SECTION B
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Intrusion of the European

The reasons for Western contact with New Guinea at a particular point of time, the various motives that took Europeans so far from home, the circumstances of their disappointments or satisfactions in making contacts, and the development of certain outlooks, are best seen by reading at first hand the words of those people who have played a part in 'the intrusion'. Their coming and their doing must be seen and judged not in isolation, but against the kaleidoscope of world history. For this reason, Part I of this section presents discussion and documents related to the background of European interest in the East, the practical problems that had to be overcome before Europeans could make direct contact with the East, and the great variety of motives governing their actions.

The gap separating the mental processes of the New Guinea peoples and the Europeans was as great as that separating their skin colour, clothing, boats and weapons. Because the Europeans were nearly always receivers, and because New Guinea did not have the things they valued, they were often prejudiced against the country and the people, whom they described as savage and inferior to other races. Sometimes the

PLATE 13: Prevailing winds which governed the success of voyages of exploration and trade
Europeans who came as givers were prejudiced too. Because the New Guinea peoples lacked the special sophistication that was necessary for them to accept the Christian faith in the same way that a European could, the missionary described them as children, ignorant and evil. The impressions gathered by European visitors led to established attitudes that later influenced the pattern of administration in New Guinea.

Part 2 of this section is devoted to a study of the nature of the first culture contacts—the first impressions formed, the reactions to the appearance and actions of the foreign race and the attitudes that resulted from these experiences.

A half-century or less saw all the main islands of Polynesia opened to European contact. Foreign impact on Polynesia might be described as shattering compared with the early sporadic and tentative probes into New Guinea. In the three hundred years preceding permanent European settlement in New Guinea, only the fringes of the mainland and the adjacent islands were examined. At least until 1870 there was no thought of pushing into the interior or of establishing any sort of permanent settlement. Europeans merely forged links to a chain of casual contacts with coastal peoples that had been started at least three centuries before the Portuguese arrived in the Pacific. Traders from the islands of the Indonesian Archipelago, Malays, and possibly Chinese, had already forged many links. Some of the earliest European explorers who touched on the west and north-west coasts of New Guinea were surprised to find items of Asian manufacture and indications of contact with Islam, and to hear Malay words in the peoples' vocabulary. Had a reporter from yet another culture visited New Guinea after its three centuries of European contact, say about 1860, he would have found no more evidence of European contact than a few trade items and the odd word from a sailor's vocabulary. James Selwin, a beachcomber on Willaumez Peninsula about 1815, told the surgeon, Coulter, he was substituting English for the native 'gibberish'. Coulter found the natives' language overlaid with damns and curses peculiar to a maritime life.1 (C12) At Port Carretet in 1849, Captain Keppel was greeted by 'What ship that?' 'God dam!' 'Rum got?' He thought the manners of the people were not at all improved by their intercourse with more civilized nations.2 (B112)

Written records tell only a fraction of the story of culture contact. For every ship that carried a man, or perhaps a captain's wife, with the desire and skill to record the details of a voyage, there must have been many that left no record. From the evidence we have of Chinese trade missions throughout the Archipelago as far as Timor, it is not improbable that parts of New Guinea were known by mariners from China and other regions of the Far East. It is unlikely that material will come to light to prove that the natives of Humboldt Bay and the Admiralty Islands with 'remarkable long Jewish noses'3 (B52) and those of the Katau River having features of 'very marked Jewish character'4 (B51), are part of the Lost Tribe of Israel; it is also unlikely that evidence will come to light to prove that the Tolais learned the delicate operation of trepanning the skull5 from the diffusion of Egyptian culture, or that the 'Egyptian' art forms described by D'Urville at Dorei (Manokwari) resulted from the same diffusion of culture.6 (B45) However, it is possible that the archives of Madrid as well as those of other centres, particularly in Asia, contain material that would fill out the meagre picture we have of New Guinea before 1600.

When Valentine attempted an acculturation study of the Lakalalai people of New Britain, he found that their history could not be given sequential and chronological coherence without the information that was available only in European records. He said, "... only by piecing together an ethnohistorical account from sources on both sides of the contact relationship can an investigator find meaningful order in a changing situation which is not fully understandable from either side alone."7

The field of ethnohistory has only recently been delineated out of the no-man's land between anthropology and history. Gregor Dening has defined the ethnohistorian's aim:

'Ethnohistory's prime concern is not with myth, legend or genealogy, or with historical reconstructions of illiterate societies, or with the origins of these societies. The ethnohistorian's prime concern is with the description of illiterate societies by literate observers at the time when contact between the two had not changed the illiterate society.'8

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4 Journal of William Macleay, The Macleay Papers, MS. Linnean Society, Sydney, entry for 3rd July 1875
Since it is the aim in this section to approach the early history of New Guinea from an ethnohistorical viewpoint, material dealing with first culture contacts has been limited to contacts of a casual nature, 'when contact between the two had not changed the illiterate society.'

From a sympathetic study of the documents in this section, I believe we can develop important historical awareness. Perhaps the most staggering aspect of such an awareness is the realization of the time it has taken for Europeans and New Guineans to accept what James McAuley calls 'the most elementary fact: that they shared a common humanity.'

When we realize that at the time European labour recruiters were preying upon the New Guinea peoples there were other Europeans living out their lives in New Guinea, sacrificing everything for the welfare of the people among whom they lived, then we can see the great potential for good that is within man, and we are not unduly despondent if, on some occasions, an evil thing is thrown up instead. And lastly, when we understand the values and assumptions of both European and New Guinean and when we are aware of all the pressures that are directed upon a man, forcing him to behave in a certain way, we are less likely to judge him summarily; the makers of history will appear, like other less conspicuous men, neither wholly good nor wholly evil.

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9 J. O. McAuley, 'We Are Men—What Are You?' Quadrant, Vol. 4, no. 3, 1960, p. 74
PART 1
Background, Approach and Motives

Richard Parkinson, who was settled in the Gazelle Peninsula as early as 1882, felt that 'many of the peculiar manners and customs of the natives might well be the rudiments of an old culture introduced by the original discoverers.' Who were the original discoverers? We must agree with Dr Beaglehole that 'it would be doing Europeans too much honour to suggest that historically they were the only persons capable of navigating the seas south of Java and New Guinea.' G. F. Carter's examination of the potential of Pacific Island sailing craft makes this idea more attractive. Some of the more extensive trade cycles within New Guinea necessitated canoe voyages over quite long distances. (See Section A, Networks of Exchange and Trade) S.H. Riesenbergs sees evidence for a number of connections by canoe between New Guinea and Micronesia. It is possible that islands further afield also had connections with New Guinea. A tradition in Fiji and Western Polynesia refers to a land, 'Buloto', which affords fine yams, taro, bright-plumed birds, crocodiles and disease. Guppy thinks this could refer to one of the Melanesian Islands, but Parsonson is convinced it refers to New Guinea.

Because of New Guinea's proximity to the Indonesian Archipelago, one would expect to find evidence of connections with that region. That contacts between the islands of East Indonesia and West New Guinea were being made at the time the Europeans arrived in that part of the world, we know from Spanish and Dutch records of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Evidence of contacts before this period is, however, fragmentary. At this stage of research we are ignorant of the duration and frequency of such contacts. In the literature of the East there is the occasional suggestion of knowledge of or contact with New Guinea. There is, for instance, indication that the Javanese had some knowledge of West New Guinea in the mid-fourteenth century. Some of the recorded history of the East is based on tradition. One such tradition has a folk-hero, of Biak, Goera-besi, married to the daughter of the Sultan of Tidore. Apart from theories, we have with the unearthing of ancient Chinese pottery and Asian glass beads fragmentary evidence of inter-island trade that brought West New Guinea into indirect contact with Asia.

