A shipping route alternative to Dampier Strait was opened in 1767 when Philip Carteret navigated St. George's Channel between New Britain and New Ireland. Carteret cleared this Channel, revictualled at New Ireland and cleared New Hanover in five days. (B57) Following a similar route in 1792, D'Entrecasteaux took only three days. (B42; B104) After the establishment of the British penal settlement at Port Jackson, New South Wales, in 1788, trade between this colony and India and China led to the search for safe and speedy sea-routes. Ships' masters were advised to avoid Torres Strait with its dangerous shoals. St. George's Channel was considered preferable to Dampier Strait for the passage to India; but in the monsoon season routes well east of New Guinea and its archipelagoes were considered safest because the winds are steadier in those regions. (See Section C, Shipping Routes and Whaling Grounds in New Guinea Waters: Documents C1 to C11.)

New Guinea's position on the new trade routes meant that the islands were used more and more frequently by ships to obtain fresh supplies of food and water. There were no attempts to penetrate the interior of the islands and only a few attempts to establish coastal depots. (See Section C, Colonization Schemes, Industry, Trade and Land Dealing: Documents C79 to C94.)

Influenced perhaps by the arguments of scholars like Dr Campbell and de Brosses (see Section B, Politics and Scholarship: the Start to National Interest: Documents B29 to B35), the British East India Company showed some interest in New Guinea's spice production when in 1775 it sent Thomas Forrest to investigate resources and the extent of Dutch claims. Forrest built a shed at Dorei (Manokwari), planted mustard seed and returned to India after a stay of three weeks. (B61) In 1792 John McCluer, a marine officer stationed in India, carried out a coastal survey of the Gulf of Onin (McCluer's Gulf) and investigated commercial potential in that area. (B62) On another voyage the following year, McCluer took possession for the British Crown at Gebé Island. In July of the same year Captains Bampton and Alt claimed Darnley Island, the neighbouring islands and the coast of New Guinea. Captain John Hayes, also of the Bombay Marine, had his interest in New Guinea aroused by McCluer's report of nutmegs growing there. Hayes obtained private backing and, like Forrest, chose Dorei as a centre for settlement and commercial activity. He renamed Dorei Bay 'Restoration Bay', and a settlement, 'New Albion', was formed from the nucleus of a log stockade called 'Fort Corner'. Hayes formally took possession of New Albion for the British Crown on 25 October 1793. The extent of this claim was from Waigeo Island in the west to Rossel Island in the east; that is, the entire north coast of mainland New Guinea and its adjacent islands. The British Government failed to take up an option on any one of these claims. Hayes and his partners applied for recognition of New Albion by the East India Company but the Company at that time was not interested in incurring expenses of settlement further east unless the prospects of trade were exceedingly rich. (B63) In May 1795 the settlement which had suffered great hardship was abandoned because of the outbreak of hostilities between Britain and Holland.

The Dutch settlement, Merkussoord (Fort du Bus, Triton Bay), fared little better. Established in 1828, the settlement lasted only seven years, during which time a large number of settlers perished from malaria. (See Section B, Dutch Enterprise and Claims: Documents B10 to B28.) A few limited coastal surveys were carried out by the Dutch. Kolff's survey (1826-8) was followed by two expeditions of the Siren and the Triton in 1835 when the coasts of Adi Island, Nautilus Strait and several points of the south-west coast were examined. In 1858 the steamship Etna, also of the Dutch Navy, explored the same region; the Karoea River was examined and ascended, and subsequently, surveys of Etna Bay, the Bay of Caimans and Humboldt Bay were carried out. A Dutch merchant of Macassar, Mr Hartog, visited McCluer's Gulf in the Egerton in 1877 and estimated commerce there at a value of £80,000 to £90,000 annually. Although a mission station was established at Andai, south of Dorei, no regular trade stations appear to have been established by the Dutch. When the Dutch claim to territory was perfected in 1849 and extended in 1875, several expeditions were necessary to formalize the claims through the setting up of flags and markers and the appointment of chiefs. A permanent administrative settlement was not made until the 1890s.

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2 E. Marin La Moleé, Past Explorations of New Guinea and A Scheme for the Scientific Exploration of the Great Island, the Lawrence Hargrave Papers, Mitchell Library, FM4/1060. Paper read before Geographical Society of Australasia, Sydney
Trade between Asia and the Australian Colonies grew heavier as the settlements became firmly established. The need for accurate and detailed information on New Guinea waters became apparent. In 1842 the British Navy conducted the first of a series of important surveys; Captain Blackwood in H. M. S. Fly led an expedition to survey the Gulf of Papua. (B64; B65) There followed immediately Captain Owen Stanley’s expedition in H. M. S. Rattlesnake, to the Louisiades and the south-east coast of the mainland. (B66; B82; B109) In 1846 Captain Yule in H. M. S. Bramble took possession of New Guinea for the British Crown at Cape Possession. The British Crown showed no more interest in this claim than it had shown in the claims made by McCluer, Bampton and Hayes. Yule’s action, however, probably stirred the Dutch to formalize their claim to West New Guinea in 1849-50. (B23) Captain Simpson in H. M. S. Blanche in 1872 discovered a good anchorage in Bit Nata (Blanche Bay) in Simpson Harbour and examined the site on which Rabaul stands today. (B67) The following year, Captain Moresby in H. M. S. Basilisk discovered the harbour to which he gave his father’s name and charted the south-east, east and northeast coasts of the mainland in a search for a short route to China (China Strait). (B68) (Pl. 44)

By the late 1870s European traders, prospectors, scientists and missionaries were beginning to make sustained contacts with New Guinea peoples, and there commenced a limited penetration of the mainland around Rabaul and Port Moresby and along the large rivers. The natural scientist, D’Albertis, explored the Fly River and it was charted by Hargrave. (B70; B71) (Pl. 35) Its north-west branch was named the Strickland River by Captain Everell in the Bonito during the expedition in which he explored part of the river. (B78) In the Port Moresby district, Mr Alexander Morton, a natural scientist, was in company with the botanist, Mr A. Goldie, when he found a new river about 45 miles from Moresby emptying itself in the Laloki. Morton named the river after Goldie.

On the north-east coast of the mainland, Otto Finsch explored the mouth of the Kaiserin Augusta (Sepik) River. (B79) The following year (1886) Captain Dallmann took the steamship Samoa about 35 miles up the river. A few months later Captain von Schleinitz in the Ottilet navigated the river for a distance of 156 sea-miles. (B80; Pl. 36) In Dutch Territory, the Amberno River was charted by Braam Mooris and the steamship Havik ascended the Mamberamo River for 50 miles.

The British and German Governments were faced with the problem of supervising the activities of their nationals. They therefore gave to the naval expeditions that were sent to make hydrographical and coastal surveys, authority to protect their compatriots and to supervise labour recruitment. British ships of the Australian Squadron became a relatively common sight in these waters and in 1878 the German warship Ariadne (Captain B. Werner) was sent to protect the growing German trade in the Bismarck Archipelago.

Missionaries, scientists living in the field, planters, beach-combers, gold speculators and colonists moving into New Guinea in ever-increasing numbers from the late 1870s on, must be regarded as people experiencing sustained contact with the New Guinea culture. Their activities therefore lie outside the scope of this Section and are examined in Section C, Sustained Contact and Early Settlement. See also, F. P. Robinson, The Trade of the East India Company from 1709 to 1813, Cambridge, 1912; A. Dalrymple, A Plan for extending the commerce of this kingdom and of the East India Company, London, 1769; A. Dalrymple, Papuan Collection, M. L., Microfilm, FM4/1357; East India Company Primary Sources, 1613-1830, M. L., Microfilm, FM4/2487-2554; H. E. Maude, Of Islands and Men. Studies in Pacific History, Melbourne, 1968; A. Sharp, The Discovery of the Pacific Islands, Oxford, 1960.

**B56**  **A Shipping Route to China via North-west New Guinea, 1758**

... About the close of the year 1758 it happened that Captain Wilson, then Commander of the Company Ship Pitt, arrived at Batavia on his way to China, and finding it too late to proceed in the usual course, had the spirit to attempt and the good fortune to accomplish his voyage, by sailing Eastward from Batavia, thro' the Molucca Islands and by the Coast of New Guinea into the Pacific Ocean and then Northwards round the Philippine Islands and between Luconia and Formosa to Canton from whence he afterwards returned the same way and this in much less time than the Common Navigation usually requires. After this example several of the Company's Ships have used the same Passage...

