Maritime Exploration

This series includes accounts, by eye-witnesses and contemporaries, of voyages by Europeans to the Americas, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific during the colonial period. Driven by the military and commercial interests of powers including Britain, France and the Netherlands, particularly the East India Companies, these expeditions brought back a wealth of information on climate, natural resources, topography, and distant civilisations. Their detailed observations provide fascinating historical data for climatologists, ecologists and anthropologists, and the accounts of the mariners’ experiences on their long and dangerous voyages are full of human interest.

The Three Voyages of Captain James Cook Round the World

During Charles Darwin’s 1831–6 voyage on the Beagle, his on-board library included ‘Cook’s voyages’ (the edition is not specified). This illustrated 1821 edition, in seven volumes, is representative of the versions available in the early nineteenth century. Volumes 1 and 2 cover the first Pacific voyage of James Cook (1728–79), the object of which was to observe the 1769 transit of Venus from Tahiti. The text replicates the version published in 1773 by John Hawkesworth (1715–73) as part of a collection of ‘Voyages … in the Southern Hemisphere’, which interwove Cook’s account with botanical and ethnographical notes by the ship’s naturalist, Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820). The journals were only published separately much later: Cook’s in 1893 (ed. Wharton) and Bank’s in 1896 (ed. Hooker); both are also available. Volume 1 narrates the voyage to Tahiti, the observations there, and the explorers’ first impressions of New Zealand.
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The Three Voyages of Captain James Cook Round the World

Volume 1:
An Account of a Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, and 1771

James Cook
THREE VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN JAMES COOK ROUND THE WORLD.

COMPLETE

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

WITH MAP AND OTHER PLATES.

VOL. I.

BEING THE FIRST OF THE FIRST VOYAGE.

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James Cook
Frontmatter
More information
LIFE

OF

CAPTAIN JAMES COOK.

This celebrated navigator was the son of a day-labourer, and born at Marton, a village in Yorkshire, Nov. 3. 1728. At the age of thirteen he was put to a school, where he learnt writing and arithmetic; after which he was bound apprentice to a shopkeeper at Snaith, but on discovering an inclination for the sea, his master gave up his indentures, and he articed himself for three years to a ship-owner at Whitby. After serving out his time diligently, he entered in 1755 on board the Eagle sixty gun ship; and in 1759 he obtained a warrant as master of the Mercury, in which ship he was present at the taking of Quebec, where he made a complete draught of the channel and river of St. Laurence, which chart was published. Mr. Cook was next appointed to the Northumberland, then employed in the recapture of Newfoundland; and there also he made a survey of the harbour and coasts. At the latter end of 1762 he returned to England, and married a young
LIFE OF CAPTAIN COOK.

woman of Barking; but early in the next year he went again to Newfoundland, as surveyor, with Captain Graves, and he afterwards acted in the same capacity under Sir Hugh Palliser. While thus employed, he made an observation of an eclipse of the sun, which he communicated to the Royal Society. It being determined to send out astronomers to observe the transit of Venus in some part of the South Sea, Mr. Cook was selected to command the Endeavour, a ship taken up for that service; and accordingly he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, May 25. 1768. Our limits will not allow of giving the details of this interesting voyage; and therefore we shall content ourselves with stating, that the transit was observed to great advantage at Otaheite; after which lieutenant Cook explored the neighbouring islands, and then shaped his course for New Zealand, which he circumnavigated, and thus ascertained that it was not a continent. From thence he sailed to New Holland, or, as it is now called, New South Wales, where he anchored in Botany Bay, April 28. 1770, an epoch of great importance in the history of that part of the world. From hence he sailed to New Guinea, and next to Batavia, where the ship being refitted, he returned to Europe, and arrived in the Downs, June 12. 1771. For his services on this occasion, Mr. Cook was promoted to the rank of commander, and an account of his voyage was soon after published by Dr. Hawkesworth. The interest ex-
LIFE OF CAPTAIN COOK.

vii

cited hereby induced government to send Captain Cook on another voyage of discovery to the southern hemisphere, and he accordingly sailed with two ships, the Resolution, commanded by himself, and the Adventure, by Captain Furneaux, April 9. 1772. After proceeding as far as 71° 10′ of south latitude, amidst mountains of ice, and discovering some new islands, our voyagers returned to England, July 30. 1775. The Resolution in this enterprise lost only one man out of her whole complement, for which Captain Cook was elected a member of the Royal Society, and afterwards the gold medal was voted to him by the same learned body. He was also appointed a post-captain, and promoted to a valuable situation in Greenwich hospital. As the narrative of the former voyage had not given satisfaction, the history of the second was drawn almost wholly from the captain’s journals, and digested by Dr. Douglas, late bishop of Salisbury. But the labours of Cook were not to end here. In July 1776 he sailed again, to decide the long agitated question of a northern passage to the Pacific Ocean. In this voyage he had two ships, the Resolution and the Discovery; but after sailing as high as 74° 44′ N. the object was considered impracticable; and on Nov. 26. 1778, the ships arrived at the Sandwich islands. Here at first they were well received, but at length the people of Owhyhee stole one of the boats, to recover which Captain Cook went on shore, with the intention of getting
into his possession the person of the king; but in doing this a crowd assembled, and the brave commander fell by a club, after which he was dispatched by a dagger; and his body was carried off in triumph and devoured. This melancholy event occurred in the morning of the 14th February, 1779. Captain Cook left a widow and family; on the former a pension of 200l. a year was settled by the king, and 25l. a-year on each of the children.
CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

FIRST VOYAGE.