From the writings of Marco Polo, the Venetian, and from the publications of the Ming Dynasty, it appears that the Chinese were aware of the larger islands of the Indonesian Archipelago. They traded with the Celebes for trepang and the bird of paradise and with Timor for sandalwood. There can be little doubt that the source of these trade items was New Guinea. For this trade the Chinese depended on middlemen—seamen of Banda and of Macassar, known as 'Bugsis'. Chinese knowledge of the eastern islands of the Archipelago seems to have been gathered from hearsay. Religious pilgrims, ambassadors and envoys supplied the bulk of geographical knowledge. The southern provinces of Fukian and Kuangtung had the monopoly of foreign trade. It is possible that the adventures of merchants and mariners from these parts might have remained unknown to scholars in the north who collected material for history. The great Chinese Admiral, Ching Ho, made the main contribution to Chinese knowledge of the South-west Pacific as a result of seven voyages undertaken between 1405 and 1433. There has been some speculation about whether, on the last of Ching Ho's voyages


9 Paul W. van der Veur, Search for New Guinea's Boundaries, Canberra, 1966, p. 6
10 Ibid
11 The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East, ed. H. Yule, London, 1875, 2nd edn., Vol. 2, Bk. 3, p. 254
(1431-33), part of his expedition sailed south-east from Sumatra and reached Australia.\(^9\) In 1453 a change in policy at the Chinese Court discouraged trade and contact with foreigners, so that when the Europeans made contact with West New Guinea they found not Chinese but Indonesian influence dominant.

The imagination of the European was gripped by the idea of Lochac, an island rich in gold which Marco Polo claimed existed in the seas south of Java. The terms ‘Jawa’ and ‘Jawi’ were applied by the Arabs to the Archipelago generally, and to Sumatra specifically.\(^10\) There is evidence that in the era of Hindu influence in the Archipelago the island of Sumatra bore the name ‘Yava’.\(^11\) In the Catalan Map of 1375 (Pl.14) the last great island named ‘Jana’ (for Java) seems certainly to represent Sumatra. In 1299 Kublai Khan claimed to have led his conquering forces to ‘Mul-Java’ (Java Mainland)—a land which appears to have been the Malay Peninsula or perhaps Cambodia. The location of Marco Polo’s Java, therefore, must remain in dispute; but for the many who searched for Lochac it was the only clue.

De Barros in 1563 recorded several voyages made by Western travellers in Eastern vessels from Malacca towards the south-east via Sumatra.\(^12\) De Barros notes that these travellers were searching for islands...
reported to be rich in gold. When the Florentine, Marignolli, journeyed into the eastern seas around 1340, he claimed to have visited ‘Saba’, a place which he described as the finest island in the world, and which he associated with Sheba and the source of Solomon’s wealth because he found it ruled by a queen.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{13} John de Marignolli and his Recollections of Eastern Travel’, Cathay and the Way Thither, H. Yule, ed., op. cit., p. 333 et seq. According to the Old Testament, King Solomon obtained great quantities of gold and silver from a land in the south called Ophir and was visited by its queen, Sheba. See 1 Kings 9: 26-28; 10: 1-22

There could be some connection between these early European voyages and the compilation of a set of French maps known as the Dieppe Maps (1536-66). The maps appear to be based on a Portuguese model and one of them by Jean Rotz (1542) shows with considerable accuracy the northern, western and eastern coasts of Australia. It seems likely that the information on this map was not first hand but was gathered by Westerners from Eastern ports. Sheba’s land in the south (Ophir), Marco Polo’s Lochac and ‘the great south land’, the existence of which was advanced as a theory in the second century A.D. by Ptolemy and Pomponius Mela, were compounded in
the European mind. Each report seemed to support the others and to confirm the existence of a fabulously rich land as yet untouched by Europeans.

Until the close of the fifteenth century Europeans could speculate only, for they did not have the material means to attempt a discovery; but at the point of time when the Chinese turned away from the lands to the south, European endeavour was directed towards contact with that region by the perfection of navigational instruments, the discovery of sea routes and the construction of ships which could make long voyages and withstand enemy attacks.

Once a passage into the Pacific Ocean had been found, the Portuguese and Spaniards—the first of the Western nations to venture—devoted themselves to the discovery of the legendary land of gold, to the direction of trade in spices and other exotic commodities of the East, and to the religious conversion of peoples of the new lands that lay in their paths. They recorded their primary objective as a search for merit before God by winning souls for him. Their complete faith in their God’s approval and support of their ventures gave them the courage to endure terrible privations. The setting out of their expeditions was accompanied by religious festivity in which benedictions played a large part. The Church often gave special dispensations to those who took part in the voyage, while the ships were decorated in such a way as to leave no doubt that God was directing the mission. ‘Our famous ships,’ wrote the pilot of the De Quiros expedition, ‘were painted with no little art, denoting that Christ made Peter the head and column of the Church, and should be of all that immense number of idolators who, in those vast and remote provinces, were buried in the darkness of blind ignorance.’ Thus, the Catholic ventures had much of the atmosphere of the Crusades. Their escapes from perils of storm and starvation were seen to be the result of direct intervention by God or the Saints. Islands of their discovery were often named after the Saints who watched their progress and extended protection, e.g., S. Christoval, S. Bernardo; while on the map of the Pacific they left a record of their hopes and fears, their satisfactions and disappointments.

It would seem that Iberian knowledge of New Guinea was limited to parts of the north coast between the Kepulawan Schouten and Astrolabe Bay, discovered in four separate voyages along that coast, and to the discoveries of Torres along the south coast in 1606. Yet, thirty-seven years before Torres’ voyage, Gérard Mercator depicted New Guinea in his world map as a very large island with the caption:

‘New Guinea, which seems to have been called “Land of the Black People” by the Florentine Andrea Corsali, is perchance the island which Ptolomy named Labadius.’

Ten years before Torres’ voyage, Cornelis Wytfliet published a world map that showed New Guinea separated from Terra Australis by a narrow strait. These cartographers might have been in possession of the Dieppe Maps in which case the information they give is probably a rationalization of various second-hand reports. On the other hand, the information could be the direct result of discoveries that were not publicised at the time. When the Dutch sought information on New Guinea from the natives of Ceram and Banda in 1602, the latter reported they could say nothing certain with respect to the islands of New Guinea, but that there were Portuguese living on the south side of the island. As they also reported they had never seen any Portuguese ships, it seems likely that the Dutch misunderstood their informants.

It is possible that Torres had Wytfliet’s map with him and knew of the existence of the strait. Torres established that New Guinea could not extend below 10 degrees south latitude when he sailed westward at ten degrees for forty days. Even so, Torres’ voyage was not well known; the credit for discovery might have gone to James Cook after his 1770 voyage if, after the British capture of Manila in 1762, Dalrymple had not discovered a copy of Torres’ letter to the King of Spain among the documents that had been seized. Hessel Gerritsz’s map of the Pacific (1622) suggests that he had come into possession of Spanish maps that revealed the voyage of Torres; but he had also to consider the conflicting evidence of the chart of the Dutch ship, Dayfken, which showed an extension of the New Guinea coastline to 14 degrees south latitude. (Pl. 21) Gerritsz was also aware of numerous inaccuracies in Spanish maps, and he was not prepared to draw the conclusion that Willem Jansz (1605-6, B12) and Jan Carstensz (1623, B13) had missed the strait and reached a new land farther south. Gerritsz left the question of the strait open ‘until more clarity is obtained.’ The voyages of Abel Tasman (1644) and of Gonzalanc Van Aarschens (1756) were further attempts on the part of the Dutch to clear up this question; but it was to the Englishman, James Cook, that a successful clarification fell, as late as 1770. (B59)

The British and French arrived too late in the Pacific to prevent the Dutch from establishing a hegemony over the richest islands of the Indonesian Archipelago. New Guinea, on the eastern extremity of the rich Archipelago, proved disappointing to the Dutch. A few initial voyages along the New Guinea coast established that trade potential was limited. Busy with their lucrative concerns in the Indonesian Archipelago, the Dutch tried, nevertheless, to safeguard New Guinea from foreign interference. They made known their claim to West New Guinea, while the East was afforded security from foreign penetration by natural barriers of shoals, reefs and perverse ocean currents.