... Soon after this, the Government of Batavia under whose orders it is to be presumed the Subordinate Governor of Tidore had acted, judging that their Protests would be ineffectual to prevent us from continuing a Navigation so useful and necessary, and having, as it should seem some
B57  Carteret in St George's Channel, 1767

Philip Carteret's voyage round the world, 1766-69, was perhaps the most remarkable voyage of the century. Carteret was second-in-command to Samuel Wallis who was instructed by the British Crown to 'proceed with the Dolphin and the Swallow round Cape Horn or through the Strait of Magellan, as you shall find most convenient; and stretch to the Westward about One Hundred or One Hundred and Twenty degrees of Longitude from Cape Horn, losing as little Southing as possible, in search of the Land or Islands supposed to lie in that part of the Southern Hemisphere.' The expedition left Plymouth in August 1766 and made for the Strait of Magellan. Wallis's frigate Dolphin was a seaworthy vessel, but the Swallow was a slow and heavy man-o'-war, decrepit and difficult to handle. At the mouth of the Strait, the two ships parted company, the Dolphin forging on ahead while the Swallow made the best of her slow way across the Pacific, through a succession of storms and perils. Pitcairn Island was sighted and named after the lad who first saw it. By the time the Duke of Gloucester group was reached, the crew was so weakened by scurvy and exhaustion that Carteret decided to make north for the trade winds in the hope of finding refuge and food. He sailed for the Islands of Solomon, and in fact sailed right through the group without realizing it, for he thought the Islands lay further to the east. The winds kept him on a north-west route, and in September, 1767 he found refuge and fresh food in St. George's Bay in New Ireland. In navigating the 'Bay', Carteret found it to be a channel, separating New Ireland from New Britain. The Admiralty Islands were next sighted and named; here the crew was forced to fight off hostile natives. The Swallow then made her way to the southern tip of the Philippines and south along the west coast of the Celebes to Batavia, where long overdue repairs were made. On the home run via the Cape of Good Hope, the Swallow was overtaken by Bougainville in the Atlantic and cursory greetings were exchanged. The Swallow reached Spithead in May 1769, exactly one year after the return of the Dolphin.

REMARKS: THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1767
Variable winds and weather, finding the winds to the S. E. at noon we bore away to endeavour to find a passage to the westward by this bay, through what had been imagined to be land and callec by Dampier Nova Britannia, I was the more incouraged to attempt this from a strong current I had found constantly running into it and made me conjecture there must have been a passage through that part of the land to admit a discharge of so great a body of water, Accordingly I found it a very fine large Passage or Channell clear of all danger as far as I saw, so that instead of this being only one Island I found it to be two fine large Islands with several smaller ones about them, the Northernmost I name nova Hibernia and that which is the Southernmost and bigest one retains it[s] Name Nova Britannia According to Dampier who named it and went rout through a passage between it and New Guinea, we keep along and coasted ye S° side of Nova Hibernia [sic] and from Carterets point 1 is an other called ... 2 & bear abt. NWbW 2 or 3 leagues and there is another which bears from this NNW about 3 lgs. which is called ... 3 and a third pt. which bears from this about N° 4 or 5 leags. 4 I can not be very exact either in the bearings and distances as we only made these remarks as we run along ye shore, in steering along ye Shore NW to NNW as ye land tretended round to the Northward, and just before dark made two passages formed by a pratty large Island which I called Duke of yorks Isld. with some smaller ones about it. It lies in the middle of the Streights or Channel between Nova Britannia & Nova Hibernia on the main or New Britain side are some very high land and 3 remarkable hills close to one and other We named the Mother and daughters, the mother is the middlemost and biggest behind these we saw great smoke and imagined it most have been from a Vulcano. These hills will easily be seen in clear weather 18 or 20 leags. If not more & will be taken (as we did) at first for Islands, they seem to be inland a good ways, the Mother bears about West from the Duke of Yorks Island. At 6 PM the weather comming in thick and foul we reed our topsails, and furled ye mainsail, and seeing we could not get through either these passages before dark & not knowing what danger there might be, at 7 we brought too, and every two hours sounded but could find no bottom at 140 fm. of line, in the night the inhabitants made many fires. At daylight made sail & went through the NE passage, at Noon ye Mother WJS & ye NE part of Yorks Island N° 42°W 5 miles It Latt, is 4° :09'S and 151° :20'E. about 25 Leags from Cape S°. George.

REMARKS: FRIDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 1767
Fresh gales and hazy Wt: There is a point of land on New Britain side to the eastward of the mother & daughters which is called a 5 and there is another to the westward of
them which I called b cape δ was the northernmost part of Nova Britannia we saw, and I believe is ye NW most part of it, this way off this Cape is a small Island called Ile of man. Cape a & Cape δ seemed to bear about N. W. & S. E. of each other & between them two is a bay, the land of which near the water side is low, & pleasant gradually descending from ye high land in the country from towards the Mother & daughters, seemingly well inhabited by the fires we saw in the night, between these above Capes is the Duke of Yorks Island which makes what I call ye S. W. passage, there are 2 or 3 small Islands in it, but seems good and safe notwithstanding, the other is what I call ye NE made by the Duke of Yorks 14. and Nova Hibernia, and is the passage I am now (PM) sailing through [and] is the best clearest & broadest, it lies about NWbN 8 or 9 miles long & about 8 Leagues broad, the straites in these parts is 14 or 15 leagues broad, and very high land on both sides. Some Canoes put off from ye Duke of yorks Island but we having a fresh gales we could not stay for them they seemed to been very neat & well made, & all the Island is pleasant well clothed with green trees, and a great number of Inhabitants who have their houses near the water side amongst the Coconut trees. they are black woolly head Negroes. At 6 pm the NEmost passage NWbN 9 or 10 leagues and the Island of Man SW about 9 Leags. the weather here was thick & hazy we could not see ye land of New Britain anything plain, and this was the last sight we got of it. We keep running along ye southside of Nova Hibernia at ye distance of 6 or 7 leags. At 11 at night it being thick like a tornado with much thunder & lightning all round, we took one reef in the topsails, and handed them, at 1 am the weather cleared up we sett them again, & top gall†. sails, light airs and hazy, at daylight AM we found we had lost sight of all the land of Nova Britannia, the weather was thick fould wet and dury, had it been clear I imagine we most have still seen some of the high land of it. All this 24 hours we have observed by the land, & indeed ever since we been sail from Carterets harbour, that we have a strong Westerly sett or Current, & by the Obsn. at Noon find the ship much to ye Northward of the account & it is plain this current cannot set directly N°. as that would be right against the land & therefore most sett along the shore. I have allow'd NNW 24 miles nearly as the shore lies.

1 Carteret Point, bounding Carteret Harbour on the west; 2 Probably Condor Point, New Ireland; 3 Probably Gilling Point, New Ireland; 4 Probably Hunter Point, New Ireland; 5 Cape Gazelle; 6 The most northerly point of New Britain, Cape Tawui; 7 Watom Island; 8 Blanche Bay.


B58 Bougainville's Account of his Discovery (in July 1768) of the Plaque Set up by Carteret on 7 September 1767 in English Cove, New Ireland

See also B36, B98.

On the first day we found a periagua, as it were deposited, and two huts, on the banks of a rivulet, at a mile's distance from our camp ... The savages had but lately been in this place; for some bananas were found quite fresh in the huts. Some of our people really thought they heard the cries of men towards the mountains; but we have since verified, that they have mistaken for such the plaintive notes of a large crested pigeon ... We found something extraordinary on the banks of this river. A sailer, belonging to my barge, being in search of shells, found buried in the sand, a piece of a plate of lead, on which we read these remains of English words, HOR'D HERE TCK MAJESTY'S. There yet remained the mark of the nails, with which they had fastened this inscription, that did not seem to be of any ancient date. The savages had, doubtless, torn off the plate, and broke it in pieces.

This adventure engaged us carefully to examine all the neighbourhood of our anchorage. We therefore ran along the coast within the isle which covers the bay; we followed it for about two leagues, and came to a deep bay of very little breadth, open to the S. W. at the bottom of which we landed, near a fine river. Some trees sawed in pieces, or cut down with hatchets, immediately struck our eyes, and shewed us that this was the place where the English put in at. We now had little trouble to find the spot where the inscription had been placed. It was a very large, and very apparent tree, on the right hand shore of the river, in the middle of a great place, where we concluded that the English had pitched their tents; for we still saw several ends of rope fastened to the trees; the nails stuck in the tree; and the plate had been torn off but a few days before; for the marks of it appeared quite fresh. In the tree itself, there were notches cut, either by the English or the islanders. Some fresh shoots, coming up from one of the trees which was cut down, gave us an opportunity of concluding that the English had anchored in this bay but about four months ago. The rope, which we found, likewise sufficiently indicated it; for though it lay in a very wet place, it was not rotten. I make no doubt, but that the ship that touched here, was the Swallow; a vessel of fourteen guns, commanded by captain Carteret, and which sailed from Europe in August 1766, with the Dolphin, captain Wallace. We have since heard of this ship at Batavia, where I shall speak of her; and where it will appear, that we from thence followed her track to Europe. This is a very strange chance, by which we, among so many lands, come to the very spot where this rival nation had left a monument of an enterprize similar to our's.

