The Voyages of Captain Cook: A Bicentennial Exhibit (Part III)

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On September 20, 1969, when the 150,000-ton tanker *Manhattan* (Captain Roger Steward) reached Point Barrow, Alaska, having left the shipyards at Chester, Pennsylvania, less than a month earlier, she became the first commercial ship to sail the Northwest Passage. It was not the silks and spices of Cathay but the effort to transport oil from Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's northern slope that gave incentive for this historic voyage.

In the years following the first transit of the Northwest Passage, completed between 1903 and 1906 by Roald Amundsen in a 47-ton herring boat, the route had been sailed by Canadian and United States' government ships and by the nuclear submarines *Nautilus*, *Skate*, and *Seadragon*. But the centuries-old hope for a northern passage that would be commercially useful was not realized until the successful round-trip voyage of the gigantic *Manhattan* in 1969.

Most of the early efforts to find a Northwest Passage had been directed at the eastern side of the American continent, and such geographical features as Frobisher Bay, Davis Strait, Hudson Bay, and Baffin Island memorialize the names of certain of the sixteenth and seventeenth century seekers of the passage. The western side of the North American continent was probed in 1579 by Sir Francis Drake, who sailed northward in the *Golden Hinde*, past San Francisco Bay, and along the coast of "New Albion" as far north, it has been claimed, as Vancouver Island. After Drake, the north Pacific remained so little known that in the seventeenth century Francis Bacon could situate his Utopian New Atlantis in this "greatest Wilderness of Waters in the World," and Jonathan Swift in the eighteenth century could place Gulliver's giants of Brobdingnag on a peninsula jutting westward into the Bering Sea.

In 1776 the British Admiralty renewed the search for a Northwest Passage and instructed Captain Cook to proceed to the "Coast of New Albion" to look for a waterway leading from the Pacific Ocean into the Atlantic Ocean or the North Sea. Cook, in fact, volunteered for this duty, but he was a tired man, and there were to be times during the ensuing voyage when his nerves seemed as frayed as the tattered rigging on his ships.

THIRD VOYAGE, 1776-1780

In the wartime shipyards at Deptford the *Resolution* (Captain Cook) and her consort ship the *Discovery* (Captain Charles Clerke) were fitted out rather poorly, as time was to show, and Cook sailed from Plymouth Sound on July 12, 1776, leaving the *Discovery* to follow as soon as her captain could extricate himself from debtor's prison. Impatient at the slowness of the law courts, Captain Clerke decamped from the Fleet prison late in July and went immediately to Cawsand Bay, where James Burney, his first lieutenant, had the ship in readiness, and on August 1st the *Discovery* sailed on a non-stop passage to Capetown.

From Capetown, where the *Discovery* arrived early in November, three weeks after the *Resolution* had anchored, Cook sent a friendly letter to William Hodges, who had been official artist on his second voyage, and to William Strahan his publisher; and James King, astronomer and second lieutenant of the *Resolution*, wrote to his friends Jane and Edmund Burke.¹ The surgeon of the *Resolution*, William Anderson, found time to make a wagon trip to Stellenbosch, where he examined a granite boulder of "prodigious size" and sent a description of it to the Royal Society. In the absence of an official scientist for the expedition, Anderson was to give some attention to natural history, and the *Discovery* carried a gardener from Kew, David Nelson, who was collecting for Joseph Banks.²

In conformity with his instructions from the Admiralty, Cook sailed from Capetown into the Indian Ocean to determine the location of an island lately discovered by the French. This was Kerguelen Island,

¹ One of Lt. James King's younger brothers, the Rev. Dr. Walker King, was later to serve as a literary executor for Edmund Burke, in which capacity he helped to edit the collection of Burke's *Works* that appeared between 1792 and 1827.

² David Nelson is the subject of a brief chapter in a delightful little book by A. W. Anderson, *How We Got Our Flowers* (London, 1956), pp. 143-149. Nelson was among those set adrift by the mutineers on the *Bounty*, but after enduring the rigors of that famous 3,600 mile open-boat voyage to Timor with Captain Bligh, he died at Coupang in 1789.

which the ships sighted through the fogs in late December. Cook sent his young sailing-master, William Bligh, to look for a harbor, and on December 25th the ships dropped anchor in Christmas Harbor, where the shores were lined with rows of tall penguins looking like a regiment of soldiers. Grass was cut for the livestock and supplies of water and seal blubber were taken in. Among the boggy declivities Anderson and Nelson collected specimens of an edible plant which the whalers of the next century were to call Macquarie's cabbage, and one of the sailors found a bottle with a note inside which had apparently been left by Kerguelen's consort ship *Oiseau*. Cook added a few lines to this note, dropped in two silver pennies, and replaced the bottle, which was reportedly carried off sixteen years later by the American brig *Ino*.