How was the Dutch hegemony established? The Dutch had been under the same Hapsburg rule as Spain and had acted as middlemen, conveying eastern goods to European ports. In 1568 the first of a series of Dutch revolts occurred against Spain. When Philip II of Spain made good his claim to the throne of Portugal, he was able, in 1595, to close the Portuguese harbours to his rebellious Dutch subjects. The Dutch were left with a choice of abandoning this valuable trade or of sending their ships direct to the Orient. Many Dutchmen had served in Portuguese...
ships. Jan Huysgen van Linschoten, a Dutch geographer, published in 1596 his *Navigatio ac Itinerarium* to reveal the slender hold of the Portuguese in the East. (B10; P.1.20) Peter Plancius in his nautical school at Amsterdam, systematically taught how Spanish and Portuguese possessions could be usurped. Outside Malacca, the only important Portuguese settlements were at Bantam, Ternate, Ambon and Banda.

By 1599 ten Dutch companies had been formed, sending between them 14 fleets of 65 ships, of which 54 made the return journey from the East safely.19 In 1602 the States General of the United Provinces granted to an East India Company—organized into six Chambers, one for each of the chief ports of Holland—an exclusive Charter prohibiting all subjects except this Company from carrying on any trade to the eastward beyond the Cape of Good Hope, or westward through the Straits of Magellan. On 18 December 1603 a great fleet of twelve vessels under the command of Steven van der Hagen set out for the East. The vessels were heavily armed while ‘the instructions given to the Admiral read more like a war manifesto than those of a commercial enterprise.’20 There is no doubt that the Dutch vessels were far superior to the Portuguese and Spanish vessels that had preceded them into the Pacific: they were stronger, roomier, and required fewer hands to sail. The success of the Dutch venture must be seen as a result of improvements in ship construction and efficient organization. The Portuguese fort at Ambon was attacked and occupied within two days of the outbreak of hostilities. Bantam was important as commanding the strait by which vessels could escape the control exercised by the Portuguese at Malacca. The Dutch established an office there in 1600, the French in 1601 and the English in 1602. The energetic Dutch Governor-General Jan Pieterszoon Coen, drove out the French and the English in 1620 and dislodged the Portuguese when the Dutch capture of Ceylon isolated them. Hostilities with the Spaniards continued until 1663, when they withdrew from the Moluccas.

New Guinea’s proximity to the rich Dutch empire, her lack of valuable commodities, her geographical position well off the trade-routes to China and the hostility of her shores resulted in the Western nations’ neglect of that country for richer, assured and well-known centres of trade. Much of North-east New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago was charted finally because some Europeans never lost sight of the ancient quest for the legendary lands of gold. Mendana’s discovery in 1567 of islands that were wishfully named ‘Islands of Solomon’ (B5), sparked off many voyages with the aim of rediscovery over the next two hundred years.

It was not until the establishment of British settlements in Australia that New Guinea became significant for its position on the new trade routes that then opened up and for its strategic position as a buffer between Australia and foreign empires. The European image of the inhabitants was of hostile and treacherous savages. Incentives for making contact with these people had to be strong: traders and whalers called there when in dire need of refreshment; labour recruiters risked dangers because the profits were high; prospectors hoped to make sudden fortunes; natural historians could not resist the unique field of study New Guinea offered; missionaries could not reject their God’s call to Christianize the New Guinea peoples. Nevertheless, as late as 1875, there was no more than a sprinkling of Europeans in New Britain and in the Port Moresby district; penetration of the interior did not exceed fifteen miles.21

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The Portuguese pioneered the sea route to the Pacific around the Cape of Good Hope while the Spaniards pioneered the Cape Horn route. Papal Bulls and Treaties established a line near the present meridian of longitude 47°W. (Greenwich) to demarcate a Portuguese hemisphere and a Spanish hemisphere. Both nations wished to claim the rich Moluccas. The Portuguese reached Malacca in 1511, the Spaniards in 1519. For ten years the Spaniards strove to establish themselves there. Because of the difficulties of measuring longitude accurately, there was confusion on which nation had the right of access to the Moluccas. The problem was resolved when Charles I of Spain (Emperor Charles V) sold his rights to the Moluccas (1524-29). Spain retained the Philippine Islands, however, which were in the Portuguese sphere.

At Malacca the Portuguese found that spices cost five to seven times as much as in the islands where they grew. So the following year D’Albuquerque, the Portuguese Viceroy of India, despatched three ships, the Santa Catarina, the Sabao and a caravel, under the command of Antonio de Abreu and Francisco Serrào, to Ceram. Their exact route is not known, but as Banda was the chief island for the production of nutmegs, it is possible they reached that island. Consequently, they might have been the first Europeans to sight the shores of New Guinea. On the return voyage one of the ships was wrecked and the survivors found refuge in Amboina where they helped the local chieftain to defeat a rival. On hearing of this the ruler of the Moluccas invited Serrào and his companions to visit Ternate. He offered them trade in return for their support. Thus, chance opened up the Spice Islands for the Portuguese. The offer to establish a trade station at Ternate was not taken up until 1522, by which time the Spaniards had reached Tidore, and Antonio de Brito, the first Portuguese Governor of the Moluccas, found competition almost at his doorstep.

From their newly established ports in the Archipelago, the Portuguese and Spaniards sought to destroy Islam, to Christianize the East and to become rich in the process. A Catholic seminary, the first of its kind in the East, was established at Ternate in 1537. From about 1540 on, Christian missionary work made great progress in the Indonesian Archipelago through the activities of Francis Xavier. It does not appear to have reached New Guinea, however. Some New Guinea natives were kidnapped by mariners and forcefully baptized into the Roman Catholic faith, but no Christians were reported to be living in New Guinea during this period. When the Dutch moved into Indonesia at the end of the century they found the islands closest to West New Guinea were peopled by Moslems who through trade and intermarriage were converting many New Guineans to the Islamic faith.

De Barros reports that from the forward base at Malacca several voyages were made in search of islands of gold. As early as 1518 the Portuguese, Diego Pacheco, reported the existence of an island of gold at one hundred odd leagues in a south-westerly direction from the west coast of Sumatra. Godinho de Erédia believed gold was to be found in Timor Island, and that a certain King of Damuth, sailing south-east from Java, reached a land where he saw ‘a considerable amount of gold, cloves, mace,...15 Martin Fernández de Enciso, in his ‘Suma de Geographia’ of 1518, identified Ophir with the island of Jocat, eighty leagues east of Java. Roger Barlow, his translator, says, ‘and beyond Java, 80 leges southest is an other Iond called locat, wherein is very moche golde...’.16

The first to associate the land of gold with New Guinea was Antonio Pigafetta, a native of Vicenza, who accompanied Magellan on the 1519-22 voyage that resulted in the first circumnavigation of the world. Pigafetti recorded: ‘The king of these heathens, called Raja Papua, is exceedingly rich in gold, and lives in the interior of the island.’

