narrowly avoiding being carried ashore by its treacherous tidal current. He then completed his survey of North Island by stretching north to resight Cape Turnagain before reversing course once more and heading down the east coast of South Island in tempestuous weather. By 13 March he had rounded the southern end and was again sailing up the western side, completing (in Banks's words) 'the total demolition of our aëriel fabrick' that it might be part of a southern continent. His survey was to result in the first chart of New Zealand, compiled on a single pass to an extraordinary level of thoroughness and accuracy.

By the end of March 1770, *Endeavour* had again resupplied at Admiralty Bay in the Cook Strait as her captain used the discretion granted by his orders to consider

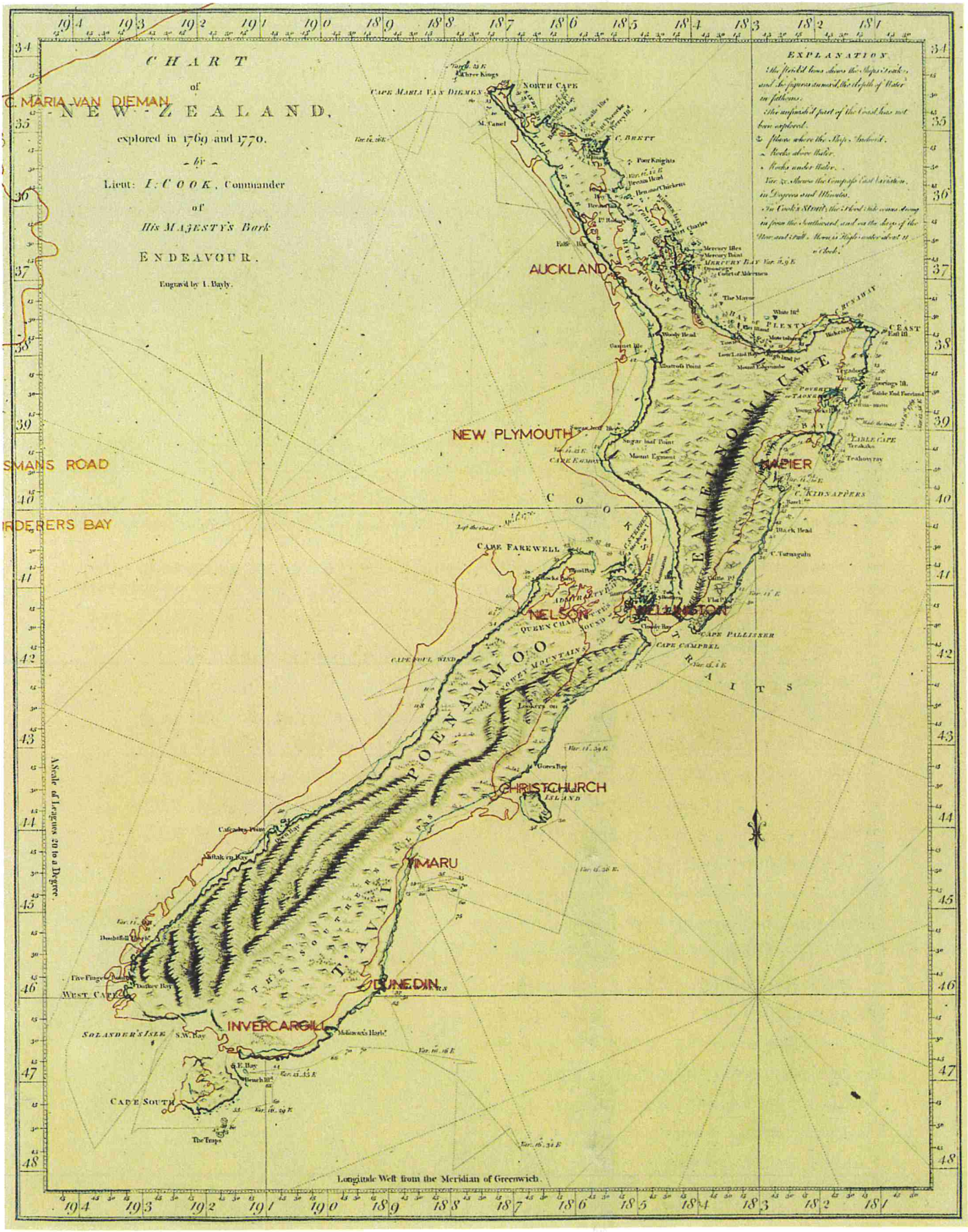


CHART
of
NEW-ZEALAND,
explored in 1769 and 1770.
by
Lieut: J: COOK, Commander
of
His MAJESTY'S Bark
ENDEAVOUR.