At the end of December the ships sailed eastward, through thick patches of kelp or seaweed that lie off Kerguelen Island, and less than a month later they touched at Adventure Bay in Tasmania, where on Cook's second voyage the *Adventure* (Captain Furneaux) had paused. The natives were unarmed and quite naked, and James Burney noted in his journal that they "have much less idea of decency than an English dog." Among the plants that David Nelson collected in Tasmania was an acacia with lemon-yellow blossoms which is still sometimes known as Nelson's mimosa.

Nearly two weeks in February were spent at Queen Charlotte's Sound in New Zealand, where wood and water were plentiful. Copper boilers were set up on shore to melt down the seal blubber obtained at Kerguelen Island, and though this processing was intended to produce lamp oil, one of the assistant surgeons, David Samwell, noted that the New Zealanders were extremely fond of this "delicate food." Cook and Clerke with an armed party visited Grass Cove, where Furneaux's boat crew had been massacred on the previous voyage, and found out some details regarding that affair. Cook saw little point in avenging the massacre, though the natives were contemptuous of his restraint, and John Webber, the official artist of the expedition, was so bold as to sketch a portrait of Kahura, the chief instigator of the massacre. What astonished the New Zealanders most was the sight of the horses, cattle, sheep, and goats that Cook was transporting to Tahiti.

Light and insufficient winds delayed the expedition northeast of New Zealand, and it became apparent that the work of exploring the northwest coast of America would have to wait till the following summer. After sighting three new islands in the southern Cook group, on one of which a small landing-party was detained for a day by in-

scrutable natives, the ships touched briefly at Palmerston Island. Here cocoanuts were gathered, grass was cut for the livestock, and Surgeon Anderson was enchanted by the branching coral in one of the lagoons where colorful fish swam placidly in the bright water.

The ships tarried for nearly ten weeks among the islands of the Tonga archipelago, and William Bligh was able to make a detailed chart of the group. David Samwell found Nomuka to be "as beautiful a spot as imagination can paint," and he amused himself shooting wild ducks at a large lagoon while shore parties under Lt. King's direction were buying hogs and other provisions and carrying on a surreptitious trade for red feathers. At Lifuka in mid-May the voyagers were entertained with wrestling and boxing matches and wild native dances, to which they reciprocated by putting their marines through maneuvers ("a most ludicrous performance," said William Bligh) and shooting off an impressive display of fireworks. Cook and his men were unaware that the chiefs of these Friendly Islands had planned this night's entertainment as an ambush, which failed to kindle only because the chiefs could not agree among themselves on the best time to strike.³

As the ships approached Tahiti in August, Omai, the "noble savage" who had fluttered the fashionable circles of London two years earlier, "sat all day on the forecastle viewing his native shores with tears in his eyes." Tents and observatories were again erected at Point Venus, and the mainmast of the *Discovery* was hauled on shore for repairs. Shortly before his departure, Captain Cook observed a sacrificial ceremony, the human victim having been killed the night before. In John Webber's watercolor drawing of this ritual event, the skulls of some fifty former victims can be seen in the background, and this macabre picture, which was engraved for the official account of the voyage, became one of the best-known illustrations of the century.

Pilfering by the natives was a constant annoyance. At Tonga several indispensable cats had been spirited from the rat-infested ships, and while on shore duty Lt. Molesworth Phillips of the marines had had his bed stolen, "some say from under him while he was asleep." At Moorea Cook was so incensed by the disappearance of two goats that he set fire to a village and destroyed a number of canoes, and at Huahine a "hardened scoundrel" who stole a brass sextant was pun-

³ Information concerning this planned assault on Cook and his men was obtained by William Mariner, who was a captive in the Tonga Islands from 1805 to 1810. See John Martin, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands* (Boston, 1820), pp. 304-305.

ished by having both his ears cut off. Not all of Cook's officers condoned this severity, and Captain Clerke usually punished such offenders by shaving half of the thief's head, one eyebrow, and half his beard, "which effectually rid us of his company till his hair grew again."

Omai having decided to settle at Huahine, the carpenters of both ships built a small house for him where he could lock up the treasures he had brought back with him from England—a barrel-organ, a jack-in-the-box, some toy soldiers, sky rockets, a musket, a bayonet, two pairs of pistols with swords, cutlasses, and ammunition. When William Bligh returned to Tahiti in 1788 on his ill-fated breadfruit voyage, he learned that Omai had died of natural causes some thirty months after Cook had left him.⁴

During the month the ships lay at Raiatea, one of the marines from the *Resolution* abandoned his sentry post and disappeared into the night. After he was found and brought back, a midshipman and the gunner's mate from the *Discovery* both deserted. Determined to recover these men, Cook detained the son, daughter, and son-in-law of the island chieftain on board his ship and held them as hostages until the natives located the English fugitives at Bora-Bora and brought them back. It was at this time, while she was a prisoner on the *Resolution*, that John Webber painted a portrait of Poetua, the chieftain's daughter.

