European Discovery of New Zealand Before 1642

A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE

Several eighteenth century historians of Pacific exploration discussed the possibility of a French or Spanish discovery of New Zealand. These were regularly quoted by nineteenth century writers on New Zealand. Some of the latter also added other information, including a Portuguese claim to a New Zealand landfall early in the sixteenth century. This paper outlines some of these theories and examines their persistence, despite their sometimes dubious accuracy and inadequate documentation, over a couple of centuries.

Much of the exploration of the South Pacific can be summarized as a search for Terra Australis Nondum Cognita. The existence of Terra Australis, or the Antipodes, had been postulated in ancient Greek geographical writings as a temperate land, corresponding with the Temperate Zone of the northern hemisphere, but cut off from the Oecumene by the burning heat of the Torrid Zone. This concept was passed on into medieval geographical writing, and a temperate southern land, often populated with marvellous antipodean creatures appeared on many medieval maps. This concept was reinforced with the rediscovery by West European scholars in the early fifteenth century of Ptolemy's Geographia, a document far superior to any medieval treatise in geography or cartography.¹ Ptolemy's Terra Australis erroneously connected East Africa to South East Asia and after Vasco de Gama's voyage to Calicut, many cartographers redrew their outlines of Africa and India and moved Terra Australis Nondum Cognita further south. An extra peninsula was retained on 'modern' Ptolemaic maps of South East Asia and more islands, derived mainly from Marco Polo's narrative, were added.² As European exploration

increased, more reliable sources of cartographic information became available, but these were frequently distorted by copying from original charts that were not drawn to any standard scale. Latitudinal observations, when provided, were often inaccurate and there was no reliable method of measuring longitude.

Belief in an unknown southern continent persisted. By the end of the sixteenth century, elaborate arguments for its existence as an extensive land mass, necessary to counterbalance the weight of the land areas of the northern hemisphere, were being put forward by Mercator. Such arguments were still being reiterated in the eighteenth century. Any discussion of a European discovery of New Zealand before 1642 must be considered against the background of this widespread belief in the existence of *Terra Australis Nondum Cognita*. European sea captains expected to come up against it when sailing in southern latitudes and any sighting or supposed sighting of land was *ipso facto* part of the southern continent. Sightings of land by voyagers among the myriad islands of the Pacific were frequent, but because of the inadequate means of fixing latitude and longitude, many islands were found and lost perhaps several times over. Further, many of the original narratives of Pacific voyagers have been lost and their stories told at second hand, often with a lapse of many years between the event and publication. Tentative reports by mariners of landfalls in *Terra Australis* of the South Pacific were frequently elaborated on, and exaggerated, by stay-at-home journalists in Europe who, more often than not, were using such reports to promote interest in further exploration, commerce, colonization and missionary effort.

Discussion of the European discovery of New Zealand must not only be concerned with contemporary geographical beliefs, erroneous as they were, but also with geographical reality. New Zealand would have been remote indeed to the sixteenth and seventeenth century mariner. The approach from the west was blocked by Australia and the wrecks of several Dutch ships on its inhospitable western coast early in the seventeenth century discouraged sea captains from venturing too far south across the Indian Ocean en route to the East Indies. The European sailor approaching the Pacific via Magellan’s Strait, or Cape Horn, found little to encourage him to continue beating westwards against the cyclonic systems of the ‘Roaring Forties’ when favourable winds and currents carried him north and west across the Pacific to the East Indies. From the point of view of the


physical geography of the South Pacific it is perhaps not surprising
that well over a century elapsed between Magellan's entry into the
Pacific and Tasman's sighting of New Zealand. The physical facts
were also supported by the economic facts of the sixteenth and
seventeenth century. Wealth was located in the East Indies. There
was little incentive to detour into unknown waters when there was
a known source of riches in the East Indies. For European discovery
and exploration was still largely commercial in the seventeenth cen-
tury.