INTRODUCTION to the first Voyage .......................... Page 3

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.
The Passage from Plymouth to Madeira, with some Account of
that Island ................................................. 7

CHAP. II.
The Passage from Madeira to Rio de Janeiro, with some Account
of the Country, and the Incidents that happened there ...... 18

CHAP. III.
The Passage from Rio de Janeiro to the Entrance of the Strait
of Le Maire, with a Description of some of the Inhabitants of
Terra del Fuego ............................................ 44

CHAP. IV.
An Account of what happened in ascending a Mountain to search
for Plants .................................................. 51

CHAP. V.
The Passage through the Strait of Le Maire, and a further De-
scription of the Inhabitants of Terra del Fuego, and its Pro-
ductions .................................................. 59

CHAP. VI.
A general Description of the south-east Part of Terra del Fuego,
and the Strait of Le Maire; with some Remarks on Lord
Anson’s Account of them, and Directions for the Passage
westward, round this Part of America, into the South Seas .. 67
X

CONTENTS.

CHAP. VII.
The Sequel of the Passage from Cape Horn to the newly discover-
ed Islands in the South Seas, with a Description of their Figure
and Appearance. — Some Account of the Inhabitants, and seve-
ral Incidents that happened during the Course, and at the Ship's
arrival among them


Page 74

CHAP. VIII.
The Arrival of the Endeavour at Otaheite, called by Captain
Wallis, King George the III.'s Island. — Rules established for
Traffic with the Natives, and an Account of several Incidents
which happened in a Visit to Tootahah and Touburai Tamaide,
two Chiefs


84

CHAP. IX.
A Place fixed upon for an Observatory and Fort. — An Excursion
into the Woods, and its Consequences. — The Fort erected. —
A Visit from several Chiefs on Board and at the Fort, with some
Account of the Music of the Natives, and the Manner in which
they dispose of their Dead


93

CHAP. X.
An Excursion to the eastward, an Account of several Incidents
that happened both on Board and on Shore, and of the first In-
terview with Oheraa, the Person who, when the Dolphin was
here, was supposed to be Queen of the Island, with a Description
of the Fort


102

CHAP. XI.
The Observatory set up. — The Quadrant stolen, and Conse-
quences of the Theft. — A Visit to Tootahah. — Description of a
wrestling Match. — European seeds sown. — Names given to
our People by the Indians


113

CHAP. XII.
Some Ladies visit the Fort with very uncommon Ceremonies. —
The Indians attend Divine Service, and in the Evening exhibit
a most extraordinary spectacle. — Touburai Tamaide falls in-
to Temptation


126

CHAP. XIII.
Another Visit to Tootahah, with various Adventures. — Extraor-
dinary Amusement of the Indians, with Remarks upon it.
CONTENTS.

Preparations to observe the Transit of Venus, and what happened in the mean time at the Fort - - Page 184

CHAP. XIV.

The Ceremonies of an Indian Funeral particularly described. — General Observations on the Subject. — A Character found among the Indians to which the Ancients paid great Veneration. — A Robbery at the Fort, and its Consequences; with a Specimen of Indian Cookery, and various Incidents - 144

CHAP. XV.

An Account of the Circumnavigation of the Island, and various Incidents that happened during the Expedition; with a Description of a Burying-place and Place of Worship, called a Morai - - - - - 157

CHAP. XVI.

An Expedition of Mr. Banks to trace the River. — Marks of subterraneous Fire, — Preparations for leaving the Island. — An Account of Tupia - - - - - 173

CHAP. XVII.

A particular Description of the Island; its Produce and Inhabitants; their Dress, Habitations, Food, Domestic Life and Amusements - - - - - 184

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Manufactures, Boats, and Navigation of Otaheite - 209

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Division of Time in Otaheite; Numeration, Computation of Distance, Language, Diseases, Disposal of the Dead, Religion, War, Weapons, and Government; with some general Observations for the Use of future Navigators - 225

CHAP. XX.

A Description of several other Islands in the Neighbourhood of Otaheite, with various Incidents; a Dramatic Entertainment; and many Particulars relative to the Customs and Manners of the Inhabitants - - - - - 245
CONTENTS.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The Passage from Oteroa to New Zealand; Incidents which happened on going ashore there, and while the Ship lay in Poverty Bay

Page 274

CHAP. II.

A Description of Poverty Bay, and the Face of the adjacent Country. — The Range from thence to Cape Turnagain, and back to Tolaga; with some Account of the People and the Country, and several Incidents that happened on that Part of the Coast

289

CHAP. III.

The Range from Tolaga to Mercury Bay, with an Account of many Incidents that happened both on board and ashore. — A Description of several Views exhibited by the Country, and of the Heppahs, or fortified Villages of the Inhabitants

314

CHAP. IV.

The Range from Mercury Bay to the Bay of Islands — An Expedition up the River Thames. — Some Account of the Indians who inhabit its Banks, and the fine Timber that grows there. — Several Interviews with the Natives on different Parts of the Coast, and a Skirmish with them upon an Island

339

CHAP. V.

Range from the Bay of Islands round North Cape to Queen Charlotte's Sound; and a Description of that part of the Coast

360

CHAP. VI.

Transactions in Queen Charlotte's Sound. — Passage through the Strait which divides the two Islands, and back to Cape Turnagain. — Horrid Custom of the Inhabitants. — Remarkable Melody of Birds. — A Visit to a Heppah, and many other Particulars

374
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