In 1526 Jorge de Menezes, the Governor-elect of the Moluccas, whilst sailing from Malacca to the Spice Islands, was driven by the north-west monsoon to Waigeo Island. ‘[B1] He called it ’Ilhas dos Pupaus’.

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2. Callander states that in 1703, that is, a little more than a century after Dutch Protestants took over the Christianizing mission, there were about 240 Christians in Arua. See J. Callander, ed., *Terra Australis Cognita: &c., Edinburgh*, 1768, Vol. 2, p. 285.

3. Hernan A. Cladese and Manuel Múrias, eds., *Asia, de João Barros. Dos Feitos que os Portugueses Fizeram no Descobrimento e Conquista das Maes e Terras do Oriente*, Lisboa, 1945-46, decreta, liv. 3, cap. 5; liv. 4, capas. 3, 7; liv. 5, cap. 5.


7. C. Kelly, op. cit., p. 13
The name ‘Papua’ is probably derived from the Malay expression, ‘orang papuawah’, meaning ‘fuzzy-haired man’. Meneses described Papuans as ‘the black people with frizzled hair, who are cannibals and the devil walks with them.’ Two years later a Spaniard, Alvaro de Saavedra, in attempting to return to Mexico from the Moluccas, reached a large island, probably Biak, which he called ‘Isla del Oro’ — the Golden Isle. As a result of Saavedra’s report, plans were made for the further discovery and settlement of the land.

In 1537, Cortes directed Hernan Grijalva to complete a mission to Peru and then to proceed with one of his ships to attempt discovery of ‘some islands to the westward which were believed to abound in gold.’ Grijalva was murdered by his crew and his disintegrating ship was abandoned in the vicinity of Geelvink Bay. The seven survivors were captured and enslaved by the natives. They were probably the first European settlers in New Guinea! Years later they were ransomed and released by the Portuguese Governor at Ternate. It was not until 1545 when Inigo Ortiz de Retes coasted along the northern shore of the New Guinea mainland that the illusion of ready gold to be found there was dispelled.

The name ‘Islands of Solomon’ was given to the islands that Mendana discovered in 1567, as an expression of the hope that these lands were indeed the legendary lands of gold. The failure of mariners to retrace the islands fostered a belief in their richness. ‘There is no doubt,’ wrote Prado, who was on the Quiros expedition and later sailed with Torres along the south coast of New Guinea in 1606, ‘that these lands contain many mines of rich metals, as they are at the same altitude and parallel of that part of Peru which has the best mines of gold.’ When Quiros, after his 1605-6 expedition, wished to prosecute another voyage, he cited the words of Ruy Gonzalez de Sequeira, Mayor of Tidore:

New Guinea is a land of much gold, of which the natives make chains ... and bracelets which the women wear on their necks and arms, and the men on pommels of their swords; and that they have silver and do not value it, and pears, to which they pay no heed.’

This report was corroborated by Hernando de los Rios, Procurator of the Philippines, who declared he had been told by Miguel Rojo de Brito that:

‘the natives of New Guinea are negroes, and have gold which they wear in their ears and round their necks, and they are traders and hold a great fare in a village called Segat, where many slaves are bought who are taken to a rich island called Cerdenas.’

Nearly all Spanish voyages were directed by the Crown. Portuguese often formed part of a ship’s company, while it was not uncommon for a Portuguese to command an expedition for the Spanish Crown. Altogether there were four Spanish voyages along the north coast of New Guinea covering the area between the Kepulawen Schouten and Astrolabe Bay. On one of these voyages (1545) New Guinea was named and formal possession was taken. The Portuguese, Torres, sailed in the service of Spain along the entire south coast of New Guinea (1606) and took possession for the Spanish Crown at two separate places. The Spaniards also discovered the chief island groups of Micronesia and Melanisia — the Admiralty Islands, the Solomon Islands, Duff Island, Santa Cruz Island, Banks Island, the New Hebrides, and the Louisiade Archipelago.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Dutch, the English and the French were ready to search for new lands and wealth. In a very short time the rich spice empire fell to the Dutch while the Iberian ports elsewhere were transformed into mere stopping places on the trading routes of the world. Whatever claim Spain might have had to New Guinea was relinquished by the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1714.

See also, Antonio de Herrera, Descripción de las Indias Occidentales, Madrid, 1622; Zaragoza, Descubrimientos delas Españoles en el mar del Sur y en las costas de la Nueva-Guinea, Madrid, 1878; Bart. Leonardo de Argensola, Conq. de las Malococos, Folio, Madrid, 1609, Bk. 2; De Couto, Decada Quinta da Asia, Lisbon, 1612; Antonio Galvano, The Discoveries of the World from their first original until the year of our Lord 1555, Bethune, ed., London, 1862; J. R. Mc Clymont, The First expedition of the Portuguese to Banda and the events antece- dent thereto, Hobart, 1905; Celsus Kelly, Calendar of Documents. Spanish voyages in the South Pacific and Franciscan Missionary plans for their Islands, Madrid, 1965; The Terra Australis: a Franciscan quest, New York, 1948; The Franciscan missionary plan for the conversion to Christianity of the natives of the Austra- lian lands, as proposed in the memorials of Fray Juan de Silva to Pope Urban VIII, Washington, 1951; Some early maps relating to the Queiros-Torres discoveries of 1606, Lisboa, 1961.

9 Antonio Galvano, The Discoveries of the World from their first original until the year of our Lord 1555, Bethune, ed., London, 1862, p. 176
10 Ibid., pp. 202-3
11 Ibid., p. 238
12 Relacion Sumaria of Captain Don Diego de Prado y Tovar on the 1605-1606 expedition of Quiros to the Austral Lands etc., Stevens and Barwick, eds., Hakluyt Soc., London, 1939, ser. 2, Vol. 64
13 C. Kelly, op. cit., p. 15
14 Ibid.
B1  Dom Jorge de Meneses, First European in New Guinea, 1526

Meneses was Portuguese Governor-elect of the Moluccas. He left Malacca in 1526 intending to sail to Ternate. He reached Halmahera, but thereafter the north-west monsoon drove his ships east to Waigeo Island where he apparently found a good anchorage, on the north-west coast of the Vogelkop. It is possible that Meneses sheltered from storms in Geelvink Bay. Ultimately the weather permitted him to return to the Moluccas. The lands of his discovery he named 'Ilias dos Papusas'.

... the islands of PAPUA, which were named ISLAS DE DON JORGE DE MENESSES, are 200 leagues to the eastward of the MALUCOS: coming from the ISLA VER-SIJA, where he watered, which lies under the equinoctial, and has a good harbour. Keeping always under the line, they came to an island, named by the natives MEUNSU, and to another which they called BUFU, which is more to the east, where they gave the name of DOS GRAOS (grain Island) for the plenty they got there.