The French Claim

The French claim to discovery of New Zealand is based on a
narrative of a voyage of one Binot Paulmier de Gonneville who left
Honfleur, near the mouth of the Seine, in June 1503 on a voyage to
the East Indies. Soon after rounding the Cape of Good Hope he was
struck by a fearful storm which caused him to lose his way and left
him in a calm unknown sea. The sight of some birds coming from
the south led him to seek land as he needed to repair his ship and
take on water. He found a large country which he called the Southern
Indies. He and his crew stayed there six months and de Gonneville
noted in his journal the features of the land and customs of the
people. Unfortunately, when near the Channel Islands on their return
voyage to France, they were attacked by an English 'corsaire' which
took all they had. When de Gonneville finally reached France, he
made a declaration to the French Admiralty relating his discoveries,
dated 19 July 1505, and signed by the principal officers of the ship.5

This narrative first appeared in English translation in John
Callander's compilation Terra Australis Cognita which was derived
largely from de Brosses, in 1766. De Gonneville's declaration had
appeared initially in Mémoires touchant l'Établissement d'une Mission
Chrétienne dans la Terre Australe, printed in Paris by Cramoisy in
1663, and signed J.P.D.C. Prêtre Indien. In Callander's words:

This priest, as well as his father and grand father was born in France; but
his great grand father was one of the Australians, or natives of the Southern
World, whom Gonneville had brought into France at his return from that
country and whom he afterwards married to one of his own relations there,
he having embraced Christianity. The author . . . being animated by a
strong desire of preaching the Gospel in the country of his ancestors, spent
his whole life endeavouring to prevail on those who had the care of foreign
missions to send him there. . . .6

Callander lamented the fact that 'the good priest has totally
omitted to mark the longitude and latitude of this country' but
nevertheless concluded that its location 'lies to he south of the little
Moluccas, in that quarter which, according to our division, is called
by us Australasia.'

5 de Brosses, I, 106-7.
6 Callander, I, 63.
There are two points which make the de Gonneville story suspect. One is the long space of time between his alleged declaration in 1505 and the publication of the story in 1663, in the memoirs of an unidentified ‘Prêtre Indien’. The other point is the enormous distance between the Cape of Good Hope, and any part of Australasia. Australia was ruled out as the descriptions of the people did not correspond with the primitive aboriginal population. New Zealand seems impossibly distant, especially when Madagascar provides an equally likely and much closer landing place of any size for de Gonneville’s lost ship. Although de Brosses had conjectured that de Gonneville’s land was part of Australia, Burney, who used de Brosses as his main source for this narrative, disagreed. ‘Let the whole account be recognised without prepossession, and the idea that will immediately and most naturally occur, is that the southern India discovered by de Gonneville was Madagascar.’

Rainaud summarised the locations suggested for de Gonneville’s southern Indies which included Australia, some part of Australasia, Madagascar, Virginia or Maryland, Brazil or the Falkland Islands; Rainaud preferred Brazil. Hursthouse and Thomson located Gonneville’s discovery specifically in New Zealand. ‘The manners and customs of the islanders where de Gonneville anchored, according to the descriptions given, correspond wonderfull[y] with the habits of the New Zealanders’, said Thomson. Hursthouse remarked that de Gonneville’s description was ‘perhaps more applicable to New Zealand than to any other South Sea country with which we are acquainted.’ However, Taylor dismissed de Gonneville as the discoverer of New Zealand: ‘The account of his course is too vague to make out anything satisfactory from it, but there is little probability that his amiable savages were New Zealanders; as they would have been more inclined to regard the Sieur as a fit subject to exercise their gastronomic powers upon.’ And there the French claim rested, for de Gonneville has not been resurrected as regularly as various Spanish or Portuguese mariners in the South Pacific in the sixteenth century.

The Spanish Claim

The chief contender for Spanish discovery of New Zealand about 1576 is Juan Fernandez, whose voyage was described in A Memorial Addressed to His Catholic Majesty Philip the Third, King of Spain, by Dr Juan Luis Arias, Respecting the Exploration, Colonization and Conversion of the Southern Land, published sometime after 1614.