John Webber's *Poedooa* is a highly romantic image of a firm-breasted young Raiatean girl bare to the waist, who wears the flowers of the cape jasmine in her hair and a Gioconda look upon her face. She represents both the mysteries of the East and the sensual pleasures of Tahiti, the sailor's paradise.⁵

After crossing the equator in late December, the ships came upon a low crescent-shaped atoll, Christmas Island, where vast numbers of green turtles were procured, though two seamen got lost on the little island and nearly perished from heat and thirst.

At dawn on the morning of January 18, 1778, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery* saw high land to windward. This was the beginning of

⁴ The account of Omai's return in the official narrative of Cook's third voyage revived public interest in Omai. William Cowper, in the first book of his poem *The Task* (1785), waxed indignant over the fate of this gentle savage, and a stage production by John O'Keefe, *Omai: or a Trip Round the World*, with costumes and scenery by de Louthembourg, was a smashing success at the Theatre Royal during the Christmas season of 1785. See William Huse, "A Noble Savage on the Stage," *Modern Philology*, 33 (February 1936), pp. 303-316.

⁵ This is Bernard Smith's description of Webber's painting in *European Vision and the South Pacific, 1768-1850* (Oxford, 1960), p. 93.

the recorded history of Hawaii. Oahu was sighted first, but the winds favored an approach to Kauai, and a landing in small boats was made at Waimea Bay, where a native was killed in a scuffle over a boat-hook. At Niihau a few days later, Lt. Gore and a party went ashore to trade for salt and yams and were stranded on the beach for two nights before the boats could take them off through the high surf. Cook fixed the position of these westward islands of the Hawaiian group, and he suspected that others would be found to the east, but a fuller survey was deferred as the ships pressed northward to look for a northwest passage.

While still some days from the American coast, Surgeon Anderson observed a strange phosphorescence in the waters around the *Resolution*. Taking up a sample of seawater, he described the tiny sea-medusae in a page that was later to stir the imagination of Coleridge the poet:

They [the small sea animals] emitted the brightest colours of the most precious gems . . . assuming various tints of blue, from a pale sapphire to a deep violet colour . . . frequently mixed with a ruby, or opaline redness. . . . With candle light, the colour was, chiefly, a beautiful, pale green, tinged with a burnished gloss; and, in the dark, it had a faint appearance of glowing fire.⁶

The coast of present-day Oregon was sighted on March 7, but storms off Cape Foulweather drove the ships southward, and it was not until two weeks later that an indentation in the coastline to the north gave promise of a harbor. Disappointingly, low land seemed to close this opening, and Cook named the point Cape Flattery. He did not realize that his ships were within a few miles of the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca leading to the lovely inland waters of Puget Sound.

About one hundred miles northwest of Cape Flattery the ships found anchorage in Nootka Sound, at a spot still known as Resolution Cove on Bligh Island. Here the foremast of the *Resolution* was unstepped and taken on shore for repair, sails and rigging were mended, supplies of wood and water replenished, and a quantity of spruce beer was brewed. The natives eagerly traded fine sea-otter furs and bearskins for brass buttons, pewter plates, and broken pans and kettles. Sometimes at dusk they appeared in masks of cedarwood carved to resemble the heads of deer or birds and paddled round the ships singing

⁶ "Few passages, indeed, which Coleridge ever read seem to have fecundated his imagination so amazingly as that 257th page of Cook's second volume, which described the 'small sea animals swimming about' in 'a kind of slime' with 'a faint appearance of glowing fire.'" John Livingston Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu* (Boston, 1927), p. 90.

wild songs, to which the Englishmen responded with French horns and a fife and drum. Cook, Clerke, and some others visited a native village at nearby Yuquot Point, where John Webber made drawings of rude dwellings, totems, and primitive implements.⁷ During the next quarter-century Nootka Sound was to become one of the most-frequented harbors on the northwest coast of America, but Cook did not stay long enough to discover the precise geographical nature of this region. It remained for George Vancouver, one of the midshipmen on the *Discovery*, to return in 1792 to circumnavigate Vancouver Island and survey in detail the coastline from California to Alaska.⁸

Leaving Nootka Sound in late April, the ships bore away to the northwest, and on May 4th they sighted a volcanic mountain which they identified as Mt. St. Elias, the landmark that had been Vitus Bering's first sight of the American coast in 1741. Cook and Anderson landed briefly on Kayak Island, where Steller, the naturalist with Bering, had collected for ten hours,⁹ and a few days later the ships dropped anchor in Prince William Sound to repair a leak in the *Resolution*. Natives came off in kayaks, and noting that the hats of these Eskimos were ornamented with glass beads, Cook surmised that Russians from Kamchatka had been trading for furs along this coast.