In 1526 Cortes directed three ships to sail from Mexico under the command of Alvaro de Saavedra to the relief of Spanish forces besieged by the Portuguese at Tidore. On 3 June 1528 Saavedra attempted to return to Mexico. He held an east-north-east course. For 25 to 30 days his ship, Florida, was held by calm. According to Herrera, the ship then made 250 leagues and reached a large island which Saavedra named ‘Isla del Oro’. This island has not been identified although it seems likely that it is one of the Schouten Islands to the north of Geelvink Bay. Continuing on an easterly course, Saavedra reached an island which he named Urais la Grande and which is probably Manus Island in the Admiralty Group. Striking out north-east across the equator he reached islands in the Caroline Group. In latitude 14° N. the Florida encountered strong winds that forced her to return past the Marianas and Mindanao to Tidore. On his second attempt to reach Mexico in May the following year, Saavedra followed his earlier route as far as Manus, then set a north-easterly course to 31°N. latitude. Again, contrary winds forced him back, this time as far as the Marianas. Several small islands, which can be identified with islands in the Carolines and in the Marshall Islands, were seen. Saavedra fell ill and died on this voyage while the boat was in 21°N. latitude, during October. He left an account of the voyage in a diary which he kept until his death. Another original source of information lies in two depositions that were made by a survivor of the voyage. These have been published in M. F. de Navarrete, Coleccion de los Viajes y Descubrimientos que Hicieron por mar los Españoles desde Fines del Siglo XV... , Madrid, 1825-37, Vol. 5, pp. 476-86.

The first document that follows is a brief extract from the record of the voyage made by Antonio Galvano, Governor of Ternate; the second is a much fuller account purport by Callander to be the first English translation of the account given by Antonio de Herrera in Voyages aux Terres Australes, Vol. 1, p. 158 et seq.

A  In the yeere 1529, in May, Saavedra returned back againe towards New Spaine, and he had sight of a land toward the south in two degrees, and he ran east a long by it above five hundred leagues till the end of August (according to their account). The coast was cleane and of good ankerage, but the people blake and of curled haire; from the girdle downward they did weare a certain thing plaited to cover their lower parts. The people of Maluco call them Papuas, because they be blake and frisled in their hair; and so also do the Portugals call them.

B  The admiral pat to sea from Tidore, June 3, 1528, in order to return to Mexico. After a calm of 30 days, and a course of 250 leagues, he got to a certain land, which he calls Golden Island, but without giving any other description of it; nor does Herrera say any more about it, though, in his description of India, he says this land of Saavedra’s was New Guinea, of which he there gives a geographical account, accompanied with a chart which is full of errors. But there is great probability that this island of Saavedra’s makes part of the great southern continent. For, according to the report of other writers, this navigator, returning from the spice-islands towards New Spain, and being got 100 leagues from Gilolo, discovered a country inhabited by Papous, which he called New Guinea, thinking it lay opposite to the Guinea of Africa under the same meridian, in which he was mistaken. On the other side, Thevenot affirms, that the land of the Papous was not called New Guinea till near a century after, when it was called so by James le Maire.
The inhabitants of those lands are Negroes, with crisped hair, naked, but armed with swords and other arms of iron. Having run 100 leagues further, he found some other islands, inhabited likewise by Negroes who had arrows. He brought away three of these savages, and having run 250 leagues further, he fell in with some islands at one degree from the Equator, where he found the inhabitants entirely white, wondering greatly to find so total a change in the colour of the human race, within so short a space. (If this account is true, we have no reason to trust to the hypothesis of these Naturalists, who account for the difference of colour from the change of climate.) These whites endeavoured to board his ship, and flung stones with slings. Hence he sailed North, and N. N. W. till he got into fourteen degrees, when a violent storm at N. E. drove him back quite to the Ladrones. He passed to the south of these islands and was driven on the coasts of Mindanao.

He set out from Tidore a second time, in order to go to Mexico, in the year 1529, keeping the same course he did before. He again saw the islands whence he had taken the Negroes. One of those, whose understanding was better than that of his fellows, was become a Christian. Alvaro sent him to tell his countrymen, that he came only to traffic with them, and see the country, but not to hurt them. But the poor Indian was killed by the savages, before he set a foot on shore. On this the admiral weighed anchor, and standing to the N. E. discovered five small islands, the biggest being four leagues long, and the rest but one. The inhabitants were naked, had beards, and were quite black. They had canoes with sails like mats, but made of palm tree leaves. Five of these savages advanced towards the ship, crying in a threatening tone, and one of them flung a stone with such force, that it split one of the upper planks. The Spaniards fired a musket, on which they retired. These isles lie about 7 degrees from the equator, half-way between Tidore and Mexico, and distant at least 1000 leagues from each.


B3 The Voyage of Grijalva and Alvarado, 1537

Grijalva and Alvarado were Spaniards sent by Cortes to explore the region close to the equator, ranging westward from Peru to the Moluccas. In 2 deg. N. latitude, they discovered a distance 500 leagues from the Moluccas, an island, Asea (probably Christmas Island). The next island passed, named Los Pescadores, can be identified with one of the northern islands in the Gilbert group. Continuing west, they reached the island of Haimé, which is probably the same island visited by Saavedra (see B2). They then crossed to the south of the equator, reached the island of Apia and anchored at Seri. Sailing one degree north brought them to the island of Corido, and a southerly course brought them next to Mezon and Bubi. North, across the equator again, the Spaniards reached the island of Guelles. G. A. V. Stanley makes the following identification of the Spanish names with modern names: Apia—probably Japen in the Schouten Islands; Seri—probably Serui, on the south coast of Japen; Coroa—probably Korido on the south coast of Supiori; Mezon—Mios Num; Bubi—Nufor (Numfoor); Guelles—the Mapia Islands. See G. A. V. Stanley, 'A Short History of New Guinea', unpublished typescript.

A From Peru they sailed above 1000 leagues, without sight of land on the one side, nor yet on the other of the equinoctial. And in 2 deg. N. they discovered one island, named ASEA, which seemeth to be one of the islands of CLOVES; 500 leagues, little more or less, as they sailed, they came to the sight of another, which they named ISLA DE LOS PESCADORES. Going still in this course, they saw another island, called HAYME, towards the south, and another named APIA; and then they came to the sight of SERI; turning towards the north one degree, they came to anchor at another island named COROA, and from thence to BUFU, standing in the same course.

The people of all these islands are black, and have their hair frizzled, whom the people of MALUCO do call PAPUAS. The most of them eat man’s flesh, and are witches, so given to devilishness, that the devils walk among them as companions. If these wicked spirits do find one alone, they kill him with cruel blows or smother him. Therefore they use not to go, but when two or three may be in a company. There is here a bird as big as a crane: he fleeth not, nor hath any wings wherewith to fly; he runneth on the ground like a deer: of their small feathers they do make hair for their idols. There is also an herb, which being washed in warm water, if the leaf thereof be laid on any member and licked with the tongue, it will draw out all the blood of a man’s body: and with this leaf they use to let themselves bleed.

From these islands they came unto others, named the GUELLES, standing 1 deg. towards the north, east and west with the island TERENATE, wherein the Portugals have a fortress: these men are hardened like the people of the MALUCOS. Those islands stand 124 leagues from the island named MORO, and from TERENATE between 40 and 50. From whence they went to the isle of MORO and the islands of CLOVES, going from the one unto the other. But the people of the country would not suffer them to come on land, saying unto them, Go unto the fortress

A description of a cassowary bird
where the captain ANTONIO GALVANO is, and we will receive you with good will; for they would not suffer them to come on land without his license; for he was factor of the country, as they named him. A thing worthy to be noted, that those of the country were so affectioned to the Portugals, that they would venture for them lives, wives, children, and goods.

B Captain ALVARADO, a Spanish knight, was sent by CORTEZ to TERENATE, not to let the valour he had shewn sink into indolence. He discovered the islands of PAPUA, and bravely fought with the Barbarians: the Portuguese attribute this discovery to MENeses in 1527. The great ALVARADO also discovered other islands, named GELLES, in 1 deg N. Lat. E. and W. with TERENATE, 125 leagues distant from that of MORO. The natives of the GELLES in complexion, dress, and customs, are like those of the MALUCOS, except their language, which is particular to them.