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8 Rainaud, pp. 268-9.
11 R. Taylor, Te Ika a Maui or New Zealand and its Inhabitants, London, 1855, p. 205.
There was also a pilot named Juan Fernandez, who discovered the track from Lima to Chili by going to the westward (which till then had been made with much difficulty as they kept along shore, where the southerly winds almost constantly prevail): he sailing from the coast of Chili about the latitude of forty degrees, little more or less, in a small ship, with some of his companions, in course between west and south-west, brought in a month's time to what was, to the best of their judgment, a very fertile and agreeable continent, inhabited by a white and well-proportioned people, of our own height, well clad, and of so peaceable and gentle a disposition that, in every way they could express, they showed the greatest hospitality, both with respect to the fruits and productions of their country, which appeared in every respect very rich and plentiful. But (being overjoyed to have discovered the coast of that great and so much desired continent) he returned to Chili, intending to go back properly fitted, and to keep it a secret till they and their friends could return on the discovery. It was delayed from day to day till Juan Fernandez died, when with his death this important matter fell to the ground.

In regard to this subject it must be observed, that many have related this discovery of Juan Fernandez in the following manner, affirming that they had it thus from himself, viz., that going to the westward from Lima, to discover the track to Chili, waiting their opportunity and getting off shore (where the winds almost always are southerly), a certain space of longitude (which we would, at a proper time declare); and then standing south, with little deviation to the adjoining points, he discovered the said coast of the southern continent in the latitude (which he would also tell when expedient) from whence he made his voyage to Chili.

Other relations, very worthy of credit, give this discovery as before described; but whether it happened in this or the other manner, or whether there were two different discourses, it is a very certain fact that he did discover the coast of the southern land; for it has been thus certified by persons of great credit and authority, to whom the said Juan Fernandez communicated the account with the above mentioned proofs and details of the country and the people thus discovered: and one of these witnesses, who made a statement thereof to Your Majesty, as having heard it from the said pilot, and seen the description he brought of the said coast, was the Maestre del Campo Cortes, a man as worthy of credit as any that is known, and who has been employed in Chili nearly sixty years.¹²

Both Dalrymple¹³ and Burney¹⁴ quoted similar translations of this part of Arias' Memorial. Burney commented:

The only land at present known, that in any respect answers to the description of Tierre Firme of Juan Fernandez, is New Zealand; but the distance from the American continent (above 100 degrees of longitude), though it does not exceed the powers of a good vessel with favourable winds, is full great for a month's sailing: yet it is not sufficient to be conclusive against the possibility of that country having been seen by Juan Fernandez.

¹⁴ Burney, I, 300-303.
Burney also noted that the Memorial of Juan Luis Arias exhibited 'a curious mixture of the probable and the fabulous.' He remarked that Arias 'was not a man possessed of much geographical knowledge, or who had made enquiry on the subject' and commented on a number of errors he had made concerning the Mendana voyages. 'Respecting the continent of Juan Fernandez, Arias speaks only from reports, which are yet more liable to variation. Nevertheless, the authorities on which he gives them, as well as the circumstances, are such as must be supposed to have some foundation in facts.'

Because Burney did not completely dismiss the possibility, the account of Juan Fernandez' discovery of New Zealand was related in a number of nineteenth century histories.\(^\text{15}\) Most of these authors felt that the evidence was insufficient to prove Fernandez reached New Zealand, but did not discount a Spanish landfall. The writer of the section on Discovery and Settlement in The Official New Zealand Year Book, 1893, went so far as to say 'It has been assumed as probable that the first European who visited New Zealand was Juan Fernandez. . . .'.\(^\text{16}\) However, this whole paragraph, which is very similar to Sherrin's version, was excised from the 1894 and subsequent editions of the Year Book. Beaglehole dismissed the whole story as 'a complete fabrication though it is unknown who first evolved it.'\(^\text{17}\) Wood remarked, 'The fact from which this fiction sprang was the actual discovery of the island of Juan Fernandez in 1563.'\(^\text{18}\) It is quite possible that such an account was confused with another narrative. Tahiti or another high island of the south-eastern Pacific would fit the description as well as New Zealand and could have been Fernandez' landfall. Rainaud saw this as the most likely explanation.\(^\text{19}\) Dalrymple included a map of the South Pacific in his Voyages in the South Pacific Ocean which shows both New Zealand and the island of Juan Fernandez in addition to a short coast line, located approximately 90° west and 40° south, labelled 'land discovered by Juan Fernandez.' Even in the Memorial two routes are mentioned, the one west from Lima and then south and the other west from Chile 'about the latitude of forty degrees.' The former route is more likely to have taken Juan Fernandez to Tahiti; the latter meant beating against the prevailing westerly winds and one month indeed seems too short a time to reach New Zealand from Chile in a sailing ship along this route.