Two weeks in early June were consumed in exploring that vast arm of the sea which is known today as Cook Inlet. William Bligh looked into the Knik estuary and landed on Fire Island near the site of present-day Anchorage, and Lt. King hoisted the English colors at Possession Point. Through mist and fogs the ships traced the coast past Kodiak Island, the Shumagins, and Unimak Island in the Aleutians. By the end of June the ships were anchored in Samganuda Harbor on Unalaska Island. It was clear that the Russians were well known at Samganuda (now called English Bay), for the natives bowed and doffed their hats as they came alongside, and they were eager to trade for tobacco and snuff. Captain Cook and a party entertained themselves by shooting grouse, while David Samwell, John Webber,

⁷ Some of these were engraved for the official account, but see also David I. Bushnell, Jr., "Drawings by John Webber of Natives of the Northwest Coast of America, 1778," *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections*, 80, no. 10 (March 24, 1928), pp. 1-16.

⁸ Vancouver's classic account, with an accompanying atlas of maps and plates, was published in 1798 as *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean, and Round the World; In Which the Coast of North-West America Has Been Carefully Examined and Accurately Surveyed*. 4 vols. A facsimile reprint of this first edition was published in 1968.

⁹ For an excellent account of Vitus Bering's second voyage, with a focus on the naturalist George Wilhelm Steller, see Corey Ford, *Where the Sea Breaks Its Back* (Boston, 1966).

and some others visited a native village. The houses resembled small hillocks of earth, and Samwell noted that "the whole town stinks worse than a tanner's yard." Webber made sketches of the houses and of a "very beautiful" young woman, and David Nelson collected specimens of an Aleutian buttercup which still bears his name (*Ranunculus Nelsoni*).

From Samganuda Harbor the ships emerged in the Bering Sea and spent the first two weeks of July tracing the shores of Bristol Bay. A boat was sent ashore briefly at Cape Newenham, where deer and foxes were seen, and at the end of the month Cook sighted St. Matthew Island and remarked on the myriads of sea birds flying round its perpendicular cliffs. Surgeon Anderson, ill from tuberculosis, died on August 3rd and was buried at sea a day or two before the ships sighted St. Lawrence Island.¹⁰ On August 9th, sailing through Bering Strait, Cook named the western extremity of America after the Prince of Wales and passed the twin Diomed Islands, which lie midway between Cape Prince of Wales and the Siberian mainland.

Before the ships sailed northward into the Arctic Ocean, Cook landed for two or three hours at a village on the Asian shore, and John Webber drew sketches of the Chukchi natives. During the next week the two ships pushed as far north as 70° 44', just beyond Icy Cape, where further progress was blocked by unexpected pack ice. At this point Cook was almost as close to the North Pole as he had been to the South Pole on his previous voyage. It was probably fortunate that he had not arrived a few weeks earlier, when the pack ice usually retreats briefly from the Alaskan shore, for if he had tried to push past Point Barrow it is likely that his ships would have been locked in the ice forever.

From Icy Cape the ships sailed south and then westward for a week, along a wall of ice sometimes ten or twelve feet high. Occasionally the fogs lifted to reveal herds of walrus on the ice.¹¹ Moving down the Siberian coast past Serdtze Kamen, Cook again reached Bering Strait, accurately determined the position of the easternmost tip of Asia, and resolved to return the following summer to make another northern exploration.

To assure himself that Alaska was not an island, as it was represented on Stählin's map of 1774, Cook crossed again to the American

¹⁰ A survey of Anderson's career is attempted by J. J. Keevil, "William Anderson, 1748-1778, Master Surgeon, Royal Navy," *Annals of Medical History*, new series, 5, no. 6 (November 1933), pp. 511-524.

¹¹ At first these animals were thought to be sea cows of the kind Steller had described, but that curious creature was extinct even in Cook's time and is known today only by a bone or two in the Leningrad Academy of Sciences.

coast looking for a possible channel. In early September the ships anchored for a week in Norton Sound, which Cook named after Lt. King's relative, Sir Fletcher Norton, then Speaker of the House of Commons. Lt. King took two small boats northward to explore the inlet, the men relaxed ashore and picked wild raspberries and currants, while Cook made seventy-seven sets of lunar observations to check his longitude.