SOURCE Lewis D. Bougainville, A Voyage round the World, 1766-9, J. R. Forster, ed., Dublin, 1772, pp. 326-8
Cook Reflects on the Extent of Exploration of New Guinea, 1770

Torres' voyage in 1606-7 had established that New Guinea did not extend south below 10 degrees south latitude, but it was not until 1762 that the results of Torres' voyage were made known to the world. Alexander Dalrymple who had discovered in that year Torres' letter to the king describing his voyage, showed Joseph Banks who sailed with James Cook, a map tracing Torres' voyage. Even so the existence of a strait between New Guinea and Australia was to James Cook a 'doubtful point' which he was 'determined if possible to clear up.' As the Endeavour beat northwards along the east coast of Australia, Cook debated the existence of a strait and the extent of exploration that had taken place: 'I now came to a fix'd resolution to keep the Mainland on board in our rout to the northward let the concequence be what it will, indeed now it was not adviseable to go without the reef, for by it we might be carried so far from the Coast as not to be able to determine whether or no New Guinea joins to or makes a part of this land.'

See also B100.

Its true I might have proceeded farther a long the Coast to the northward and westward untility we had found a place where the Ship could lay so near the shore as to cover the

2 Ibid., p. 380

A Description of Trade in Birds of Paradise, New Guinea, 1775

Pierre Sonnerat accompanied a French scientific expedition comprised of two vessels whose destination was the East—Ceylon, Malacca, Philippine Islands, the Moluccas. The total voyage covered the years 1774 to 1781. See also, P. Sonnerat, Voyage aux Indes orientales et à la Chine, fait par ordre du Roi, depuis 1774 jusqu'au 1781, etc., Paris, 1782, 2 vols.

The Papous are the inhabitants of the isles near New Guinea, and of New Guinea itself; they are little known, and their country seldom visited by Europeans: their looks have somewhat hideous and frightful in them: the men are stout, of a shining black, but their skin rough and rude, and in most of them disfigured by marks, like those occasioned by the Leprosy: their eyes are very large, their noses flat, their mouths excessively wide, their lips, especially the upper one vastly thick, short woolly hair, either a shining black, or fire red: this is so striking a variety, that one should almost suspect that the color was artificial, by powdering with lime; they are brave, love war, but are cruel, suspicious and deceitful. It is however on their country that nature has placed the rarest, most precious, most singular, and most beautiful of its productions; if we only judge from the small quantity they brought us of their own accord.

They presented us with several species of birds equally as elegant for shape, as brilliant for the lustre of their colors; and several sorts of those precious Trees, which furnish Spices. The bodies of the dead birds of Paradise serve for ornament to their Chiefs; who wear them fasten'd to their bonnets by way of Aigrettes: but in preparing the skins, they cut off the legs. The Dutch, who trade on these coasts, buy them in this condition, and carry them to Persia, Suratte and the Indies; where they sell excessively dear to the rich inhabitants, who wear them as Aigrettes in their Turbans,
or Helmets; and adorn their Horses with them: hence these birds are supposed to have no feet, that they sleep suspended by the two long hair-like feathers which adorn their tail; and lastly, that they hatch their eggs by carrying them under their wings. The Dutch have given a credit to these idle tales, which, by throwing an air of the marvellous over the object of commerce, was likely to set it off and enhance its value....


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**B61  A Report on Trade at Dorei (Manokwari), 1775**

In October 1774, the English Chief and Collector of Balambangan, Mr Herbert, was told by a Moluccan, Ismail Tuan Hagee, that spices were produced in New Guinea and other islands, independent of the Dutch. Herbert consequently employed Captain Thomas Forrest to undertake a voyage in company with Tuan Hagee to ascertain the truth of the rumour. Forrest sailed from Balambangan on 9 November 1774 in a Soolva prow of only ten tons, the ‘Tartar’ galley. He touched at Soloo Tonyl, Bally Tomaguy, Waigiou and other islands, and was detained for several lengthy periods by storms. Forrest anchored in Dorei Bay on 27 January 1775, and remained there until 18 February. He was received in a friendly manner by the natives, and was able to make a close examination of their living conditions and practices. During his stay he also visited Maasingham Harbour to the south of Dorei Bay and the adjacent islands of Manaswary and Maspinapy. See also B101.

They purchase their iron tools, chopping knives, and axes, blue and red battoas, china beads, plates, basona, etc., from the Chinese. The Chinese carry back Misoy bark, which they get to the eastward of Dory, at a place called Warrambee, or Warapine; it is worth 30 dollars, a pecul (133 lb.) on Java. They trade also in slaves, ambergrise, swallo, or sea slug, tortoiseshell, small pearls, black loories, large red loories, birds of Paradise, and many kinds of dead birds, which the Papua men have a particular way of drying.

The Dutch permit noburgher of Ternate or Tidore, to send a vessel to the coast of New Guinea. They are not willing to trust those burghers, while they put a just confidence in the Chinese; that they will not deal in nutmegs, as formerly mentioned. The Chinese have a pass from the Sultan of Tidore, and wear Dutch colours.

**Source**: T. Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea and the Moluccas from Balambangan performed in the Tartar Galley belonging to the Honourable East India Company during the years 1774, 1775, and 1776*, London, 1780, 2nd edn., p. 104 et seq.

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**B62  The First Survey of McCluer’s Gulf, 1792**

John McCluer was a Marine Officer stationed at Bombay. He was instructed to carry out extensive surveys of the coastline of New Guinea, particularly of shores in the vicinity of what is now known as McCluer’s Gulf. For this purpose he was given command of the East India Company ships Panther and Endeavour. The first task of this voyage was to map the Pelew Islands, where he was ordered to report the death of the son of the King of those islands. Upon completion of this mission, McCluer skirted the southern shores of New Guinea in an easterly direction. See also, Amasa Delano, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres*, Boston, 1817.

Our stock of provisions being now compleated, and every thing in good order, and not a sick Person on board of either Vessel we set out; we fell in with New Guinea just where Commodore Watson’s Chart terminates and here found the Land trends away due East.

The 2 day of our entering this Gulph we had the misfortune to lose our Surgeon in the following manner.

26th Oct. we got under sail at day light with a light breeze from the Land, upon looking along the Shoar to the Westward, we saw several Canoes paddling towards us, as they approached us, we could perceive 3 of them to be large Coorouroras and paddling 3 rows of each side on the outriggers, carrying from 60 to 70 men each, the others were smaller Canoes 8 in number from 3 to 10 persons in each, they came on boldly within hail of us (with Flags flying and Feathers in their hair) then made a full stop and took a view of us; their appearance looked hostile, each man having a Bow or a Dart stick in his hand, they made a whooping noise and danced about like Madmen, which we could not well distinguish whether it meant rage or joy, however, I ordered 20 stand of arms to be loaded and laid down on the Quarter-deck; also the People in the Tops to their Quarters but with
orders not to shew their arms or fire 'till they were ordered, as I wished to make friends with them if possible: they kept a considerable time talking to each other at a bow-shot distance from us and we inviting them to come close to us by every sign we could make, they then stood for the Endeavour but Mr. Proctor would not let them come near him, by waving to them to keep off, and pointed for them to go to us, this they obeyed, and came now close under our stern and held fast by our boat we made every sign we could of friendship to them, by making the Boat Keeper throw some salt water over his head, and we stretched out our arms to shew them we had no weapons of offence, and called them Batte Batte which was understood perfectly well in Revenge's Strait for Friendship, and some of them returned the compliment by calling Batte; but they did not put down their bows which were all strung, and an arrow in hand, they were apparently reconciled and held up Birds of Paradise to us, which we supposed were for sale, and thought they wished to trade with us.

The Doctor being always forward and wishing to have the preference in trading seeing the Savages held up the Birds of Paradise begg of me to let him go into the Longboat to purchase them.

The hauling up of the Boat to let the Doctor get in, caused a confusion among the Savages and M. Wedgborough observed some of them to fix the arrow in their Bow and begg I would not expose myself so much to them, but their confusion subsided on my shaking my hands and the Doctor dropping astern in the Boat— to the Chief of the nearest Boat he gave a fathom of Chintz and followed the custom of putting water on the head, but I observed this was not returned on their side, I then threw a piece of white cloth to the Doctor to present to the Chief of the other large Boat who were one on each quarter of our longboat which he did accordingly and asked of me to give him down the box to make them all presents. I told him I would not give him the box, but I would go and fetch him some things from it— while I was doing this, M. Wedgborough called to me that the Doctor had gone into one of their Boats and they had pushed off with him; when I looked; sure enough he was seated in one of the small Canoes, and 3 or 4 fellows dancing round him and they took him in the rear of the large Boats out of our sight, several fellows now jump in from the large boats and made for the longboat, one of them got in and wrestled with the Boatkeeper to get him out of the Boat, but he was too much for him and upon drawing a knife from his pocket the Savage leapt in the water and left him; at the same instant a Shower of arrows and darts came towards us and many fell on board, 4 men were wounded by the first flight, we then fired our musquetry among them that they were glad to make off and from the Endeavour they could perceive them killing the Doctor, they sent several charges of round and grape all among them which must have done great execution, the Savages used every exertion to get with all speed out of our reach, and they got into the opening of a Creek where they remained some time and we were with a light air lying helpless. I looked with the Glass among the boats, but could not see any thing like the Doctor. After this business was over I called a Council of Officers and we all agreed to proceed on our work, as Mr Proctor from the Endeavour saw a man strike the Doctor with what appeared like a chopper, and Mr Mitchie of the same vessel saw him all bloody before a musquet was fired from us, also one of the Servants from the Cabin window saw one of the Savages strike the Doctor upon the neck with something like a Hatchet and by the same blow he fell overboard and another fellow threw a lance at him in the water after which he was seen no more.