It is evident that there is some confusion in the Juan Fernandez narratives. Arias mentions some 'other relations' but it is not known

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\(^\text{16}\) Official New Zealand Year Book, Wellington, 1893, p. 2.
\(^\text{19}\) Rainaud, pp. 276-7.
what these were. Certainly the time lag between 1576 and the time of writing the *Memorial* is sufficient for a certain amount of embroidery to creep into the account. It is likely too that such confusion of narratives was of little moment to Arias whose primary purpose in writing his *Memorial* was to persuade the Spanish King to send out missionaries to the southern land, *Terra Australis Nondum Cognita*. Finally, the sighting of any land in the South Pacific was, *ipso facto*, a discovery of the coast of *Terra Australis*. Arias wrote:

Many spacious rivers were also seen to discharge themselves along the coast which the pilot Juan Fernandez discovered, from which, and from the signs of the natives, and from the people being so white, so well clad, and in all other respects so different from those of Chili and Peru, it was taken for certain that it was the coast of the southern continent, and seemed to be far better and richer than that of Peru. Besides all this, the great number of large islands which, as has been stated, have been discovered on voyages from the coast of Peru, made with the object of discovering the southern land, are necessarily the evidences of the proximity of a very large and not very distant continent. . . .

Any doubt cast on the claim of Juan Fernandez did not preclude speculation on the possibility of a landfall in New Zealand by some other Spaniard before 1642. Hursthouse referred to ‘a remarkably correct Spanish chart of Dusky Bay of very early date, and Dusky Bay was not a place which Tasman the recognized discoverer of New Zealand forty years later appears to have visited.’ Unfortunately Hursthouse gives no source for this interesting piece of information and no other reference to it has been found. Hursthouse went on to suggest, ‘Might not Quiros, holding on south in continued search of the gold land (the realised Diggings of two centuries later) have been the real discoverer of New Zealand?’ Both Thomson and Hursthouse quoted linguistic evidence of a Spanish landfall in New Zealand in a supposed similarity between some Spanish and Maori words. Although both cited examples, neither placed any great value on such evidence. Thomson concluded: ‘Had the Spaniards frequented these coasts, traces of their presence would have been still discovered in other things than words; but I have looked among the natives in various parts of the country for better evidence . . . some vestiges which the followers of Mendaña and Quiros might have left behind, but no footprints are to be found.’

Another piece of ‘evidence’ for Spanish discovery of New Zealand is the so-called Spanish helmet in the Dominion Museum, Welling-
The helmet is of a type used throughout Europe during the sixteenth century, not just in Spain, and it was dredged up out of Wellington Harbour about the turn of this century. However, it was probably dumped, or accidentally dropped overboard, sometime last century since its condition suggests it has not been in the water for any length of time. It certainly provides no further clue to a possible Spanish landfall in this country.

During the sixteenth century, the Spanish sent out a number of expeditions from Panama which explored and mapped the Pacific coast from California to Southern Chile. After 1564 regular voyages were made between Acapulco in Mexico and Manila in the Philippines. It is highly unlikely that any of the Manila galleons could have been blown so far off an established northern hemisphere sailing route to become lost in the South Pacific and accidentally discover New Zealand. A Spanish sea captain sailing west through Magellan's Straits was equally unlikely to continue beating west against the prevailing winds toward New Zealand when he knew the winds and currents would carry him north along the known route to Peru and Panama, or northwest with the southeast trades along Magellan's route to the Moluccas and Philippines. Indeed Juan Fernandez was quite possibly seeking to avoid the strong northward coastal current which slowed down the trip from Peru to Chile by sailing further out to sea.