Engravd by T. Bayly.
EXPLANATION
C. MARIA VAN DIEMAN
NORTH CAPE
AUCKLAND
NEW PLYMOUTH
NAPIER
WELLINGTON
NELSON
CHRISTCHURCH
DUNEDIN
INVERCARGILL
TIMARU
CAPE FAREWELL
CAPE CAMPBELL
CAPE PALLISER
CAPE SOUTH
SOLANDER'S ISLE
Longitude West from the Meridian of Greenwich.
A Scale of Leagues 20 to a Degree.

BELOW A 4-pounder gun from the *Endeavour*.

After striking the Great Barrier Reef the crew had to lighten the ship, throwing overboard the six carriage guns, and eventually managing to refloat it. Two hundred years later they were retrieved by divers, and this one was presented to the National Maritime Museum by the Australian government in 1969.

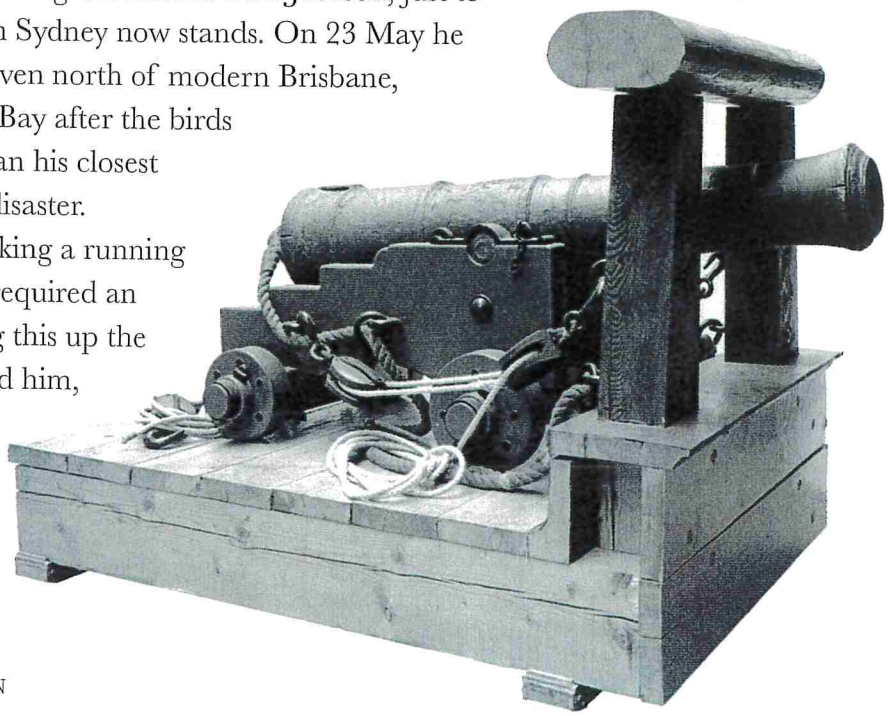
OPPOSITE A view of the Endeavour River on the coast of New Holland (detail), where the ship was laid on shore, in order to repair the damage which she received on the rock; engraving by William Byrne, probably after a lost drawing by Parkinson.