A few days after the vessels had anchored for a second time in Samganuda Harbor, a native accompanied by two Asiatics came to Cook bringing a present of spiced salmon baked in a rye loaf, and from this gift Cook inferred that there were Russians somewhere on the island. Corporal John Ledyard of the marines, a native of Connecticut, volunteered to return with these messengers and make contact with the Russians.¹² On Cook's advice Ledyard went unarmed, taking only some bread and brandy and a few bottles of rum and wine as a gift. After a circuitous day-and-a-half journey by foot and by water, Ledyard arrived at a village somewhere on Iliuliuk Bay, probably near the site of the present U.S. Naval base at Dutch Harbor, where he found some thirty Russians and twice that many Asiatics from Kamchatka. Three of these Russian fur hunters returned with Ledyard, and in a few days Gerasim Izmailov, the captain of the Russian sloop *St. Paul*, which Ledyard had seen anchored at Dutch Harbor, came to see Cook, and the two captains compared charts and exchanged information, though they had to converse by signs and figures. Against the expedition's planned return the next summer, Izmailov gave Cook letters of introduction to the Governor of Kamchatka and to the commanding officer at Petropavlovsk, and Cook entrusted Izmailov with a letter to the British Admiralty, enclosing a chart of his discoveries, which Izmailov promised to forward via Siberia and St. Petersburg.¹³

In late October the ships left the Aleutians and sailed for the Ha-

¹² There is room for a scholarly biography of John Ledyard, who was later to have interesting contacts with Robert Morris, Thomas Jefferson, John Paul Jones, Lafayette, and Joseph Banks. Two twentieth-century biographies have so far appeared, but both are popular rather than scholarly: Kenneth Munford, *John Ledyard: An American Marco Polo* (Portland, Oregon, 1939) and Helen Augur, *Passage to Glory: John Ledyard's America* (Garden City, N.Y., 1946). The best life of Ledyard is still the outdated nineteenth-century study by Jared Sparks, *The Life of John Ledyard, the American Traveller*, 2d. ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1829). Material relating to Ledyard's unsuccessful attempt to cross Russia and Siberia will be found in Stephen D. Watrous, ed., *John Ledyard's Journey through Russia and Siberia, 1787-1788: The Journal and Selected Letters* (Madison, 1966).

¹³ This letter and map eventually reached London on March 6, 1780. The map is reproduced as Chart XLIX in the portfolio accompanying Beaglehole's edition of Cook, and the text of the letter is given in Beaglehole's volume 3, part 2, pp. 1530-1533.

waiian Islands. One month later they sighted the island of Maui and lay off shore trading with natives who came alongside in canoes. For seven weeks the ships cruised around Hawaii searching for a harbor, while the sailors grew increasingly restive. Trying to get round Cape Kumuhaki, the eastern tip of Hawaii, the ships lost sight of each other during a heavy rainstorm and parted company for nearly two weeks. It was not until mid-January that William Bligh found a bay on the western side of Hawaii, Kealahou Bay, where the ships could anchor.

When Captain Cook went ashore, the natives fell on their hands and knees, and he was led to a place sacred to Lono, a deity of Hawaiian mythology. Here, with songs or incantations and surrounded by strange images and human skulls, Cook was wrapped in a red cloth and fed some barbecued pig. Whether or not the natives considered him to be an incarnation of Lono is a moot point. In later ceremonies, an offering was burnt before him, and Cook placed a gift of beads beside one of the images.

The observatories were erected in a sweet-potato field near the sacred enclosure, and the natives apparently concluded that the astronomers' clocks and watches were the gods which the Englishmen worshipped. In a few days King Kalani'opu with some of his chiefs, dressed in cloaks of brilliant red and yellow feathers, visited Cook and with great ceremony made him a present of seven or eight magnificent feathered capes. When David Nelson, George Vancouver, John Ledyard and some others set out to climb the heights toward Mauna Loa, they noticed, among the dense forest growth that blocked their way, many of the bright birds whose plumage was used in these feathered cloaks. The tops of the lofty ohia trees were frequented by a black bird, the o-o, whose wing tufts were of a fine crocus yellow, and among the tree-ferns and lobelias darted the scarlet i'iwi, whose breast feathers were used in the Hawaiian capes and leis. Specimens of these and other birds were collected, and drawings of them were made by John Webber and by William Ellis, one of the surgeon's mates.¹⁴

At daylight on February 4th, having salted thirty-nine puncheons of fresh pork for a sea stock, and with sails and rigging newly mended, Cook directed the ships northward along the Kona coast. It was the

¹⁴ On Hawaiian birds see Scott B. Wilson and A. H. Evans, *Aves Hawaienses: The Birds of the Sandwich Islands* (London, 1890-1899). William Ellis's drawing of the extinct Sandwich Rail is reproduced in color in this volume. George Forster published the first technical description of a native Hawaiian bird from four skins of the scarlet i'iwi that were brought to Cassel, Germany, by B. Lohmann, one of the two sailors who had been lost for a day or two on Christmas Island.

winter season when the Kona wind sometimes gathers furious strength, and in one of these gales the foremast of the *Resolution*, a solid timber of Nootka fir, was sprung so badly that Cook reluctantly ordered the two ships back to Kealahou Bay.