The Mendaña-Quiros voyages (1567-9, 1595 and 1606-7) are sufficiently well documented to identify with certainty most of the landfalls made. There is no evidence that they sailed anywhere near

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26 B. McFadgen, Dominion Museum, personal communication.

New Zealand. It seems equally certain that Mendaña, who knew about New Guinea, and that there was land south of the Straits of Magellan, had no evidence of any land in between, beyond the widespread belief in a *terra australis nondum cognita*. The Spaniards knew of Drake's discovery during his circumnavigation of 1577-80 that 'the Atlanticke Ocean and the South Sea meets in a most large and free scope' south of the islands of Tierra del Fuego. Nevertheless, Quiros firmly believed that the islands he and Mendaña had discovered were off the shores of the mainland of Terra Australis. The Spanish authorities refused to support any further expeditions in search of Terra Australis and apart from the exploratory expedition of the Nodal brothers who circumnavigated Tierra del Fuego, there is no record of any further Spanish voyages of discovery in the South Pacific during the sixteenth or early seventeenth century.

The lands discovered by Mendaña and Quiros soon appeared on Spanish maps. Some Spanish cartographers filled in an outline of Terra Australis but many left the South Pacific area blank. The Solomon Islands were always east of New Guinea and north of the Tropic of Capricorn. Dutch cartographers obtained copies of the Spanish maps and added the Spanish outline of the Solomon Islands, to their maps which still preserved the mythical continent of *Terra Australis Nondum Cognita*. On the world map of the Englishman John Speed drawn in 1626, information from early seventeenth century Dutch voyages is incorporated in the outline of the northern coast of New Guinea and Le Maire Strait, Staten Land and Cape Hoorn, but there is no indication of the Spanish Solomon Islands; most of the southern ocean is filled up with Magallanica, the southern continent. On the south west Pacific portion of this continent, in the latitudes of New Zealand, there appears the following legend: 'These coasts were first discovered by a Spanish ship separated from her fleet and driven here along in ye Southerne Sea.'

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30 *Mapas Españoles de América, Siglos XV-XVII*, Madrid, 1951, see especially Plates XXIX, XXXVI, XXXVII, LII for the development of Spanish outlines of the Pacific 1545-1601.
31 See Wytfliet's map of Terra Australis in his *Descriptionis Ptolemaicae Augmentum*, Louvain, 1597, facsimile *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Series I, Vol. V, Amsterdam, 1964. Willem Blaeu's world map, discussed below, also illustrates this.
The South Pacific portion of the map of Juan Lopez de Velasco, 1601, depicts an outline of the Solomon Islands derived from the voyages of Mendaña and Quiros. The Spanish discoveries were added to existing maps as in this outline of part of Willem Blaeu's world map. This map, first published in 1606, and subsequently revised, locates the Soloman Islands off the coast of the unknown Terra Australis.
There is no indication whether Speed knew about the Mendana-Quiros voyages. Perhaps the legend referred to Torres' voyage? No further information is to be obtained from the accompanying text concerning the southern continent which reads: 'Now of all the Southerne course is most unknowne and yet Art hath not beeene idle, nor altogether lost itselfe in the search: it hath discovered Countries about the 52 degree toward the Pole, but so uncertainly, that it may well yet keepe her name of Terra Incognita.'

Neither Speed's map, nor any other of the scraps of information available, provides conclusive evidence of a sixteenth century Spanish landfall in New Zealand.