Being certain we could not recover the Doctor again dead or alive and to see further revenge would answer no good purpose 'would be only sacrificing the innocent for the deeds of the guilty, and indeed to pursue them would be madness, for they could take their boats into Creeks that we would not enter with our boats so that burning their Villages would be the only revenge we could take and that would them highly imprudent we therefore stood on our course to the Eastward.

Having instances of the treachery of these people from the Journals of the Queen and Northumberland I always treated them with caution and never trusted our boats from the vessel unarmed, and at Revenge's Strait we had some trouble to make them believe we were not Dutchmen and every European they see they take them to be of that Nation they not having sense to discriminate one Nation from another; and while the Dutch are in possession of the Malucus the Papoos will be their mortal Enemies, I was told at Amboina that those who could produce 3 whites heads were entitled to the rank of a Chief of the 1st order in Papoos, but this I did not give credit to.

On the 28th Oct. a huge chain of Mountains extended from N to SE and our water began to decrease fast . . . the Panther in deep water and went in the small vessel, one of the openings I found had good depth at its entrance and deep water within. I went up about 10 miles, we were perceived by the Natives and as their Numbers were unknown to me I thought it best to return and bring in the Panther, the People seeing we were going back, they came in 4 small Canoes, about 20 people in them, they waved a Mat, and hald us at a distance; a small one having 3 men in seemed to possess more courage than the others came within half of us and pointed to the NE and called out Dory, Iovy, Manuswary, Miyory and seemed much distressed, we were going back again, the other Boats seeing us on familiar terms with their Comrades wished much to join us, but we waved to them to keep back and pointed a musquet at them, (which they seemed acquainted with) but this had not the effect 'till we fired it, they seeing the ball strike the water made them keep a proper distance, we then sent them presents by their Comrades which we could see by the Glasses that they were punctually distributed as we directed them.

When we anchored at change of Tide, they came, one Canoe at a time, and we let one or two of them come on board, they seemed quite affable and cheerful and not ill-features, like those at the Entrance of the Gulph, they sold us their Bows, Spears, Combs and any thing we took a fancy to and I observed before one of them came on board of us, he would break an arrow over his head. Having thus established a friendly footing with them, we went out to the Panther and they went to inform their friends of their success.

We now entered the River with both Vessels and were met at the entrance by several Canoes we now adopted a different plan from what we did before, we let several of the principal men come on board and we shewed our superiority by firing some great guns, some with round and some with grape, which latter astonished them much, we likewise made the Seapous are platoons of musquetry from the tops, which I found had the desired effect, as they seemed greatly afraid of a musquet, they complied with any thing we told them to do, we made them all unstring their Bows alongside, and afterward none came with a Bow strung. The first day we went considerably past where we had been in the En-
deavour before, we now came to a division in the River, one branch ran NE and the other S'ward the N\textsuperscript{th} one being broadest I followed that, but it began to shoal and I came to anchor in 7 fath. at high and 4 at low water and here the water was as salt as any part of the Ocean. We were now almost surrounded with immense high Mountains and in the mornings were almost suffocated with the fogs, which hung in clouds about the Hills all the Day long, I was here afraid of my people but thank GOD none got sick, I kept out the damp with good Arrack which they preferred to any medicine in the Chest. — I went up in the Endeavour as far as I could possibly go, when I returned it was not above twice the vessel's length in breadth: we made the best of our way out again, the Canoes now came from all quarters to us, we had above 30 about us and every one had Nutmegs in, some the Massey Bark and we bought all their Nutmegs those in the husk made an excellent pickle the Natives eat the husk raw like an apple, and our people followed the example, which must be a good antiscorbutick, the Seapoy made Curriese of them, and indeed they came at last so plenty to us, that in a few days I could have loaded the Vessel with them; this was just the Season and we had them ripe from the Tree. Even those people who seemed to us quite harmless had their wars among themselves, many of them were wounded, and the head men of one branch wished me to keep them from the others, telling me to peo at them, but this I would not consent to. My greatest concern now was about fresh water — I sent to every place I thought probable to get it but without success. I asked the People about it, but they could not take the Vessel near the Place, and I would not trust the Boats among them. I made my concern known to the head men and every Canoe that came brought us many Bamboos with water as the (St) could take in, for which I paid them a bead a gallon which they agreed to, and by that means I got near 200 gallons as I did not like this method of watering I made the best of my way from the Place, hoping soon to get to Dampier's (Fresh Water) Bay where we filled up our water very conveniently. At our departure from the former place these poor Creatures seemed greatly grieved and showed obvious signs of their mortification by sitting on the bank of the River and looked at us, while we were in sight of each other. To describe the whole of our transactions in this Gulph would take up a deal of your time to read: suffice to say I kept them in order through fear, if not love, tho' we never hurt one of them.


B63 British Enterprise at Restoration Bay, 1794
East India Company Council from two of Hayes's merchant partners seeking recognition of the New Guinea settlement. Attached to the letter is a list of the productions of New Albion as reported by Captain Hayes. The second document is a letter from the Council to the Court of Directors declining recognition of the settlement.

PETITION LAID BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AT A MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 7TH

We cannot refrain from observing its (Restoration Bay) centrical situation, and how conveniently for the ships bringing out stores to Botany Bay, which may proceed direct through Castrell's or Hayes's Straits, both equally safe and free from danger, refresh and load with the rich products of Restoration Bay, and take them to China, where a ship may go from thence in either monsoon in twenty to twenty-five days. Ships bound to India from Port Jackson could pursue the same route, being far more eligible than going through the dangerous strait called by Captain Cook Providential Channel, where in the best weather they are liable to be totally lost.

We conclude by praying your attention to the good fellows left behind (in New Guinea) in the event of your judging it expedient to follow up the advantages gained. They were promised relief by the end of the year, now near at hand. A ship leaving this in November or up to the middle of December would to a certainty reach them in four or five weeks, but if longer delayed would be open to the sad disappointment of being obliged to round New Holland.

We remain, with great respect,
Yr. very obedient servants,
JAMES FRUSHARD STEPHEN LAPRIMAUDAYE.

October 21st, 1794.

Products of New Albion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Round nutmeg</td>
<td>Timber:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long nutmeg</td>
<td>Iron Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mace</td>
<td>Fatty Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clove Bark</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massoy bark</td>
<td>Log Wood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dammer in great plenty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dye roots beetle nut</td>
<td>Seven kinds of Birds of Paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wild Hog</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Turtles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Large Turtle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>Mangoes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tortoiseshell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pines</td>
<td>Citrons, Oranges and Lemons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fish, various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECRET LETTER DATED 30 DECEMBER 1794 TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF THE HONORABLE COURT OF DIRECTORS, EAST INDIA COMPANY FROM J. SHORE, PETER SPEKE AND WM. COWPER

We also transmit as a number in the packet copies of letters received from Messrs. Udny, Frushead and Laprimaudaye, merchants of this place, and from Captain John Hayes of the Bombay Marine, who had conducted two ships belonging to himself and the above mentioned gentlemen on a voyage of discovery to the coast of New Guinea, together with a copy of a minute from the Governor General upon the proposal made by Captain Hayes for making a settlement on a part of that coast, to which he has given the name of New Albion.

After due consideration of the advantages held out by him and of the subject in general, and adverted to your orders prohibiting any new settlements to the eastward, and aware also of the expense which must attend the formation of a colony at Restoration Bay, even were the advantages so great or so certain as to authorize a deviation from your instructions, we entirely concurred with the Governor General in declining to authorize such a measure, or taking any part with respect to the establishment which Captain Hayes had made.

B64 Captain Blackwood Receives Orders, London, 1842

H. M. S. Fly under the command of Captain F. P. Blackwood, made surveys of Torres Strait in 1843 and 1844. In 1845 the Fly explored a part of the south coast of New Guinea to the north and to the east of Torres Strait.
Captain Owen Stanley at Chaumont Island

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

... Some books with which you have been supplied record the treacherous conduct of the natives of the small islands in Torres Strait; while those of New Guinea and the Louisiades bear a somewhat better character; but in all such places you should be equally on your guard. You will endeavour to preserve an amicable intercourse with them at all times. You should appear to forget their former crimes, and to caution your people against giving them any offence. When purchases are made an officer should be present to prevent any misunderstanding; and you are to impress on the minds of all under your command, the mischievous consequences of exciting the jealousy of the men, by taking any liberties with the females. It would be a subject of deep regret, that an expedition devoted to the noble purposes of acquiring and diffusing beneficial knowledge, should be stained by hostilities and bloodshed.