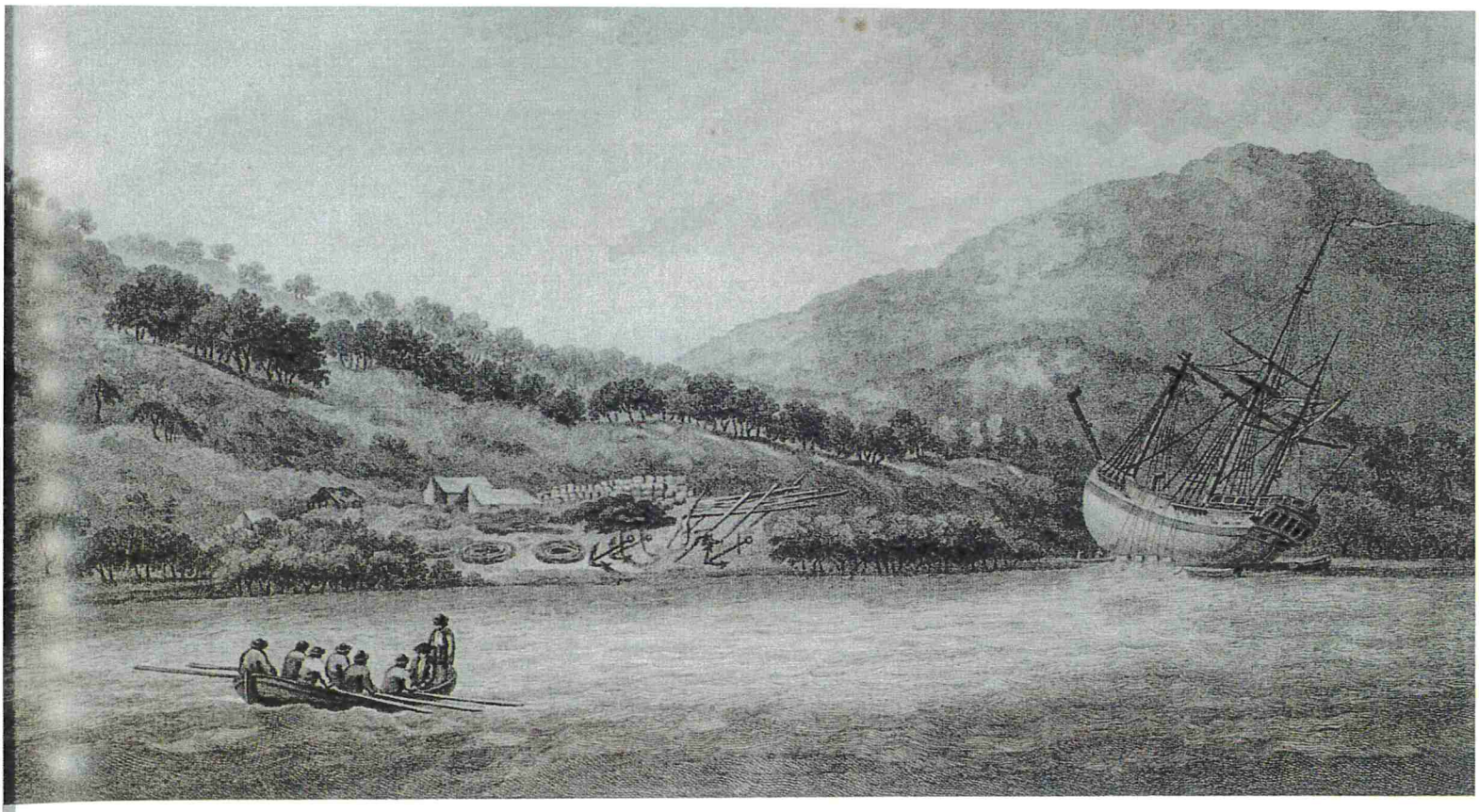
Endeavour was beached for seven weeks in June 1770 for repairs.

his route home. Although he was tempted, the state of the ship argued against further hunting for a 'southern continent' on a high-latitude Pacific passage to Cape Horn. The same applied to a route directly to the Cape of Good Hope by passing south of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). Cook listened to the views of his officers and Banks and decided to sail via the East Indies – where *Endeavour* could refit properly – but with the variation of heading west and falling in with the totally unknown east coast of New Holland. He hoped to confirm whether Van Diemen's Land was joined to it and then to follow it north – with luck, directly to the Indies.