The Portuguese Claim

Sherrin and Chapman remarked on a British Admiralty Chart of the Indian Ocean, 1827, which carried a legend that New Zealand's 'eastern coast was known to the Portuguese about 1550' and Cook Strait was labelled 'Gulf of the Portuguese 1550'. This would seem to be Louis Stanislas de la Rochette's 'A Chart of the Indian Ocean Improved from the Chart of M. D'Apres de Mannevillette; with the Addition of a Part of the Pacific Ocean . . .' published in London by William Faden in 1803, with another edition in 1817 and a final edition in 1827. It was published by the Admiralty as Chart No. 748. Below the name 'New Zealand' appears the legend 'Discovered and named by Tasman 1642 but whose Eastern Coast was known to the Portuguese, about the year 1550.' 'Cooks Strait' carries the date 1769 and the legend 'Gulf of the Portuguese 1550'. Alongside East Cape in the North Island appear the names 'Cape East 1769 (Cabo Fermoso 1550)'. Apart from these legends, the outline and place names on this map of New Zealand are derived entirely from Tasman and Cook. De la Rochette's chart appears to be an isolated curiosity for no legends of this sort appear on any other hydrographic charts of New Zealand produced by the Admiralty in the nineteenth century.

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33 Sherrin, p. 3; G. T. Chapman, *Centenary Memorial of Captain Cook's Description of New Zealand*, Auckland, 1870, p. xv.
The source of these Portuguese legends is very obviously the 'Dieppe Maps', a series of manuscript maps drawn by French cartographers from Portuguese sources between 1540 and 1566. Maling suggested that de la Rochette probably drew his information from one of these maps, the 'Dauphin', presented to the British Museum by Sir Joseph Banks in 1790. The Dieppe maps of southeastern Asia depict a large land mass titled Jave la Grande. In some this is attached to modern Java and islands to the east, in others, separated from Java by a narrow waterway. On the eastern coast of Jave la Grande a stubby peninsula is variously labelled Cabo Fermoso, Cabo Fremoso, Cap de Fremose. Sharp has demonstrated that Jave la

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37 Maling, p. 80.
Grande on these maps represents an exaggeration of Portuguese exploration of Java and Indonesian islands to the east to correspond with Marco Polo's account of a Greater Java which he heard about but did not visit on his return journey through western Indonesia. A large land mass to the south also fitted the current belief in Terra Australis and there was therefore no reason to question the accuracy of this outline. Sharp identified the eastern coast of Jave la Grande as an exaggerated reproduction of a chart of part of the east coast of the island of Sumba, with the outline of Sumbawa to the northwest extended to join up as a continuous coastline. Cabo Fermoso is thus identified as the eastern extremity of Sumba — Cape Undu.

In 1859, Major, supported by a number of late eighteenth century French and English geographers, identified the eastern and western coast of Jave la Grande with New Holland. "This is the opinion of MM. Dalrymple, Pinkerton, De la Rochette and several others; and I do not believe that any good reason can be alleged in refutation of an opinion so well founded." Major attributed the lack of documentation of Jave la Grande to a Portuguese desire to keep the discovery secret because it was feared some of it lay east of the Treaty of Tordesillas line in Spanish territory. The information on the Dieppe maps apparently fell into French hands by treachery! Major went on to remark: 'It may also be fairly presumed that the islands in the extreme east of our extract from the Dauphin map, represent New Zealand.' Sharp offered a more likely identification of these islands. 'A Liofer' is a garbled version of the perennial island of Offir or Offer of the old maps, i.e. Ophir, the biblical islands of Solomon which Mendana and Quiros later sought. 'Ye de Saill' and 'Ysles de Mayna' north of ‘Cap de Fremose’ are a garbled legacy of Zeylan (Ceylon) and Angamanain (Andamans) of the Polo narrative. Sharp offers no explanation for the remaining 'Ye Taba'. Apart from bearing no resemblance in outline, all these islands are located too far north for convincing identification with New Zealand. De la Rochette, however, identified the East Cape of New Zealand's North Island with Cabo Fermoso on the East Coast of Jave la Grande on his map.