Source: J. B. Jukes, Narrative of the Surveying Voyage of H. M. S. Fly commanded by Captain F. P. Blackwood, R. N. in Torres Strait, New Guinea, and other islands of the Eastern Archipelago, during the years 1842-1846, London, 1847, appendix No. 1, p. 260

B65 Captain Blackwood and His Men Have Difficulty in Adhering to Orders, Gulf of Papua, 1845

It was now rapidly getting dark, and the canoes were advancing in a line, the men flourishing their paddles, encouraging each other, and adjusting their bows and arrows. When they were within 100 yards, Captain Blackwood and myself stood up on the taffrail and waved our hats, shouting 'poud, poud', and told them in Eeeroo we were friends, and invited them to come to us. They ceased their cries and listened; and I thought at once I heard them say to each other, 'Eeeroo'. They seemed to understand 'toorree' as they answered it with a general cry, but in words we could not understand. We held up hatchets to them but nothing would induce them to depart from their hostile attitude; and when about sixty yards from us, two arrows were discharged, which passed over our heads. Captain Blackwood then gave the word to fire; and there was a general discharge, several of the men loading again and firing without order, and before it could be stopped I dare say thirty muskets had been fired. (The men were just at this time becoming exasperated, with the loss of their messmates in the boats, and expressed great hatred against the blacks.) The large canoe then seemed quite empty, drifting up with the tide, and pursued by Grant in the cutter. As soon, however, as the firing ceased, several men started up in it and began to paddle away, with such swiftness, that our cutter could not overtake them. The smaller canoes likewise kept ahead; and at the same time kept up a smart shower of arrows on the cutter, several of which fell into her or struck her masts, but luckily did not wound any of our men. It is probable, however, that ten or a dozen savages were struck, of whom several were no doubt killed.


B66 Captain Owen Stanley Goes Ashore, Chaumont Island, 1849

On its fourth cruise (May 1849 to January 1850) H. M. S. Rattlesnake, and H. M. S. Bramble, under the command of Captain Owen Stanley, surveyed the coast of New Guinea from Cape Deliverance, the easternmost point of the Louisiade Archipelago, to Redscar Point. T. H. Huxley, a young scientist on board, was impatient with what he considered Captain Stanley's excessive caution. See B109, B110, B111. See also Adelaide Lubbock, Owen Stanley R. N., Melbourne, 1968.

FRIDAY, 6 JULY 1849

On Wednesday morning the Captain determined to visit the small island (supposed to be Chaumont Island) which the galley visited on the 2nd, in order if possible to open up a communication with the natives. We formed a formidable party, the 1st. galley and second cutter with their crews, the Captain, Thomson, Brady, McGillivray, Heath, the sergeant of marines, James the Captain's servant and myself. The galley conveyed the skipper and surgeon; the rest of us went in the cutter.

We got over the reef which fringes the island and nearing its southern shore we saw several natives running along the shore and gesticulating. We stood in towards them but as
we neared they retreated among the cocoanut trees that thickly wooded the hillside, their dusky shapes showing here and there as they peeped from between the trees. We might have landed here but as the water shoaled much and as the tide was falling the boats would have been hardly able to remain near enough to the shore to afford us efficient protection, so we stood off again and pulled round a point to the westward, opening a little sandy bay with a long spit running out from the bushes and allowing the boats to remain pretty close. There could not have been a better place for our purpose as from several canoes being hauled up on the beach it was clear the natives were living near and at the same time the long bare space on which a sandpiper would have been a capital mark to anyone in the boats, quite secured us when landed against any treachery. The Captain landed, giving directions to Dr. Thomson to remain in the galley and cover him with his gun. Several blacks came down, but each party was rather suspicious of the other, the Skipper with his usual want of savoir-faire, looking stupid as a stockfish, and the niggers not knowing precisely what we wanted to be about. After a while it occurred to me in my presumption that this was not the way to do any good, so I said: 'I don’t know that there are any orders about staying in the boats,' and holding my coat tails, waded ashore. I began to dance and the niggers began to dance, and then we sat down and began to draw some of them, and then some more of the officers came ashore and we were very good friends. They offered us yams and cocoa-nuts for 'Kalouma' and we gave them red cotton night caps, bits of glaring cotton handkerchiefs and other articles of virtu with which they were evidently delighted. By this time there were some twenty niggers down on the beach. At some distance in the background three or four ladies made their appearance in their peculiar dress, looking just like ballet girls, a resemblance not a little increased by the jumps and springs they occasionally took, but the men waved them off and would not let them approach.

Everything seemed to me to be going on rightly, and so I quietly wandered away, and spying a path followed it up and in twenty steps found myself in an open area containing three houses, invisible from the sea by reason of a screen of bushes and cocoa-nut trees.

All the natives were down with the boats so there was no one to be seen but a stray woman or two who ran off on my approach and I had an excellent opportunity for examining the houses. I got a pretty clear understanding of their build and then, knowing the skipper’s peculiar jealousy, I returned and told him that I could show him houses if he would come quietly so as not to disturb the natives; so he and Brady and I went back, but when we came to the opening in the trees which led to the houses, he turned back saying he thought it advisable to have somebody else with him.

Brady and I remained and he came presently with one of his boat’s crew and the sergeant(?) and some of the natives.

The little man had his book but to my certain knowledge he neither made note nor sketch, and seemed rather anxious to get away, wandering about in a fidget and seemingly unhappy till he got away. I notice these things because today he said to B---- when he came on board, 'Well, I have seen the houses and know all about them—got every particular.' He seems to be much of Louis XIV’s opinion, ‘La France, c'est moi.’


B67 Simpson Surveys the Coasts of New Hanover, New Ireland and Duke of York Island, 1872

H. M. S. Blanche, a six gun vessel under the command of Captain Cortland H. Simpson, left Sydney, N. S. W., on 12 May 1872 for the South Sea Islands under sealed orders 'to visit as many islands, bche-de-mer fisheries and pearl stations, as possible, to obtain all reliable information with regard to British subjects reported murdered, the practice of skull hunting, treatment of islanders employed in fisheries and plantations, the practice of kidnapping, and to collect information on these and all other subjects of interest.' Simpson arrived back at Sydney after a cruise of 189 days and a voyage of 13,000 miles.

... the whole of this N. W. end of New Hanover is bounded by coral reefs and islands with lagoons inside; steamed along outside them towards Cape Queen Charlotte, and observing an apparently good opening in the reefs just to the northward of that cape, steamed through, and found a spacious harbour inside, having about 20 fathoms all over it, with sandy bottom and with another opening in the reef about three miles to the northward of where we entered; the least water on coming in was 10 fathoms, but I regret to say that on leaving early the next morning we touched on the reef and hung for about a quarter of an hour, when on transporting the quarter-deck guns forward and going ahead full speed, she came off, and I proceeded to steam down the S. W. coast of New Hanover and New Ireland, anchoring the following evening in Port Hunter, Duke of York Island.

The natives of the north part of New Hanover are the same race as at Saint Matthias Island, but much darker, they showed no fear, and both men and women came alongside in great numbers, all of whom were quite naked; they had little or nothing for barter except spears, and appeared good humoured, but arrant thieves. A party of officers landed here, and except that their pockets were picked were in no way molested; as these natives were ignorant of

the use of tobacco, and any old pieces of paper were taken by them in preference to the usual trade articles, I should be inclined to think they had perhaps never before been visited by white men.

The scenery while steaming along the coast of New Hanover and New Ireland was very beautiful, especially that of New Hanover, where the slopes of the mountains are much cultivated, and the bright brilliant green of the crops and grasses contrasts with the dark forest, and the black limestone rocks and cliffs which here and there shoot up perpendicularly and in various fantastic forms many hundreds of feet high. The space between New Hanover and New Ireland is apparently larger than that shown in chart No. 2,463, and more full of islands, there is most probably good anchorage to be found amongst them.

The morning after our arrival in Hunter Bay, I sent the diver down to examine ship's bottom, the result is fully reported in my letter relative to the ships having touched the ground.

Port Hunter is a beautiful little bay, and well sheltered, being open only to the north facing the high land of New Ireland, about 18 miles distant, but too small for a vessel of the Blanche class; we anchored in centre of bay in 19 fathoms, and with 40 fathoms chain out only just swung clear of the coral reefs which edge the beach; it is, notwithstanding, much resorted to by whalers and traders for wood and water, and I was shown a written agreement between the chiefs of this part of the island and Mr. A. M. Ferguson, master of the schooner, Captain Cook, on behalf of Messrs. O'Dowd & Co. of Sydney, for the purchase of a plot of land on Point Mitchell, for the purpose of erecting a house and trading establishment; consequently the natives are more civilised here than those we have lately been amongst, many of them speak English, two of whom, who had served on board the Captain Cook, and had been in her when the white woman and child are reported to have been seen, I procured as interpreters for my expedition to New Britain to ascertain the correctness of that report....

Source: Extract from Report, Captain Cortlandt H. Simpson to the Admiralty, dated H. M. S. Blanche, Sydney, 11 December, 1872, Great Britain, Parliamentary Accounts and Papers, Session 6 February-5 August, 1873, Colonies and British Possessions, Vol. 30, p. 196
B68 A Search for the East Point of New Guinea, 1873-4

Captain John Moresby, in H.M.S. Basilisk, surveyed 275 miles of the south-east, east and north-east coasts of New Guinea. The charting of this coastline had been neglected because of the dangerous shoals, currents, reefs and strong south-east winds which made the eastern extremity of the island difficult to negotiate. Moresby hoped to discover a passage through the Louisiades which would shorten the trade route between Australia and China. In this extract, he surveys the task that lies ahead.