The tempo of thievery seemed to increase, though it had been a problem all along. Twice in one day the armourer's tongs were stolen from the *Discovery*, and at dawn on February 14th Lt. Burney, the officer of the watch, reported that the *Discovery's* large cutter had been stolen during the night. Captain Cook went ashore at once with Lt. Molesworth Phillips and nine marines under arms and attempted to seize King Kalani'opu as a hostage. Soon Captain Clerke and Lt. Burney, waiting on board the *Discovery*, were alarmed at hearing a volley of small-arms fire and a violent shout from the natives. Looking through his telescope, Burney saw Captain Cook receive a blow and fall into the water.¹⁵

Across the bay Lt. King was on shore at the astronomers' tents, where the ships' carpenters were still at work on the foremast of the *Resolution*, and so Captain Clerke sent William Bligh with a strong party to reinforce them and bring the mast on board.

I never before felt such agitation [said Lt. King] as on seeing at last our cutter coming on shore, with Mr. Bligh. He called out before he reached the shore, to strike the observatories as quick as possible, and before he announced to us the shocking news that Captⁿ Cook was killed, we saw it in his and the sailors' looks.

Tempers on both sides gradually cooled during the ensuing week, though a party under Lt. Rickman's command set fire to a native village and bayoneted and decapitated several of the inhabitants. The bodies of the four marines who had been killed with Captain Cook were never recovered, and a peace emissary sent by King Kalani'opu intimated that Cook's body had been accorded the treatment reserved for the bodies of high-ranking Hawaiian chiefs, the flesh being stripped from the bones. A bundle wrapped in a feathered cloak was eventually brought off to the ships and was found to contain some of Cook's remains—his hands, both arms, his skull, and the scalp with the ears attached. At sunset on Sunday, February 21, 1779, with the ships' flags at half mast and the guns firing at ten-minute intervals, these remains of Captain Cook were committed to the deep.

¹⁵ The circumstances leading up to Cook's death are carefully reconstructed by J. C. Beaglehole, "The Death of Captain Cook," *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand*, 11, no. 43 (October 1964), pp. 289-305. See also Rupert T. Gould, "Some Unpublished Accounts of Cook's Death," *The Mariner's Mirror*, 14, no. 4 (October 1928), pp. 301-319.

The next day, before the two ships sailed from Hawaii under Captain Clerke's command, a native chief returned Cook's lower jaw and his feet.

After collecting hogs and yams at Kauai and Niihau, the ships sailed northward for Kamchatka in order to carry out Cook's plan for a second Arctic exploration. Ropes and sails were continually giving way now, and the sheathing on the bows was beginning to come off. As April turned to May, the ships came to anchor in Avacha Bay at the harbor of Petropavlovsk, a desolate little fortress of log houses and conical huts on poles. Izmailov's letters were presented to the sergeant in command, and though the Russians were extremely suspicious of these foreign ships, Lt. King and John Webber, who could speak German, set out by dogsled to see the Governor of Kamchatka, who resided across the peninsula at Bolcheretsk. During their absence, William Bligh made a survey of the harbor, and the crewmen seined for herring and gathered nettle tops and wild onions for their broth. The German-speaking Governor, Major Magnus von Behm, returned to Petropavlovsk with Webber and King and visited the English ships. He brought presents of tea and sugar for the officers and tobacco for the sailors, and at Captain Clerke's request he arranged for twenty head of cattle and quantities of flour to be sent from Bolcheretsk. Inasmuch as Major Behm was soon to return to St. Petersburg, Captain Clerke entrusted Cook's journal as well as his own to the Major's care, for delivery to the English ambassador. It was in this way that word of Cook's death first reached England in January of 1780.

Despite the rapid decline of his own health—he was dying from tuberculosis—Captain Clerke took the weary ships into the Arctic Ocean once again and followed the ice edge from one continent to the other. This year the ice, moving early, stretched farther south, and the ships were turned back some miles short of the point Cook had reached eleven months earlier. A Northeast or Northwest passage was clearly impractical for such ships.