SOURCE A. Antonio Galvano, Discoveries of the World from their first original until the year of our Lord, 1555, Bethune, ed., Hakluyt Society, London, 1862, pp. 202-4; B. Bart. Leonardo de Argensola, Const. de las Malucos, Folio, Madrid, 1609, L. 2, p. 64

B4 De Retes Names New Guinea, 1545

In August 1543 Ruy Lopez de Villalobos chose Bernardo de la Torre to continue the Spanish search for an eastern sailing route across the Pacific. Hernan Gallego made a false claim for the San Juan de Letran having reached New Guinea. This mistake led the French expedition under Dumont D’Urville (1827) to honour the Spaniard by naming the left bank of the mouth of the Sepik River (Cape Girgir), ‘Cape della Torre’, after him. The failure of the San Juan mission led to another attempt being made by Inigo Ortiz de Retes (or Rotha). The San Juan was refitted and De Retes sailed on 16 May 1545. Setting a northerly course, he reached the Talaul Islands (probably Karakelung) where the expedition was held up for eight days by the weather. At this point the decision was made to try a southerly route. The equator was crossed and on 15 June two islands were sighted, La Sevillana (probably Supiori), and La Gallega.
(probably Biak). Continuing south-west, the island of Numfor was reached and named ‘Isla de los Martyrs’. An easterly course then brought them to an archipelago, thought to be ‘Traitors’ Islands, and named by the Spaniards, ‘Isles de los Crespos’, in reference to the natives’ hair. On 20 June the mouth of the Santo Agustin River (Mamberamo) was found. Here it was that De Retes took possession in the name of the King of Spain, and named the land ‘Nueva Guinea’. The name appeared for the first time in print on Mercator’s World Map of 1569. (See Pl. 15) Beating continually into a south-east wind, the San Juan approached Wewak and made many island discoveries. By 10 August a change in the winds forced the Spaniards into the open sea, but it was not until 27 August that De Retes acceded to his crew’s demand and returned to the Moluccas. The original sources of information for this voyage are very brief and consist of the observations noted by two participants Santisteban and Juan Pablo de Carreon. See G. de Santisteban, ‘Relacion diaria’ (1547), Coleccion de Documentos Ineditos ... de Indias, Madrid, 1866, Vol. 14, pp. 151-165; J. P. de Carreon, Coleccion de Documentos Ineditos ... de Ultramar, Madrid, 1885-1932, Vol. 2, p. 206. The following extract is from the records of Antonio Galvano.

In the yeere 1545 Rui de villa lobos sent from the island of Tidore another ship towards New Spaine by the south side of the line, wherein was capitaine one Inigo Ortez de Rotha, and for pilot one Jaspier Rico (a native of Almada). They sailed to the coast of the Papanas, and ranged all along the same, and because they knew not that Saavedra had been there before, they challenged the honor and fame of that discoverie. And they named it Nueva Guinea. For the memorie of Saavedra as then was almost lost, as all things else do fall into oblivion which are not recorded, and illustrated by writing.


B5 The Discovery of the Solomon Islands, 1567

On his return to Peru in 1568 Alvaro de Mendana reported the discovery of islands wealthy, populous and fertile. At Guadalcanal he thought he had discovered precious metals. It was his ambition to return to the islands to establish a colony. It is likely that in order to fulfill this ambition he named his discoveries ‘The Islands of Salomon’ which title suggested that these lands were the source of the great wealth of King Solomon. Lopez Vaz, a Portuguese who was captured by the English at the River Plate about eighteen years later gave this explanation. He also claimed the Spaniards brought back from Guadalcanal 40,000 pezos of gold. Neither Gallego, the Chief Pilot of the expedition, nor Figuera mentions this but Gallego’s narrative states that the iron-stone axes used by the natives were of metal which appeared to be gold. As the journals of the voyage were kept secret for nearly half a century after the return of Mendana, stories about the wealth and resources of the islands spread and were greatly exaggerated.

All the islands thus discovered are thickly populated, and are all within sight of each other. The island of Santa

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1. 'History of Lopez Vaz', Purchas, his Pilgrimes, Part 4, Lib. 7

Ysabel is very long and narrow, and, though 200 leagues in circumference, is not more than a degree in breadth; this island is less populated from Puerto de la Estrella to the west, because it is near the seat of the tauriqui Bile, who, being very fierce, is the cause of its being uninhabited. In spite of this, according to the population and the Indians who were seen, we concluded that 30,000 fighting men could be raised there; and from the island of San Jorge, which is near it, although it is small, more than 10,000. From the island of Guadalcanal, both from what we saw of it and from the report of the Indians, more than 300,000 fighting men could be raised, and from Buena Vista and San Dimas, and the Isla de Flores (La Florida), with those near it, more than 50,000; and from the island of Santiago, from what was seen of it and from the report of the Indians, more than 100,000; and as many from that of San Cristoval, which has a circumference of more than 100 leagues. The Indians we took as interpreters, who are natives of that island, say that the king thereof is called Guan y China, and at certain times he sends out a visitor whom they call cacahu, who has a guard of 10,000. Nevertheless, all the Indians in this island fear the island of Ramos (Malaita) which is at war with all the others. The profitable produce of this island is cloves, ginger and nutmeg; of these three we brought back only a little ginger, which was gathered by chance; the Indians call cloves aguru, and nutmeg agali. They also say that there are pearls. I brought back the shell of an oyster in which the pearls are found, and, considering its size, they cannot fail to be good ones. These Indians of San Cristoval say also that there is gold in the rivers of their country, and that the women of Aytoro wear it round their necks in large grains as they find it, but they do not know how to melt it. Aytoro is a
province in the interior of San Christoval. These Indians call gold aburu in their language. The report that it is found in the rivers agrees with what the Indian told me in Santa Yzabel, though there they call it tereque. Spinkard is also found; I have brought a specimen of it to show to your Majesty; it was found by a fortunate chance, for the Indians neither use it nor have knowledge of it. It was recognized by a soldier (formerly an apothecary), who, landing at the island of Guadalcanal, found it at the water's edge, near a river which flows into the sea. There is also sandal-wood; this was identified here in Los Reyes by the doctors, who while examining the Indian arms which I had brought back, found two lances of a reddish wood, which, from its colour and fragrance, they declared to be sandal-wood. Ebony is also plentiful; they make arms of it, which they use in warfare. We found in these islands some clubs, seemingly of metal covered with woven palm; they are very heavy, and are used in warfare; they are really made of pressed ironstone, and its presence is a very good sign, for it is the mother of all metals. I also asked the Indians if there was any silver, and showed them some, but they said that there was none in their country.

There are many fruit trees in these islands bearing good fruit; the Indians say that there are apples like those of this country, and they call them agoniga in their language; and there are also melons; I saw some, but they were very small, and, though they looked like ours, it is not certain that they are the same. In their language they call them maraguasaro, and they saw that they are good when it does not rain, but worthless when it does. They have pigs and hens like those of Spain, and numerous wild pigeons, larger beyond comparison than ours; there are many parrots of all colours, and some very white. The soil is very fertile, and the roots of the trees are very deep; all the trees and herbs of that region are aromatic. There is abundant sweet basil on the mountains, and all the flowers on the trees are of a very bright colour. I found a certain gum upon a tree, discovering it through the strong odour which it exhaled, and I brought it to the ship. A captain of artillery, named Pero Xaro, who was suffering from the gout, put some on his feet at night, and the next morning the pain had disappeared, and since we arrived here he has often assured me that he has never had a touch of it since.