On the morning of April 6th, we weighed at eight o'clock, and stood for East New Guinea, having anxious work before us, and very few hands to do it with just then,—Mr. Hayter being laid up with a throat affection, and Mr. Shortland ill; so that Mr. Mourilyan, Mr. Pitt, and the two warrant officers, were the only ones left at this time to do duty. Our work lay where no navigator had ever laid down a line for us to follow.

Bougainville, D’Entrecasteaux, D’Urrville, and Captain Owen Stanley, had all seen what they took to be the eastern extremity of New Guinea, but did not approach near enough to define the outline of the land seen by them. H. M. S. ‘Blanche’ had the previous year approached the eastern shores of New Guinea from E. N. E., but, meeting dangerous shoals, had anchored thirty-four miles from the nearest point of the mainland (East Cape), at which distance, it is not visible, and twenty-one miles E. N. E., of Moresby Island, the easternmost of the large islands off the south-east extremity of New Guinea, which was thought by the ‘Blanche’ to be the mainland. The ‘Blanche’ remained in this position one night, and the following day retraced her way without having made any nearer approach, leaving the configuration of the eastern shores of New Guinea still unknown; but arriving at the same intelligent conclusion as D’Urrville, that the south-east extremity of New Guinea was formed of a number of high islands...

Captain Owen Stanley, deceived, doubtless, by the configuration of the land, laid down the great range of mountains which bears his name for thirty miles farther to the eastward than it actually extends, and marked a point of land, indistinctly seen by him, as the south-eastern extremity of Papua—a point afterwards found by us to be no part of the mainland, but existing as a small island some thirty miles from the mainland of New Guinea.

Of the north-east shores of New Guinea from East Cape, as since laid down by us ... no knowledge existed, nor is there any record of their ever having been seen by a white man till a point is reached, 190 miles as the crow flies, to the west. There land was indistinctly seen from a distance by D’Entrecasteaux, and named by him Cape Sud Est, by mistake, as this position falls in reality twelve miles inland on the mountain range which rises there, and was doubtless believed by D’Entrecasteaux to be the coastline. Beyond this a blank succeeded, which was unbroken for forty miles, till another high point of land, seen indistinctly by D’Entrecasteaux and named by him Richie Island, was marked on the chart—a misnomer, for no island exists there, and he had in reality caught a glimpse of the mainland. This was followed by another blank of some sixty miles to the west, when Huon Gulf was marked down, after which the mainland had been traced with tolerable accuracy. The D’Entrecasteaux Islands, so named by their discoverer, who had never visited them, lying off the north-east extreme of New Guinea, were so unknown, that the sailing directions supplied to us said that they would probably be found to be not islands but an integral part of New Guinea.

The principal cause which appears to have prevented navigators from nearing these unknown shores, has been the enormous coral barrier of the Louisiade Reef, which extends from Teste Island to the east for 200 miles, and is beaten on by an everlasting surf, blown on by the S.E. monsoon for eight months of the year, and set on by strong currents which make approach dangerous. These dangers, and the supposed ferocity of the natives, have caused the mariner to give this locality a wide berth, and prevented all attempts to explore the eastern end of New Guinea. Bougainville, even in his distressed condition, preferred to beat to windward round the entire Louisiade group, rather than seek for passage here, on his way to the Dutch settlements; but my conviction was strong that a passage might be found through the Louisiade Reef, which would open up a navigation between Australia and North-east New Guinea and shorten the route between Australia and China.

Source: J. Moresby, Discoveries in New Guinea, London, 1876, pp. 178-81

B69 The Ascent of the Maikasa River, 1875

Octavius Stone was a young geologist and friend of Macfarlane, the head of the New Guinea Mission. Stone had been hunting and cruising off Somerset and about Torres Strait when, 'hearing of a river, whose mouth was said to be two miles wide, on the opposite shore of New Guinea, only 90 miles across the straits, we determined to sail to the unknown region and explore the river. Macfarlane and Stone left Somerset in a small steamer, the Ellenguwan, on 25 August 1875, and arrived off the island of Boigu

five days later. On 1st September they entered the Maikasa River and ascended it for about 64 miles. They renamed the river the 'Baxter' in honour of a Miss Baxter of Dundee who had donated to the Mission the Ellengowan, 'by means of which we had been enabled to penetrate farther into the interior of that great unknown land than any previous expedition.' Immediately on his return to Somerset, Stone made arrangements for a second trip. His course this time was to Yule Island and Port Moresby, from where he made some limited exploration inland, as far as the Koiai mountain people.

On the 1st of September all preparations were concluded for the ascent of the river, and at low water we raised anchor, but soon ran upon one of the numerous sand banks lying between Boigu and New Guinea, and there remained until the rising tide floated us off again. We had no farther mishap and entered the Maikasa at 2.30 in the afternoon. It was a moment of intense excitement when we entered this unknown land and first sailed upon the noble river, whose banks had never re-echoed to the sound of a steam-engine, and whose waters had never before been ruffled by a revolving screw.

We saw smoke rising in large volumes a couple of miles off but no other signs of life were visible. On either side was an interminable forest of mangrove-trees, growing on the flat swampy land; so level that the highest ground was only a few feet above high water.

Early next morning we sent the men on shore to cut wood. They discovered fresh footprints, and smoke was again visible afar off, but no village, nor even hut, and not a single native did we see. The stillness of the scene was almost painful, and was only broken by the occasional scream of a passing bird, except for which (and we scarcely saw a doc during the day) all was silent as the grave. Even the countenance of an alligator would have been welcome, but not one appeared to relieve the death-like solitude. At last, when we had gone about thirty miles, we beheld, almost to our astonishment, a native leisurely paddling a canoe; but he stopped as though thunderstruck, on seeing the great machine advancing swiftly towards him. We gave orders to steam full speed, so as to catch him, if possible, before he could gain the bank; but the faster we steamed, the faster he paddled, and when he found it impossible to reach the opposite bank in time, he turned back in evident terror, staked his canoe to a bamboo, and ran off inland.

The Daudé Papuans, as the natives of this part of New Guinea are called, are said to be cannibals; they lead a roving life, hunting with the bow and arrow, and fishing with nets and spears. The country is very thinly inhabited; the malaria during the rainy season, and the heavy night dews during the dry, create a most unhealthy atmosphere.

Indeed, I am led to understand that one single night spent on shore here at some season is quite sufficient to give a European the fever. Notwithstanding this, the climate, while travelling by boat, was agreeable enough ...

When we had steamed nearly fifty miles up the river, we found it separated into two streams, and as we were sailing round into one, the current was so strong that one of our small boats came in contact with the screw-propellor and sank. It was raised with considerable difficulty, but was rendered useless for the remainder of the voyage. Fortunately we still had another lifeboat with us, or our journey must have come to an untimely end. The next morning, while the men went in search of fuel, we landed to explore the neighbourhood. I sowed some water-melon seeds near the river, and we walked a mile inland, until we came to tracts of swampy land. We noticed traces of wild boar, and evidence of the recent presence of natives was afforded by the charred trunks of trees, which must have been burnt not long before; vegetation was prolific, but a few birds, butterflies, and dragonflies were the only living things we saw.

Shortly before noon we were again winding up the river, and that it was a river, and not merely a salt-water creek, we were convinced by the indications of the salinometer, which sank lower and lower as we proceeded. At length we passed a hut, but it was untenanted. Beautiful palm-ferns rose here and there from the water's edge to a height of 30 feet, giving a very tropical appearance to the landscape.

We succeeded in making our way with comparative ease, as far as about sixty-four miles from the mouth of the river; but here we were compelled to cast anchor at a place where the waters again divide into two channels, each being too narrow to admit of our steamer turning in it. After sounding both streams, we went in a small boat a short distance up the deepest, the most easterly of the two, which averaged 2½ fathoms deep at low water. On one of the banks we found good drinking water, with which we were glad to fill our casks. Near the spot where we cast anchor, which we named Wood Bay, was a bark hut with the remains of a fire and the bones of a kangaroo, off which the natives had probably dined. These shelters afford homes to people roving from place to place, and are used as temporary dwellings while they stay to hunt game.

As we continued our course, the water became sufficiently firm to drink, the mangrove-tree almost disappeared, and the beautiful Nipa palm became more abundant, and formed graceful festoons overhead as we rowed along beneath its overhanging leaves. On the swampy land around grow tall forest trees, 100 feet high, with reeds and scrub underneath. Noticing some trees that had recently been fired, we landed, and wending our way through tall grass, nearly as high as ourselves, came to a well-constructed fence, made of branches of trees, inclosing about six acres of land. On this ground, part of which was dug over, were planted yams, sugar-cane, and, what I least of all expected to have seen, tobacco. It was the first and last piece of cultivated land we came across during our whole journey. We hung up a looking-glass and knife to astonish and delight the natives on their return.