Sharp may not necessarily have settled the controversy over the Dieppe maps but this debate is concerned primarily with the identification of Jave la Grande as Australia, whether the Dieppe maps are evidence of Portuguese, or French, voyages to Australia or whether it was a happy coincidence that the cartographers' outlines were drawn thus. Beaglehole admitted that an isolated Portuguese voyage or two to Australia was 'not impossible' but there was no
evidence that any of the Dieppe maps represented part of the coast of New Zealand.42  Spate remarked that an accidental Portuguese landfall in Australia was less likely than the Dutch because of the Portuguese ‘geopolitical pattern’ in the early sixteenth century; ‘the centre of gravity of Lusian power was to the west, in India: the continuing element of a crusade against the Moors . . . Malacca was an advanced base and the Malacca Straits the normal entry into the Archipelago.’43  This is perhaps the strongest argument against a Portuguese landfall in New Zealand. Firstly, New Zealand lay well inside the Spanish sphere of activity delineated by the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, and secondly the Portuguese were well occupied in the sixteenth century consolidating their trading position on the Indian Ocean sea routes and exploiting the rich trade of the East Indies. There is little motive to be found here for exploring cooler southern seas when these tropical islands provided the rich resources sought by Portuguese traders.

Tasman’s Information about the South Pacific

There is no evidence in his journal that Abel Tasman expected to find land specifically in the vicinity of New Zealand. His instructions, contained in a resolution of the Governor and councillors of the Dutch East India Company in Batavia, dated 1 August 1642, were to sail south from Mauritius to 52 or 54 degrees south. If no land were found they were ‘next to sail as far as the longitude of Nova Guinea and the Solomon Islands or somewhat farther east, in order to ascertain whether there is any passage into the Great South-Sea between the said lands, the land of d’Eendracht [Western Australia] and the unknown South-land; subsequently after completion of this search, to steer east and north of the Solomon Islands and Nova Guinea. . .’44

Several Dutch voyagers had explored and mapped much of the western coast of Australia during the early seventeenth century. In 1616, Schouten and Le Maire had sailed south of Magellan’s Straits around Cape Horn and then north west to reach Batavia by sailing north of New Guinea. South of Le Maire Strait they saw land which they believed to be part of Terra Australis and named it Staten-landt.45  Heeres remarked that Tasman’s instructions ‘show hardly any traces of even vague knowledge’ of any European discovery in the Southwest Pacific. ‘We may therefore safely take for granted’, he

continued, 'that what they knew about this point amounted to next to nothing; for, had they had any precise information on the subject, we may rest assured, that the instructions would not have omitted to refer to such knowledge. . . .'46

Nor is there any evidence of prior knowledge in Tasman's journal. Tasman set off from Batavia in 1642, spending some time at Mauritius before sailing south as instructed. Bad weather prevented his going as far as 54° south and he turned east at approximately 44° south. After coating southern Tasmania, which he remarked upon as being the first land they had met with in the South Sea, and not known to any Europeans, he continued eastward. On 13 December 1642, towards noon he saw a large high lying land. Tasman named it Staten Landt, 'since we deemed it quite possible that this land is part of the great Staten Landt, though this is not certain. This land seems to be a very fine country, and we trust that this is the mainland coast of the unknown South-land. To this course we have given the name of Abel Tasman passagie because he has been the first to navigate it.'47

Tasman carried with him the journal and charts of Schouten and Le Maire's voyage and Hessel Gerritz's 'Great Chart of the South Sea' published in 1622.48 Neither chart showed any indication of land in the vicinity of New Zealand.

Sherrin49 and the writer of the article on European discovery in the Official New Zealand Year Book, 1893, described an atlas published by 'William Bleau', in which one map showed a line of coast labelled Zelandia Nova. This is obviously the result of confusion between the atlases of Willem Blaeu, the father, and Johan Blaeu, the son, who took over his father's map publishing business and position as Cartographer to the Dutch East India Company on his death in 1638. Willem Blaeu's world map reproduced a standard version of Terra Australis; Johan Blaeu incorporated the results of seventeenth-century Dutch voyages of discovery in his world map of 1648 which was reprinted in his Grand Atlas.50

There are two possible sources for the idea that Tasman possessed a chart on which New Zealand was indicated. One is the version of Tasman's journal reproduced by Callander in his Terra Australis Cognita: 'On the 13th (December 1642) being in the latitude of 42

46 Heeres, p. 88.
49 Sherrin, p. 3.
degrees 10 minutes south and in the longitude of 188 degrees 28 minutes, I found the variation 7 degrees 30 minutes eastward. In this situation I discovered a high mountainous country, which is at present marked in the charts under the name of New Zealand.'