B6 Herrera Sums Up the State of Knowledge on New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, 1601

The Islands of Solomon are situated between the seventh and the twelfth degree of south latitude, fifteen hundred leagues distant from the city de los Reyes (of the kings; that is, Lima). They owe their name to the opinion conceived of their riches. They are called also Western Isles, by way of eminence, being situated to the west of Peru, where the fleet of Mendana, by which they were discovered, was fitted out, in 1567. They are no less remarkable for their number than their extent. Eighteen principal ones are reckoned, some of which are 300 leagues in circumference, two are of 200, one of an 100, one of 50, and others smaller; besides which, there are several, the coasts of which have been traced but imperfectly. It is presumed that they extend to New Guinea. The air is salubrious, the soil fertile and habitable, offering various productions fit for the support of men: even cattle is not rare. Hogs and fowls are found there, and some fruits, not different from those of Castile. They are very populous, and their inhabitants appear to belong to different races, some are tawny like the Indians, others white, others red, and copper coloured, and some perfect negroes. These diversities of species, announcing a mixture of different races, sufficiently indicate that these islands are contiguous to New Guinea, whence the inhabitants of them have had communication with those of the Spice Islands.


B7 Spanish Contact with Natives of Mailu Island, 1606

Pedro Fernandez de Quiros was a Portuguese who had sailed with Mendana on his 1595 voyage to rediscover the Solomon Islands. The command of this expedition finally fell to de Quiros after the death of Mendana and of Mendana's brother-in-law. The voyage incited de Quiros to seek command of another expedition which would search for the great South Land, 'terra australia' — a land he was determined to dedicate to the Holy Spirit and which he had already named, in anticipation, 'Australis del Espiritu
Spanish Contact with Mailu Island

Santo’. (The name ‘Australalia’ was a recognition of Phillip III’s title of Archduke of Austria.) Constant petitions to the King of Spain, to the Pope and to the Government at Peru resulted in de Quiros’s expedition setting forth from Callao in December 1605. Second-in-command was Luis Vaez de Torres, about whom little is known except for his part in this voyage. De Quiros believed he had discovered the land he sought when he made landfall on an island in the New Hebrides. From here he decided to visit lands to windward, but outside port the winds changed suddenly. De Quiros was farther out than Torres and could not return to port. The boats were separated. Eventually de Quiros returned across the Pacific to Acapulco. Meanwhile, Torres searched along the coast for wreckage of de Quiros’s ship, found none and thought himself deserted. Opening his orders, he found that Don Diego de Prado y Tovar was to take command, the ship was to sail to 20°S in search of land and if none was found they were to make for Manila. Although Prado was officially in charge it is evident from the account of the voyage that the real commander was Torres. He reached the east coast of New Guinea and because he could not weather the east point, he sailed west along the south coast of the island. They were the first Europeans to make contact with the south coast of Papua. Their first anchorage was in Sukuri Bay at the south-west end of Sideia Island. Their landing was resented by the natives who attacked them the following day, 20 July 1606, when they sailed into Namoai Bay. Torres gave the name San Millan to what is known today as Jenkins Bay. Somewhere between the villages of Bwakili and Sideia, they anchored for three days. Prado leaves us a description of the white cockatoos and wallabies they saw there. Continuing westward, the ships called at Doiní Island, which was named San Fecundo because of the plentiful food to be had there, and at Oba Bay, which was named Puerto de San Francisco. Before leaving Oba Bay (Sukuri), Prado took possession in the name of King Phillip III of Spain. On 12 August 1606, the party reached Santa Clara Island (Mugula or Bona Bona Island) where they saw orange trees and other fruits and basil. Three days later they reached Mullins Harbour, named for the day upon which it was entered, Baya Neustra de la Asumcion. Here the natives proved friendly, gave the visitors water contained in bamboo and a pig, and took an interest in their fire-arms. The Spaniards described the Goura pigeon, Birds of Paradise, and a cassowary which was taken on board and survived the voyage to Ternate. They described also bananas, coconuts, breadfruit—and a new fruit they found very palatable—the custard apple. On 24 August 1606, they reached Mailu Island (named for the Saint’s day, St. Bartholomew). At this place they had a serious encounter with the natives, and a second declaration of possession was made for the King of Spain. Prado’s account of this contact is given in the following extract. See G. A. V. Stanley, ‘A Short History of New Guinea’, unpublished typescript; J. K. McCarthy, New Guinea. Our Nearest Neighbour, Melbourne, 1968, pp. 53-6; also, documents B8; B9; B94.

We anchored quite close to the shore owing to the safety of the harbour and on the following morning we landed and found more than a hundred Indians in ambush in a copse which was near the water. And as they were discovered they went to seek the others who were guarding the pass we had to go through to the village; it was about twelve feet wide, on the one side, that is towards the sea, it had a great precipitous rock and on the other the high hill, also precipitous; on coming under gunshot we made them signs of peace after their manner. They responded by brandishing their arms namely lances and shields, which was a sign of battle; notwithstanding this, we again made them signs of peace and they replied with shouts brandishing their arms. Seeing that we were losing time by treating them with further consideration we knelt down and saying a Pater Noster and an Ave Maria, Giera Espana [the ancient Spanish war-cry], we gave them a Santiago [an attack with invocation of St. James] and in that skirmish some fell dead, and we seized their gate and pressed on, shooting them as they fled; in order to flee more lightly they threw away their shields and lances and on reaching the village they embarked in twenty-six boats flying to the great land of the Railes, and after embarking some were killed in the open sea and this caused them great fright and terror, on seeing that they killed them so far from land. The village had about three hundred houses very well enclosed by planks and big canes. They had withdrawn their women, children and old men and put them on top of a cliff precipitous on three sides, with only a very difficult ascent on the one at the end of the village, and on the sides it was cut off by the sea, so that for our people to get to the ascent we had to pass below this fortress. We made signs to them that they should come down and they replied with showers of stones; we passed with difficulty up to the ascent, and the Chief Pilot and a valiant Galician asked permission to go with their swords and shields up the cliff; they were allowed, and half way up there fell upon them such showers of stones that they came tumbling headlong to the bottom, without shields or hats, and came to us. The Indians raised a great shout in sign of joy but it lasted only a short time for twenty shooters and others with shields came up at once and made slaughter; the living and the wounded came down, they would be about three hundred, three parts were women and I was sorry to see so many dead children they were carrying in their arms. I selected fourteen boys and girls of from six to ten years and sent them on board, the rest I let go free and they ran up a hill like goats. We found a girl of about fourteen years old with the most lovely face and eyes that could be imagined; her whole body painted with stripes like a Milanese corselet and her private parts covered with a red apron reaching to her knees made of the bark of trees. There were disputes about who was to take her to the ship, so considering that some might fall away with her and
offend God I delivered her up to a good old woman of her own people; she thanked me greatly in her own manner and wanted to go off with the rest, which she did forthwith. We sacked the fortress and found a quantity of coconuts and mats on which they sleep and fishing nets and very large pearl shells; the pearls, because they are round and have no handles, they throw into the sea. This island is very cultivated and full of the ordinary fruits I have mentioned; it would be four leagues in circumference and is in 83° degrees altitude. All those we carried off were baptized in Manila to the honor and glory of God. The Fathers taught them the prayers of the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Credo and Salve Regina, and the Commandments and the Articles of the Catholic faith. These Indians worship the sun which they call Nina and the moon, Puri. In this island I took possession of all the country in the name of his Majesty the King our lord in the manner aforesaid, and to the great land I gave the name of the Magna Margarita, because it was discovered in the time of Queen Margaret our lady, for as she was great in her doings so is this land in the circumference that can be imagined.

