

Reviews

Chance Discovery of Australia and New Zealand by Portuguese and Spanish Navigators between 1521 and 1528. By Roger Hervé, transl. into Engl. by John Dunmore. The Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1983. 72 pp. illus. N.Z. price: \$13.95.

THE history of Portuguese priority in the waters of Australia and New Zealand has, in the past two centuries, been closely related to the credibility given to a well-known cartographical output — the Dieppe Maps — drawn in this Norman harbour during the six (or seven) last decades of the sixteenth century. After some setbacks, mainly caused by political considerations (the most serious of which arose in the end of last century, during the heyday of Britain's imperial era, with severe repercussions on the next decades) the work of a few scholars — namely Spate, Hervé, McIntyre and Wallis — enabled the maps to recover their due prestige and to be considered as the chief evidence of Portuguese priority in Terra Australis.

The present study clearly attempts to establish a theory for the 'whodunnit' of the first European exploration of the coasts of New Zealand and Australia. Roger Hervé displays the vast erudition he has accumulated on this particular subject by elaborating on the cartography of the Dieppe Maps, not only in what concerns their representation of Australia and New Zealand but also in aspects of other continents. It is, however, in a non-cartographical source — a mid-sixteenth century ruttier written by a Portuguese renegade, João Affonso or Jean Alfonse, at the service of the French king Francis I — that the author finds the key-pieces to match the cartographical information and form his theory: in June 1526, a Spanish ship — the *San Lesmes* — was scattered from her fleet near Cape Horn and, while trying to return to Spain, was forced to sail west, below the Polar Circle, and then north-west, reaching the coasts of New Zealand and Australia.

Although this book has the advantage of giving us a thorough scholarly review of Early Australiana, the theory deriving from such an erudite apparatus is somehow imbalanced. In fact, the author himself finds it strange that a voyage could have been performed at such high latitudes and in a region ravaged by the Roaring Forties; nevertheless, and after providing us with a hypothetical explanation for the issue, he insists that this is the only possible voyage of discovery within today's knowledge of facts that can be accepted for New Zealand and the east coast of Australia.

Yet considering the title of this study, and other more or less explicit references made within it, have we not before us a counterweight to K. G. McIntyre's hypothesis of a Portuguese discovery by Cristóvão de Mendonça, put forward in *The Secret Discovery of Australia* (London, 1977)? It is possible that the edition of this book may have moved Roger Hervé to supply scholars with alternative sources and a new first-discovery theory from his own rich experience as researcher in this field. Roger Hervé's *Chance Discovery*, more than the innovations brought to us —

the Spanish priority on the east coast of Australia and New Zealand and the navigation of the *San Lesmes* — is another important element of support to the bibliography favourable to pre-Cook discoveries, by reinforcing its three main foundations, i.e., that the Dieppe Maps are genuine; that Australia is represented on them and that Australia was actually discovered by Europeans long before James Cook (1770) and even before the first 'official' Dutch sighting of 1606.

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Bishop Selwyn in New Zealand, 1841–68. Edited by Warren E. Limbrick. New Zealand Academic Monographs, General Series No.1. The Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1983. 160 pp. N.Z. price: \$13.95.

IT IS likely that more has been written about Bishop George Augustus Selwyn than on any other religious leader in New Zealand's history. Publications on Selwyn range from the spacious two-volume 'life and letters' by H. W. Tucker, which appeared a year after his death, to pamphlets such as the deliciously titled *No Road for his Coach*, published in 1961 in a series for children on the lives of great missionaries. Certainly only a handful of Australian Anglican bishops have inspired even two, let alone three or four scholarly biographies. In the history of nineteenth and twentieth-century Anglicanism, Selwyn is notable not only as a pioneering colonial bishop, but also as one of a select band of Englishmen who, having held a colonial see, returned to England for an equally vigorous career in the established church. Moreover in Geoffrey Rowell's recent work, *The Vision Glorious* (1983), on 'themes and personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism', Selwyn is discussed along with John Keble, J. H. Newman, J. M. Neale, Bishop Edward King and other Anglican heroes who embodied the theology and pastoral ideals of the Oxford Movement.

Yet despite the quantity of the literature relating to Selwyn, there is clearly ample need for a new biography. For one thing, most of what has been written to date has been based on more or less the same range of sources, and all of it is at least faintly hagiographical in tone. When the centenary of Selwyn's death was observed in 1978, therefore, it was a very suitable occasion for the authorities of St John's College in Auckland to sponsor a series of public lectures on aspects of its founder's New Zealand episcopate.

The seven essays in this book are based on those lectures. The editor, Warren Limbrick, contributes a summary of Selwyn's life up to 1868, when he left New Zealand, together with an essay on Selwyn's ideas on the church and his role in laying the foundations of the Church of the Province of New Zealand. K. N. Booth writes on the founding of St John's College, W. P. Morrell on Selwyn's relations with the Church Missionary Society, Kerry Howe on Selwyn and the New Zealand wars, Hugh Laracy on Selwyn as a missionary in the Pacific Islands, and Ian Bewerd on Selwyn's significance as an early exponent of Christian unity. Another paper by the late Ruth Ross on the creation of the missionary bishopric of Melanesia — a fine