At daybreak on August 21st the coast of Kamchatka was again in view, and that same morning Captain Clerke died. He was buried on the north side of the harbor at Petropavlovsk, near the grave of Louis Deslisle de la Croyere, the French scientist who had sailed with Chirikov on Bering's second voyage. John Gore took command of the *Resolution* and James King moved up to command the *Discovery*. The naval stores promised by Major Behm eventually arrived from Okhotsk, and having reclaimed a drummer boy who tried to desert with a Kamchadale girl, the ships sailed out of Avacha Bay just as winter was setting in.

Through gales and hazy weather the ships passed the Kurile Islands and sailed eastward of Japan, with just a glimpse of Mount Fujiyama. Iwo Jima was sighted in mid-November, and by early December they had reached the old Portuguese city of Macao, opposite Hong Kong. Captain King noticed the arched rock overlooking the sea where the poet Camoëns was said to have composed the *Lusiad*, and he made his way to Canton and brought back some English periodicals. The seamen, meanwhile, found they could sell their sea-otter skins to the Chinese merchants for fabulous prices. "The rage with which our seamen were possessed to return to Cook's River [said King], and, by another cargo of skins, to make their fortunes, at one time, was not short of mutiny." This commercial experience on Cook's third voyage led to the development of the maritime fur trade in which vessels, chiefly from Boston, collected sea-otter skins at Nootka Sound, refreshed at the Hawaiian Islands, where they sometimes took on cargoes of sandalwood, and then sailed to an avid market in Canton.¹⁶

Late in January, 1780, heading homeward, the ships stopped for a week at Con Son Island off South Vietnam and then sailed past Sumatra and through the Sunda Strait. Here John Webber made drawings of scenes on Krakatoa, a volcanic island which was to explode in 1883 in a cataclysmic eruption. After a month at Capetown, Captain Gore took the ships around Ireland, waited for a favorable wind at Stromness in the Orkney Islands, and on October 4, 1780, the *Resolution* and *Discovery* concluded one of the longest exploring voyages in history.

In the interval of more than three and a half years that elapsed between the end of this voyage and the publication of the official account, four unauthorized narrative accounts made an appearance. The first of these was published anonymously but has since been attributed to Lt. John Rickman.¹⁷ It was a catchpenny production and has some fanciful embellishments. A contemporary review, for example, noted that "the narrative is enlivened by a love-adventure between a youth of the *Discovery* and a Zealander girl." For an eager public, however, it did outline the contours of the voyage.

The second account was published in Germany in 1781 by Heinrich

¹⁶ See F. W. Howay, "An Outline Sketch of the Maritime Fur Trade," *Annual Report of the Canadian Historical Association* (1932), pp. 5-14.

¹⁷ [John Rickman], *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*. . . . (London, 1781). A facsimile reprint was published in Amsterdam in 1967. The attribution to Lt. Rickman is made by F. W. Howay, "Authorship of the Anonymous Account of Captain Cook's Last Voyage," *Washington Historical Quarterly*, 12, no. 1 (January 1921), pp. 51-58.

Zimmermann, who had been a lower-deck sailor on the *Discovery*.¹⁸ It is a highly-compressed and somewhat ingenuous account, of which no English translation was published until 1926.¹⁹

William Ellis, a surgeon's mate who had served on both the *Discovery* and the *Resolution*, published his two-volume account of the voyage in 1782.²⁰ David Samwell remarked of Ellis that "he tells no lies 'tis true but then he does not tell you half the odd adventures we met with; it is an unentertaining outline of the voyage." Ellis's volumes are illustrated with engravings of some twenty of his own drawings. He had artistic talent, and during the voyage he made more than one hundred natural-history drawings, chiefly of birds. For the most part these remain in the British Museum, unpublished.²¹

The fourth unauthorized account of the voyage was done by the American corporal of marines, John Ledyard. It was published in Hartford in 1783, with a dedication to Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut.²² Opinion regarding it ranges from Henry R. Wagner's assertion that it is "a little masterpiece" to J. C. Beaglehole's condemnation of it as "a worthless production." It is probably safe to say that the book is more useful for the light it sheds on Ledyard than for the information it provides about Cook's third voyage. On two counts Ledyard's journal has a place in the history of American publishing. It has claim to being the first book printed in America relating to the Northwest coast; and it has claim to being the first book copyrighted in the United States.²³ There is an element of irony

¹⁸ Heinrich Zimmermanns von Wissloch in der Pfalz, *Reise um die Welt, mit Captain Cook* (Mannheim, 1781). A modern edition was published in Munich in 1966.