1 In 1960 an administration patrol post was built on the mainland about 6 miles north of Mailu. In reply to the patrol officer's question, 'What is the name of this land?' the elders said, 'We call it Magarita.' The native name could be a contraction of 'Margarita,' but it also has a meaning 'to plant', or 'to ripen', in the native tongue. See J. K. McCarthy, 'The Land of Maga Margarita,' The Journal of the Papus and New Guinea Society, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1966-67, p. 36

Evidence for Spanish Discovery of Port Moresby

During the last days of August 1606, Prado and Torres reached a point on the south coast of Papua, which, from Prado's description, could have been the present Port Moresby. (For background detail on the men and events on the voyage antecedent to this discovery, see document B7.) The first document that follows is an extract from Prado's Relacion describing the harbour reached after the party left Mailu Island on 28 August 1606. The second document is an extract of evidence advanced by G. A. V. Stanley to support the proposition that the Spaniards' description is of Port Moresby.

A On the 28th we set sail from these islands (Mailu, Baibara, Lopom) steering to the west, and finding a mouth among the shoals we entered it, as the bottom was clear among the shoals and the land high, with from seven to eight fathoms of water, and even if there is a storm in the sea it does not come in here. So we went coasting along until we reached an island where we found a good bottom and anchored. It would be about a league and a half in circumference, they gave it the name of San Juan Bautista; it is in 83° altitude; from here begins the province of the Helabons.

On the 2nd of September we set sail from this island still following the coast and anchored near a red island without brushwood or anything green, and found a boat with women who were fishing with nets, and at dawn there came a storm of wind which broke our cable and we lost an anchor. We ran without sails until it ceased and continuing our route we entered a fine 'pracel' (clean sandy ground without stones) of six or seven fathoms of water and went to anchor beneath a very lofty headland and point which formed a fine bay.

B This ... description (i.e., 'On the 2nd of September, et seq. ') is unmistakably Redcar Head (at the western end of Lagaba Island, which is tied to the mainland by a mangrove swamp) about 20 miles west of Port Moresby. The total distance from Mailu to Redcar is 175 miles.

Sailing westward from Mailu, in about 10 miles the Spaniards found themselves to seaward of the outer edge of the Barrier Reef. The only entrance through the reef where the land nearby is high is Pudana Nahua off Bootless Inlet. Entering there and coasting along the first island to afford shelter from the sou'east wind is Manubada (Locol) Island, which lies about five miles off Ela Beach.

It is suggested that the Spaniards reached Locol Island during the afternoon of August 30, and that the ship remained next day while the boats explored Port Moresby and Fairfax Harbour or scouted ahead to find a passage between Haidana Island and Daugo (Fishermans) Island.

It would seem very likely that Torres would climb to the top of Locol Island (205 ft. high) in order to get a view to the westward.

De Prado's Relation indicates that they were at a 'pracel' ('... a clean sandy ground without stones') which is probably Hall Sound, near Yule Island, on September 3 and 4.

But from then on it is far less clear as to their whereabouts. It seems fairly certain that they passed through Torres Strait towards the end of September, that on October 18 they were at Etna Bay, on the south coast of Netherlands New Guinea; and that after many adventures, they finally arrived at Cavite (Manila) on May 22, 1607.

Source A: Relacion Sumaria de Captain Don Diego de Prado y Tovar on the 1605-1607 Expedition of Quiros to the Austral Lands (in the 'Capitana' with Quiros from 21 Nov. 1605 to 9-18 April 1606 and with Torres in the 'Almiranta' thereafter until Manila, 22 May, 1607); giving an important account of the discoveries made along the coast of New Guinea and while passing through Torres Strait (Sept.-Oct. 1606).

Source B: This ... description (i.e., 'On the 2nd of September, et seq. ') is unmistakably Redcar Head (at the western end of Lagaba Island, which is tied to the mainland by a mangrove swamp) about 20 miles west of Port Moresby. The total distance from Mailu to Redcar is 175 miles.
B9  A Letter from Luis Vaez de Torres to His Majesty, 1607

Some time during the 1760s Alexander Dalrymple, hydrographer to the British Admiralty, found a copy of an account of Torres’ voyage from the New Hebrides (Australis del Espiritu Santo) to the Moluccas at Madras by W. Roberts, supercargo, at Manila. Dalrymple, in his 1767 publication, ‘An Account of the Discoveries made in the South Pacifick Ocean, Previous to 1764’, included a map tracing Torres’ course. The text of Torres’ letter to the king was published in R. H. Major, Early Voyages to Terra Australis, now called Australia, London, 1859. For background information on the man and the voyage see B7. The following extract gives Torres’ impressions of the terrain in travelling west along the south coast of New Guinea, and of the peoples contacted along that coastline. See also, The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery, J. C. Beaglehole ed., Cambridge, 1955, Vol. 1, pp. iii, clxii; F. J. Bayldon, ‘Voyage of Luis Vaez de Torres from the New Hebrides to the Moluccas, June to November 1606’, R. A. H. S., Journ. & Proc., Vol. 11, part 3, 1926.

All this land of New Guinea is peopled with natives, not very white, and naked, except for their private parts, which are covered with a cloth made of the bark of trees, and much painted. They fight with darts, targets, and some stone clubs which are made fine with plumage. Along the coast are many islands and habitations. All the coast has many ports, very large, with very large rivers, and many plains. Without these islands there runs a reef of shoals, and between them and the mainland are the islands. There is a channel within. In these ports I took possession for Your Majesty.

We went along 300 leagues of coast, as I have mentioned, and diminished the latitude $2^\frac{1}{2}$ degrees which brought us into 9 degrees. From hence we fell in with a bank of from 3 to 9 fathoms, which extends along the coast above 180 leagues. We went over it along the coast to $7^\frac{1}{2}$ degrees S. latitude and the end of it is 5 degrees. We could not go farther on for the many shoals and great currents, so we were obliged to sail out S. W. in that depth to 11 degrees S. latitude. There is all over it an archipelago of islands without number, by which we passed and at the end of the 11th degree the bank became more shoal. There were very large islands and there appeared more to the southward; they were inhabited by black people, very corpulent, and naked: their arms were lances, arrows and clubs of stone, ill-fashioned. We could not get any of their arms. We caught in all this land twenty persons of different nations, that with them we might be able to give a better account to Your Majesty. They give much information of other peoples, although as yet they do not make themselves well understood.

We went along this bank for two months, at the end of which time we found ourselves in 25 fathoms, and in 5 degrees S. latitude, and 10 leagues from the coast. And having gone 480 leagues here the coast goes to N. W. I did not reach it, for the bank became very shallow. So we stood to the N., and in 25 fathoms to 4 degrees latitude, where we fell in with a coast, which likewise lay in a direction E. and W. We did not see the eastern termination, but from what we understood of it, it joins the other we had left on account of the bank, the sea being very smooth. This land is peopled by blacks different from all the others. They are better adorned; they use arrows, darts, and large shields, and some sticks of bamboo filled with lime, with which, by throwing it out, they blind their enemies. Finally, we stood to the W. N. W., along the coast, always finding this people, for we landed in many places; also in it we took possession for Your Majesty. In this land also we found iron, China bells and other things, by which we knew we were near the Malucos. There is an infinity of islands to the southward, and very large, which, for the want of provisions, we did not approach; for I doubt if in ten years could be examined the coasts of all the islands we described. We observed the variation in all this land of New Guinea to the Malucos; and in all of it the variation agrees with the meridian of the Ladrone Islands and of the Philippine Islands.

At the termination of this land we found Mahometans who were clothed with artillery for service, such as falconets and swivel guns and arquebuses. They go conquering the people who are called Pauvas, and preach to them the sect of Mahomed.