They sailed at daylight on 31 March, and on 19 April, driven too far north to see Van Diemen's Land, they sighted the main south-east Australian coast. Cook decided to turn north along it, but the weather prevented a landing for another ten days. On 29 April, *Endeavour* finally entered a sheltered bay inhabited by a few shy, unfriendly people, apparently primitive even by comparison with the Pacific islanders, and with whom Tupaia could not communicate: they were the first Aboriginal people encountered. 'Isaac, you shall land first,' said Cook to his wife's young cousin, Isaac Smith, as their boat rowed ashore in what was first called Stingray Harbour. Later, after Banks and Solander had begun studying the harvest of new plants brought aboard, it became Botany Bay. Cook left on 6 May, naming but not entering the great inlet of Port Jackson, just to the north, where modern Sydney now stands. On 23 May he entered another good haven north of modern Brisbane, which he called Bustard Bay after the birds shot there, and then began his closest and worst brushes with disaster.

Cook's method of taking a running survey of land bearings required an inshore course, but doing this up the Australian coast funnelled him, almost unaware, into the open southern jaws of the Great Barrier





Reef. *Endeavour* avoided the clearly growing dangers until about 11 o'clock on the night of 10 June, when she suddenly struck a coral outcrop nearly 20 miles off the land. In an attempt to release her, about 50 tons of weight – ballast, stores and the carriage guns – were thrown overboard, but it was high tide and the ship was stuck fast, holed and flooding badly. With great difficulty she was hauled off a day later, a broken spur of coral fortunately jamming in the hole it had made, since the pumps could not otherwise have saved her. A sail was quickly fothered over the bottom and Cook laid the ship ashore a little to the north, in what has since been called the Endeavour River. Here, far-from-perfect repairs were made; sick and exhausted men recuperated on fresh turtle, shellfish and wild vegetables; and more plant collecting was carried out. It was also here that Cook's party were the first Europeans to see kangaroos, which Bank's surviving dog fruitlessly chased, although some were shot and eaten. The local people, however, proved as hard to engage as they had been at Botany Bay and caused panic by starting a bush fire, which destroyed the remains of the shore camp. On 6 August Cook sailed again, picking his way through the reef for a week until he found a passage to open sea. He had sailed over a thousand miles since mid-May, sounding the depth continuously.

Two days later, with an onshore wind falling to calm, their boats had to tow the *Endeavour* against an inexorable swell that was carrying her back into the breakers. At one point they were within 80 yards of destruction but were saved by a catspaw of breeze, before more towing and a turn of wind and tide took them safely back through a gap – the 'Providential Channel' – in the unending reef. From then on,