¹⁹ [Heinrich Zimmermann] *Zimmermann's Account of the Third Voyage of Captain Cook, 1776-1780*, transl. U. Tewsley (Wellington, N.Z., 1926; Alexander Turnbull Library, Bulletin no. 2). A second translation into English appeared four years later: *Zimmermann's Captain Cook*, transl. by Elsa Michaelis and Cecil French; ed. with introduction and notes by F. W. Howay (Toronto, 1930).

²⁰ William Ellis, *An Authentic Narrative of a Voyage . . . in Search of a North-West Passage . . .* (London, 1782). A facsimile reprint was published in Amsterdam in 1969.

²¹ [115 *Original Water-Colour Sketches of Animals Made by W. W. Ellis on Cook's Third Voyage, 1776-1780*]. Album in the Zoology Library of the British Museum (Natural History). The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, owns ten of Ellis's watercolor paintings of landscapes of Pacific islands, and others are in the National Library of Australia, Canberra.

²² John Ledyard, *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and in Quest of a North-West Passage . . .* (Hartford, 1783). A facsimile reprint was published in Chicago in 1963 by Quadrangle Books, and a modern edition with introduction and notes is available: *John Ledyard's Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, ed. James K. Munford (Corvallis, Oregon, 1963).

²³ See Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America* (New York, 1939), pp. 88-92.

in this latter claim, since fragments of Ledyard's book were plagiarized from Hawkesworth's *Voyages* and the concluding thirty-eight pages are lifted verbatim from Lt. Rickman's published account.

The long-awaited official account of the voyage was published in June, 1784, in three volumes accompanied by an atlas of more than sixty illustrations, and all copies were reportedly sold within three days.²⁴ Canon John Douglas, who had edited Cook's journal of the second voyage, was also editor of these. The first two volumes were based on Cook's manuscript, with interpolations from the journal of William Anderson, and the third volume was composed by Captain James King, who drew to some extent upon the journal of David Samwell.

The maps in the official account were based for the most part upon the surveys of Cook or of William Bligh. Despite his relative neglect by the official account, Bligh claimed that "every plan and chart from the time of Cook's death, are exact copies of my work."²⁵ The sixty or more illustrations were engraved from the drawings of John Webber, who in subsequent years became known as a landscape painter and a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy.²⁶

Cook's journal from the third voyage has recently been re-edited from the original manuscript by J. C. Beaglehole.²⁷ Beaglehole also prints the surviving portions of William Anderson's journal separately in an appendix, and one of the gems of his edition is its inclusion of the complete journal of David Samwell. Samwell's essay on the death of Cook has long been known,²⁸ but, incredibly, his journal has here

²⁴ James Cook and James King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean . . . for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere . . .* (London, 1784).

²⁵ Rupert T. Gould, "Bligh's Notes on Cook's Last Voyage," *The Mariner's Mirror*, 14 (1928), p. 371. Bligh is known to have kept a journal on Cook's third voyage, but it has never come to light. Possibly it was among the fifteen-year accumulation of Bligh's papers carried off by the mutineers on the *Bounty*. See Owen Rutter, *Turbulent Journey: A Life of William Bligh, Vice-Admiral of the Blue* (London, 1936), p. 35.

²⁶ Sixteen additional plates of Pacific views, etched and colored by Webber, were issued separately between 1788 and 1792; these were re-engraved as colored aquatints and published as a set by Boydell in 1808 under the title *Views in the South Seas*. For a list of some fifty works exhibited by Webber between 1784 and 1792, see Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts; a Complete Dictionary of Contributors and Works*, vol. 8 (London, 1904), pp. 186-187. In addition to views in the South Seas, he painted landscapes in Wales, Switzerland, France, and Italy, including Pliny's villa on Lake Como.

²⁷ J. C. Beaglehole, ed., *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery, Vol. 3: The Voyage of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780* (Cambridge, 1967).

²⁸ David Samwell, *A Narrative of the Death of Captain James Cook . . .* (London, 1786). A modern edition, with an introduction by Sir Maurice Holmes, has appeared under the title *Captain Cook and Hawaii* (San Francisco, 1957).

its first complete publication. In addition to proficiency in medicine, Samwell had a measure of literary talent. His copy of Horace went with him on Cook's voyage, and he could be moved to compose stanzas of verse after visiting the grave of the novelist Laurence Sterne.²⁹ It is fitting that Samwell's narrative of the third voyage should at last become available as a part of that cornerstone of modern Cook studies, the Beaglehole edition of Cook's journals.

²⁹ On Samwell's career see William Davies, "David Samwell (1751-1798), Surgeon of the 'Discovery,' London-Welshman and Poet," *The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (Session 1926-27), pp. 70-133.

The Beaglehole edition of Captain Cook's journals, published between 1955 and 1967. A final volume consisting of essays and bibliography is yet to appear.