This is at variance with all subsequent English translations which differ little from the following: 'Item the 13th. do. Latitude observed 42° 10', Longitude 188° 28'; course kept east by north, sailed 36 miles in a south-south-westerly wind with a top-gallant gale. Towards noon we saw a large, high lying land, bearing south-east of us at about 15 miles distance; we turned our course to the southeast, making straight for this land . . .' Callander's version of Tasman's narrative changes frequently from first to third person in a way that indicates that pieces of the original were linked together by explanatory material. The reference to New Zealand in the quotation above can most logically be interpreted as an explanatory interpolation. This is an obvious interpretation of the first, abridged, English translation of Tasman's journal by Robert Hooke for the benefit of the Royal Society of London. This reads: 'December 13. Latitude S.42°.10'. Longitude 188°.28'. N.E. variation 7°.30'. they had land in sight which was very high and hilly, and which in the Charts is now called New Zealand.'

There is no evidence that Tasman knew of the existence of the present land of New Zealand but the name New Zealand certainly did appear on one of his charts. On Hessel Gerritsz' Great Chart of the South Sea, a legend south of the Indonesian Archipelago indicates that 'New Zealand east of Ceram, sailed by Jasper James the younger; Duifjes land (land of the little dove) opposite Kei and Aru, Moddereiland (Mud Island) de Vuite Banken (the Shoals) the coast from 9 to 14 degrees, sailed by J. Rosingeyn; the north coast of the Papuas with its continuation to 246 Dutch miles east of Maba, navigated by J. Le Maire, here placed as is delineated by the said discoverers are looked together upon parts of New Guinea.'

In the Mercator-Hondius-Janssonius Atlas of 1636, J. Jansson's map Indiae Orientalis Nova Descriptio depicts 'Nieu Zeelandt' as a piece of unconnected coastline south of 'tLandt vande Papuos' which is quite clearly meant to represent part of the southern coast of West Irian.

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51 Callander, II, 361.
52 Heeres' translation. Other versions noted above differ only slightly.
53 'A Short Relation out of the Journal of Captain Abel Jansen Tasman, upon the Discovery of the South Terra incognita; not long since published in the Low Dutch by Dirk Rembrantse', Philosophical Collections No. 6, March 1682, p. 180.
The outlines of Australasia known to the Dutch after Tasman's voyage in 1642 are shown in this portion of the world map published by Johan Blaeu in his *Grand Atlas*, 1663. Terra Australis has now been reduced to a small circle, Australia Incognita, around the South Pole. Note that on this map the New Zealand coastline is shown in two pieces. Thévenot's map of 1663 depicted a continuous coastline, as did Tasman's own chart. However, both Tasman, and his pilot, Frans Jacobszoon Visscher suspected there was a channel in the vicinity of Cook Strait and Visscher depicted this on his maps. The area within the circle lower left on the original was filled with an inset map of the Arctic regions.

Conclusion

There would be cause for excitement indeed if documentary evidence for a pre-1642 European discovery of New Zealand were turned up. It seems unlikely but there remains the possibility of something being found in the archives of Seville or Madrid or some other Spanish library, or perhaps in Lisbon, or Paris. There are many gaps in our knowledge of early European contacts with this land. For example, we do not know who actually gave it the name New Zealand. Perhaps in some Dutch archive there is a document that would tell us. The serious student will quite rightly dismiss all claims to a pre-Tasman landfall because there is not sufficient documentation. Nevertheless, the scraps of evidence outlined here, suspect as they are, will continue to bolster the speculations of the romantics who like to think of perhaps a Frenchman, or a Spaniard, or a Portuguese, or someone else, setting foot on our shores during the sixteenth century.

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