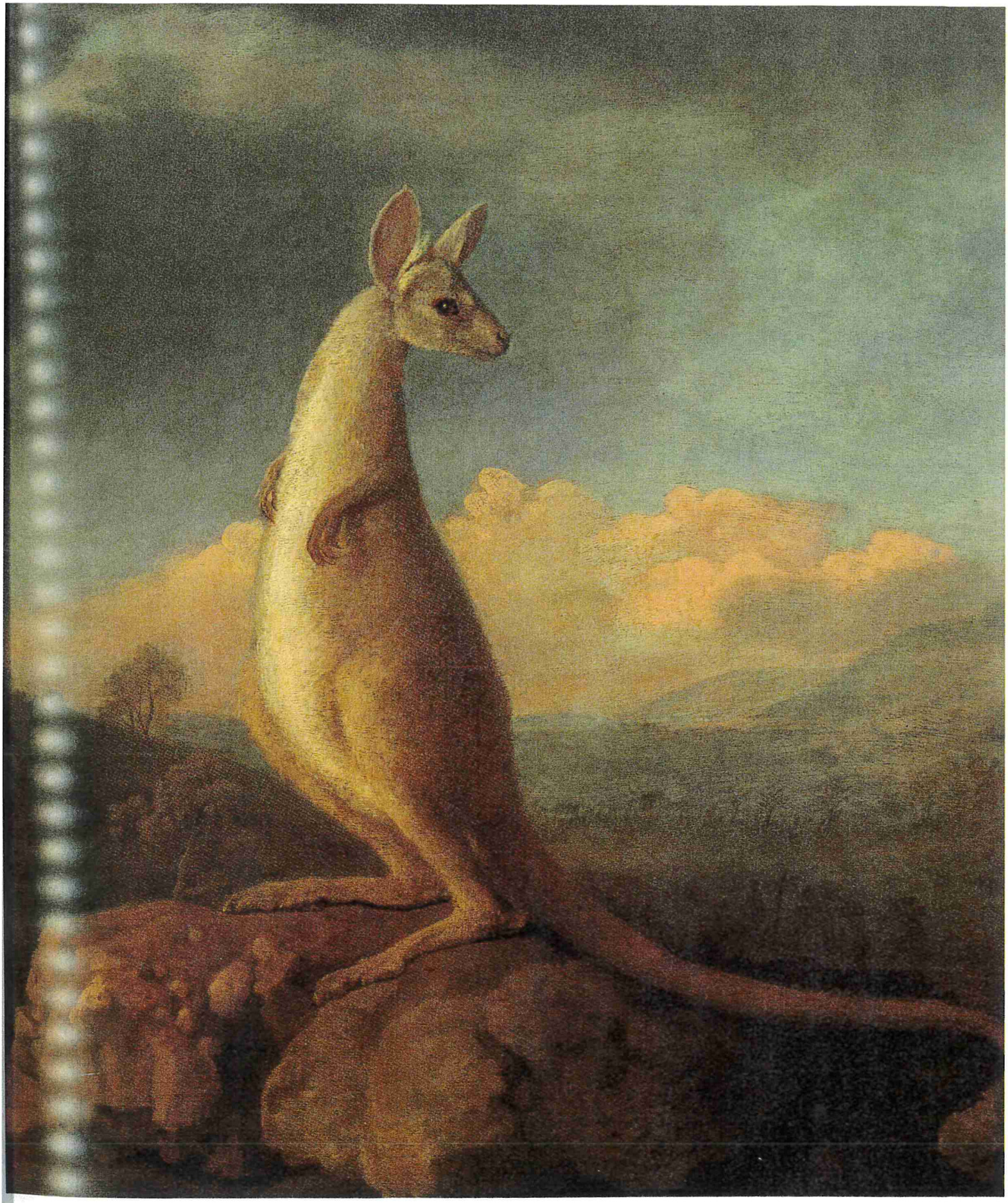
OPPOSITE THE KONGOUROO OF NEW HOLLAND (detail), by George Stubbs, *c.*1773.

While *Endeavour* was beached for repairs the naturalists enjoyed their only extended period collecting Australian flora and fauna. The first kangaroo, an animal not known in Europe, was shot and skinned on 14 July 1770 and Cook reported it made good eating. Once back in England, Banks commissioned the celebrated animal artist George Stubbs to paint it along with a dingo. The pictures were exhibited together in London in 1773.

with a boat sounding ahead, they pursued an intricately slow course northward within the reef and on 21 August reached the tip of the vast hinterland: this Cook named Cape York. That evening, from a hill on offshore 'Possession Island', he saw that only sea lay to the westward and that the 2,000-mile coast up which he had passed and now claimed as 'New South Wales' was not joined to New Guinea. He had confirmed the existence of the strait through which Torres had unwittingly sailed from the east in 1607 and that Tasman had sighted from the west in 1644.

On 29 August *Endeavour* raised the New Guinea coast and on 11 October anchored at Batavia (Jakarta), capital of the Dutch East Indies, on Java. From there Cook sent home the first news of *Endeavour* since she had left Rio nearly two years before, while the battered ship was taken into the Dutch dockyard and repaired. Her uncoppered hull was in a desperate condition with major damage to the keel, shipworm, and planking cut to barely an eighth of an inch thick in places. The Dutch did a good job, but the weeks at Batavia – a sink of malarial fever and dysentery – proved far more lethal to the crew than their past voyage had done. Banks and Solander went down but recovered; eight others died, including the Tahitians Tupaia and Tataia. After Cook sailed on 26 December, 23 more also died from illness contracted there on the way to the Cape of Good Hope. They included Herman Spöring, Banks's secretary; Sydney Parkinson, the hard-working botanical artist; and Charles Green, the astronomer. Heading north from Cape Town, Lieutenant Hicks was the final casualty, dying from long-standing tuberculosis, which allowed Clerke to be promoted to his position. The goat finished its second circumnavigation but Banks's last greyhound died before *Endeavour* anchored in the Downs, off Deal, on 13 July 1771.