About two miles beyond, a stream of fresh water falls over the bank into the river, which dwindles here to a width of only 60 feet, and we named this place Cascade Point.

PLATE 34: Luigi d’Albertis in the steamship Neva


PLATE 35: D’Albertis’s chart of the Fly River from his expeditions of 1876 and 1877. Inset shows route on a modern map

In 1875 Luigi d’Albertis undertook the first exploration of the Fly River. The exploration was furthered in a second expedition in 1876, and a third, in 1877. The second expedition, which the following extracts describe, was made possible by the acquisition of a steam-launch, the Neva, from the Governor of New South Wales. The crew under d’Albertis’ command were: Mr Lawrence Harmgrave, engineer; seventeen-year-old Clarence Wilcox, assistant collector; two West Indian negroes; a Philippien; a Chinese cook; a native of New Caledonia and a native of the Sandwich Islands. The Neva measured 52’ by 7’ and had neither deck nor cabin, but a zinc canopy covering two-thirds of her. In the second expedition the party reached the foothills of the Victor Emmanuel Range, so named by d’Albertis. He was an intensely patriotic man and would have liked New Guinea to be added to the Empire of the House of Savoy. See also, B50; L. M. d’Albertis, ‘Remarks on the natives and products of the Fly River’, R.G.S. Journ. & Proc., 1876.

(a) JOURNAL ENTRY

June 17th. At last I have seen the lofty mountains of the interior of New Guinea!

I have seen them, like giants of different height, towering one above the other, and extending from the principal chain down to the river. But we are still far from these Papuan Alps—forty or fifty miles, or even more. My mind is on the rack. I feel like Moses, in sight of the Promised Land, destined never to enter it!

Although each day we draw nearer to the end of our voyage, our difficulties are increasing. Illness is wasting the strength of my people; each day we feel painfully the dearth of provisions, but we know not how to remedy it.

Shortly after starting this morning we found ourselves in only three feet and a half of water, and the Neva bumped violently two or three times against the stones of which the channel is full.

On sounding, we found the whole bed of the river perfectly flat from one bank to the other, and with only three feet of water. But on anchoring at two yards from the right bank, we found ourselves in a depth of two fathoms.

Sounding again, we found that we could have entered a small creek with a depth of a fathom and a half, had it not been barred by the trunk of a tree, which was lying across the water. A storm was threatening. Before trying, therefore, to destroy the old tree with dynamite, I decided on putting off our departure until the following day.

Taking advantage of this delay, I landed, and climbed a hill 250 feet high. I measured its height with the aneroid. On the top I found a poor little cabin, lately deserted by the natives, who had left behind netted bags, unfinished plaited reeds, a little resin, some wild bananas, some leaves of a large fern-tree, and a heap of ashes. A good pathway on the ridge of the hill led to this cabin and continued up to the top. I could perfectly distinguish the high mountain-chain—the very dream of my life just now—and the object of my journey. I remained for a long time ecstatically contemplating those lofty summits. The landscape on which I looked, between us and the mountains, is a series of small ranges, increasing in height as they approach the principal one, which appears to run from N. to N. E. All the country visible from this point is profusely covered with vegetation.

Judging by the eye, we are about fifty miles from the larger chain, but the distance may possibly be greater. It seems fated that, as we approach the term of our journey, our difficulties should increase. Today, for example, two more men are attacked with fever.

(b) LOOKING BACK

... We have reached the true interior of the great island in about latitude 5,30 latitude and longitude 141.30 east. Then we were compelled to turn back, for we found the rapids running from six to seven knots, so that we could not steam up after the rains and after the flood there was so little water that we remained four days, and almost capsized on a gravel bank. We steamed back about 70 miles and went to explore a large branch, which I have named Alice Hargrave, after the wishes of the Colonial Secretary of N. S. W. Steam up about 40 miles north-west. Stopped again either by the strong rapids or by insufficiency of water. We did not reach any range of mountains. They are seen only at a distance, the Charles Louis Mountains to the north-west. All the people of my party were then very sick with fever, and we found it impossible to attempt to cross swampy thick forests to reach the mountains. We were also at too great a distance from Yule Island and the point in which we should have been obliged to leave the Neva. The general appearance of the country was low and swampy. From the last point reached by the Ellengowan to Snake Point, or about 70 or 80 miles from the last point reached by us, generally it was covered by swamp-grass, and lagoons, and scanty vegetation. From there the country is hilly; the highest hill ascended about 225 feet, and was covered with beautiful vegetation.

From Canoe Island we have seen only three or four villages. They are composed of only one or very few houses, which the natives deserted as soon as we appeared. Only twice some canoes with the natives appeared, but they fled as soon as we moved towards them. Four or five arrows were fired at us from a village. We fired two shots, which cleared the bush. We visited the houses, and got some curiosities. We gathered collections in three branches of natural history, but the objects were very scarce, for I had no time, room, means, or men to spare for such explorations. Still, we found interesting birds, insects, and fishes; and I preserved a good many specimens of plants, both dried and living. Mineral collection is not rich, but perhaps enough to give an idea of the formation of the country and its richness. We also discovered some fossils, shells, shark teeth, coral, &c. They are all delicately, except some few from Kiwai. The people very likely belong to the race inhabiting the east of the Great Island, if inter-mixed with the blacks of the north-west, still retaining the usages of the inhabitants of the east in dress, implements, houses, &c. They have reached a certain degree of civilization. They live on fishing and hunting, and cultivating banana, taro, and tobacco; probably some trading with southern tribes, selling tobacco...
for shells. Mother-of-pearl shells are used by them for adornments. We saw some very light-coloured people. From the study and comparison of any ethnological collection I hope to be able to throw much light on the important subject—'Who is the true original inhabitant of New Guinea—the black or the yellow race?'

B71 The End of a Mission, Fly River, 1876

Lawrence Hargrave is better known for his work in the field of aviation than for his work as an explorer. Hargrave was one of the committee of five who organized the Maria gold prospecting expedition. The brig left Sydney, N. S. W., on 25 January 1872, for Redscar Bay, but struck a reef. Hargrave was able to organize the rescue of a number of prospectors. In May 1875 he joined William Macleay on the Chevert expedition (B51) as an articulated engineer. His next expedition was with Octavius Stone in the Ellengowan to Port Moresby. From here he made three trips, aided by Mr Lawes of the London Missionary Society, to the Laroka River and to the Astrolabe and Owen Stanley Ranges. He was the first white man to enter some of the villages in the Owen Stanley Ranges. In April 1876 Hargrave joined Luigi D’Albertis, the Italian naturalist, and proceeded with him to New Guinea. The expedition was to navigate the Fly River. See also B76; B89.

Dear Father,

We have been up to the head of the Fly river and its large branch, and returned to Kattow about 2 months ago; Kattow is a village on the coast of New Guinea 80 miles from Cape York. We have made several attempts to go across but D’Albertis is afraid of his collection being spoiled by a little salt water. About a fortnight ago I went to Somerset in the ‘Ida’ cutter, and returned with provisions and mail. Mr. Macfarlane sent the cutter to bring D’A, and his collection, but now that it is here he (D’A) won’t send his collection and insists on waiting to take it in the ‘Neva’. I have got the fever and don’t know how I shall stand 2 more months here. How truly Robertson spoke when he said I should get nothing by going but hard work; after my taking the ‘Neva’ about 1500 miles and doing the engineering, navigating, and almost everything but steering, collecting specimens and cutting fire-wood, D’Albertis turns round and says, I am not even his companion, and have done nothing but make the fire. However when I am once clear at Cape York I will have nothing more to do with such an ungrateful fellow...

Remember me to Capt. Onslow and tell him that we reached Lat. 5-57 south and about 141 308 E. long. that to get there we had to navigate 450 miles of river, that the rapids at the upper part often placed us in dangerous positions, at 100 miles from the head mountains were visible from N. W. to N. E. about 40 miles off and about 2000 feet high, the land is covered with jungle and it rains almost every evening; at the mouth the natives are very numerous and there is an uninhabited district before we arrived amongst the country people who, from their houses, dress, and arms, resemble the people seen when I was inland at Port Moresby. We had no friendly intercourse with them, but plundered their houses, canoes and gardens on every occasion....

Source: MS. Papers of Lawrence Hargrave, letter to his father, dated at Kattow, 25 September 1876, microfilm, Mitchell Library FM4/1060

B72 A Letter from the Katau River, 1876

Clary Wilcox was a seventeen-year-old lad who accompanied the Italian naturalist, d’Albertis, on some of his explorations of the Fly and Katau Rivers. D’Albertis employed him in Sydney as his assistant when negotiating for the steamship Neva in which the second voyage of exploration of the Fly River was to be attempted. In this letter to his parents, dated ‘Katou River, New Guinea, September 25th 1876’, Wilcox makes some interesting comments on life with d’Albertis, the friendly nature of the natives, the William Macleay scientific expedition in the Chevert and the fate of the American scientist, Dr James. See also B79; B71.