There Cook stepped ashore with his journals and 'charts, plans and drawings' for the Admiralty Board, with a covering letter to its secretary. This modestly expressed hopes that these items would 'be 'found sufficient to convey a Tolerable knowledge of the places they are intended to illustrate, & that the discoveries we have made, tho' not great, will Apologize for the length of the Voyage'. Given his unprecedented if not complete success – the question of the southern continent remained in the air – the apology must have appeared curiously unnecessary.



THE *ENDEAVOUR* ARTISTS

Cook's *Endeavour* expedition was the first scientific voyage to carry artists, though only unofficial ones, to draw what they found. They were in the private party of the wealthy Joseph Banks, who was allowed to sail with Cook to pursue his primarily botanical interests.

Alexander Buchan, a Scot of whom nothing else is known, was employed to record landscapes and other subjects, and made a few studies on the outward voyage, mainly in Tierra de Fuego, but died of epilepsy on 15 April 1769, two days after they reached Tahiti. Banks's Swedish–Finnish secretary, Dr Joseph Spöring (c.1733–1771), also later did technical drawings of Pacific canoes and some landscapes and coastal profiles; this left the botanical draughtsman, Sydney Parkinson (c.1745–1771), as the principal voyage artist.

Parkinson, a Quaker brewer's son from Edinburgh, was largely self-taught but was influenced by contemporary landscape watercolourists, especially Paul Sandby, of whom he became a neighbour after moving to London in the early 1760s. He exhibited flower paintings in London and Banks first employed him in 1767 before taking him on the *Endeavour* voyage at £80 a year. During the voyage he produced just over 1,200 drawings of plants and animals for Banks, 280 being finished botanical studies for the latter's proposed *Florilegium*. This was not published at the time and appeared only in the 1980s, using the original engraved plates and drawings by Parkinson and others (all now in the Natural History Museum). With Buchan gone, Parkinson also extended his range into studies of Pacific peoples and landscape views. These

right The artist Sydney Parkinson (detail); self-portrait from his posthumously published *A Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas in His Majesty's Ship the Endeavour* (1773), edited by his brother.

opposite IPOMOEA INDICA; from the Banks *Florilegium*, after Parkinson. The plant is a form of morning glory; its pounded root was used in Hawaii and Tonga to treat bowel ailments.

show his artistic limitations, all being rather stiff in drawing terms, though with lively and distinctive character in the figures and notable atmosphere in some of the views. Many were not for Banks, however, but for his own interest and use, which led to later problems. A likeable, intelligent and observant young man, and a natural peacemaker, Parkinson further showed his good relations with Pacific peoples in his compilation – the first ever made – of words and phrases in the Tahitian, Maori and Australian Aboriginal vocabularies, and he also kept an illustrated fair-copy journal of the voyage. Unfortunately, he did not survive it, being among the 31 members of the crew who died from fevers contracted at Batavia while the *Endeavour* was refitting there on the way home. When he died at sea on 26 January 1771, two days after Spöring, his much-admired pictorial journal disappeared (and has never been found), but enough of his notes survived for his account of the voyage to be published by his elder brother, Stanfield Parkinson, after some difficulty in retrieving many of Sydney's figure and landscape studies from Banks. Reproduced in John Hawkesworth's official account of the expedition, with others appearing in Parkinson's, and then copied by others, they were the earliest views of the South Pacific and its inhabitants widely seen by a general public.

below A View in the Island of Huaheine; with the Ewharra no Etua, or House of God ... and a Tree Called Owharra with Which Houses Are Thatched (detail); engraved for the *Endeavour* voyage account (1773) after Parkinson, from an image made from two of his drawings.

opposite Head of a New Zealander, with a Comb in His Hair; engraved in 1773 after a drawing Parkinson probably made at Queen Charlotte Sound in January 1770. He wrote, 'Their faces were tataowed, or marked either all over, or on one side, in a very curious manner, some of them in fine spiral directions...'