I am sorry to say we have been down the Fly River about eight or nine weeks. We were wind bound for three weeks and after a good deal of risk we got safely to the Catou. We
had been here a month eating only boiled green bananas and sometimes birds that we shot but we always had plenty of that at least. A pearl-shelling boat came in this being the waiting place for all such boats, but unfortunately they were almost as badly off as we were. They had missed their provision boat and therefore they could give us very little provision. So having learned from them that Capt. Redlick, a captain Signor knows well was living at the Two Brothers Island, a small island about 30 miles from Catou or Katow, we sent some small boat there to get provision but the Captain left and came in the Catou the same day with plenty of provision. So Signor, seeing that he could not keep [sic] all the crew on board and the weather not likely to clear up he discharged six men including the Engineer Har.\(^1\) So we are living only four on board, Signor, I, a Fegeee Man and a Chinaman...

We have a very large village close to us of natives. They are very good and friendly especially the Chief of the Mokatta as they called their village ... I must not forget to tell you that this is the river the Catou that Macleay came to explore. No wonder the people laughed at him in Sydney; but we went up the river with the Neva, but could get only four miles, the trees in the banks meeting in the middle of the river. It is only a dirty little creek about the size of Swan Creek. I must now tell you a little about the Noble and beautiful river, the Fly. It is about five miles wide at the mouth and after you have gone up a hundred miles it is still two miles wide so that will give you some idea of its noble size. We went up between 350 and 400 miles and then found the rapids too strong to steam against and the water too shallow. We saw some very high mountains which we supposed to be the Charles Louis Mt., and I have the honour to say that I have been in the Centre of New Guinea both ways from end to end and side to side. The natives are, no trouble up the river and it is great fun to see about 20 canoes come out in battle array and directly they see that our canoes go without paddles they soon make off as fast as they can ... We have had very bad news from the Yule Island. A Dr. James and other white men and five black teachers have been murdered by the natives but Signor says that Dr. James only reaps his reward as he has fired bullets into the native’s canoe as they pass the Island. It is a nasty fashion the natives have of wanting the white man to fire at canoes as they pass especially if they are of another village, but don’t let this trouble you about us for Signor is a good leader and knows how to manage the natives....

\(^1\)Lawrence Hargrave

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**B73  The Murder of an American Scientist and a Swedish Trader, 1876**

Dear Sir,

It becomes my painful duty to announce to you the death, on the 23rd August, of Dr. James, late of the Chevert, in whom you were interested. It appears that he had lately joined Mr. Charles Thorngren, who owned a boat called the Mayn, and they had gone together in the boat to the mainland opposite Yule Island with a crew of seven natives of islands in Torres Straits. The survivors give the following account of the catastrophe:-

Just before daylight two canoes full of New Guinea men were seen approaching the boat. The crew called Thorn- gren, and asked for firearms, but he, thinking they were merely coming to trade, refused to give them. While Dr. James and Thorngren were trading, a native suddenly struck the latter with a club, smashing his skull and knock-
short river they say, we at the time were under the mistaken
notion that it was this Shalo river.
I named the river 'Kemp-Welch' after our old friend the
treasurer of the L.M.S. It bears about SSW from Hood
Point and SE by E from the Ierepuunu point. It is no doubt
the largest river in this part of New Guinea.

Source: Journal of Rev. W. G. Lawes, entry for 11 January
1877

B75 Limited Exploration of the Manumanu River. c. 1872

On his second expedition to New Guinea in October
1875, Octavius Stone, a geologist, recollected having
been told of an ascent of the Manumanu River. See
also B73 for the fate of Thorngren.

An enterprising and adventurous Swede, named Thorngren, whose acquaintance I made in Somerset, was, he
informed me, the first white man to find out this (Manu-
manu) river, and has ascended it for a distance of about
twelve miles ... Thorngren estimates the average width of
the Manumanu where he saw it, at 200 yards, its banks
being very thinly populated. He failed to get beyond a
certain stream which empties itself into the river, his native
guide declining to go further, giving as his reason (probably
an excuse) that, having once killed a native of those parts,
he himself was fearful of being murdered in return.

Source: O. C. Stone, A Few Months in New Guinea, London,
1880, pp. 31-2

B76 Advice Offered to New Guinea Exploring Parties, 1883

Lawrence Hargrave offered the following advice to
would-be explorers of New Guinea through a letter
to the Chairman of the Geographical Society of
Australasia. For further background detail on Hargrave, see also B71; B69.

Mr. Chairman,

After the interesting paper that has just been delivered
a few remarks from one who has actively participated in
four New Guinea expeditions may be deemed admissible by
you in the form of a note: if this is in order I shall confine my
observations to stating the course that I should pursue in
my endeavours to find out as much as possible about New
Guinea, in, say, 5 years; that is if I were in your leader's
place.

I should despatch my 1st Lieutenant with about 20 men
to Port Moresby with orders to buy the herd of horses that
I believe are nominally owned by Rua Toka, and form a
station at Mo-mé-le about 15 miles E.N.E. of Anna-páter
on the east branch of the Lároker River; (all native names
are phonetically spelt) and there break them into mountain
and jungle travelling; giving men and horses daily and
constant work, even if they can find nothing to do but pack
timber and clear plantations for the Moon-e-ki-e-ler na-
tives; this I feel confident would leave my second in com-
mand at the end of three or four months with perhaps six
men and twenty horses thoroughly acclimatised, the rest
would prefer to return to civilization.

By the way in picking my men in the first instance I
should prefer those who were used to the coast districts of
Northern Queensland and the Northern Territory. I
should send for a consignment of Malays to meet me at
Thursday Island, care being taken in their selection to have
men conversant with the preparation of Sago which with a
sparring allowance of well cooked meat should form the
principle diet of the expedition.

With these Malays and a fresh batch of white men I
would go to Orangerie Bay and work northward on foot
to Mo-mé-le: this would considerably sift my party and I
should hope to start at once with 25 strong healthy men for
Coo-ber-re (the tobacco producing country that lies round
the sources of the Fly River.)

I would keep to the eastwood of Mount Yule giving the
Roar-ro and Mi-var districts a wide berth, and be very
wary in dealing with any natives who spoke or claimed
acquaintance with Tap-pé-yán. If any of my part were
unfit to proceed beyond Coo-ber-re I should despatch them
by canoe down the Fly River to Go-ker (the district round
the mouth of or the lower waters of the Fly) where I believe
the London Missionary Society now has some evangelists
stationed.

I should pay particular attention to the water system of
central New Guinea as from my knowledge of the western
bank of the Fly, that river, large as it is, is quite insufficient
to drain the district extending to the Outer-nar-ter River
and there is an ample basin for another river of larger
capacity than the Fly River, between the two, the mouth
of which I should expect to find near Frederick Henry
Island and probably in Dourgna Straits (of course you are
aware that the Baxer and that other river near Deliverance

1 Native name for W. G. Lawes of the London Missionary Society
Island cannot extend 60 miles from the coast; however, the pearl-shellers are working westward along the coast and will soon settle this point.

I would confine my researches to the S. W. side of the dividing range as it is evident the N. E. slopes are very precipitous and are better attacked from the seaward side. I should deem the expedition eminently successful if four or five of the party got through to Salwatty with one water-tight case of note-books, a gun and tomahawk each, brown and naked as the day they were born.

Trusting this meagre outline of my ideas on the subject may be of some little use to your leader, let me close it by calling his attention to the importance of insisting that no unboiled water shall be drunk by any of the party, and to the fact that those who perspire most freely will probably retain the best health.

Source: Private Papers of Lawrence Hargrave, letter from Lawrence Hargrave to the Chairman of the meeting of the Geographical Society of Australasia held on the 19 June at the Protestant Hall, Pitt Street, Sydney, dated at North Shore, 18 June 1888, microfilm, Mitchell Library FM4/1060

B77 Captain Strachan Fails to Intimidate Papuans, 1884

At the beginning of 1884 John Strachan was appointed to lead an expedition under the auspices of the Melbourne Age. Strachan and four men purchased a lugger, the Foi, at Thursday Island, and on 22 April 1884 sailed for Banks Island, Jervis Island, Dowan Island, Saibai, and so to the New Guinea mainland at the village of Biago. In May 1884 the party sailed up a tributary of the Mia Kasa River and named it the ‘Gregory’. The ‘Neill’, the ‘Tokuda’ and the ‘Bradley’ were also named. Strachan sailed 56 miles on the first day; he subsequently sailed through the river system around ‘Strachan Island’ and anchored at the end of the Short Reach near Tokuda River. Strachan later abandoned his ship and travelled overland to the coast opposite Saibai Island where he was rescued by missionaries. On his return to the south, one of Strachan’s party accused him in the press of blowing up three canoes and killing a hundred men with dynamite and shooting 450 men in the plain. He was denounced in the Victorian Parliament as a murderer. Strachan wrote a refutation to Lord Derby and this letter was published in the Australian press. The following incident occurred near Tokuda River. See also B125.

I then grew anxious, and kept carefully scanning the mouth of the river on both sides, when a whole fleet of canoes suddenly swept round from the westward, and another fleet round from the eastward, completely blocking the mouth of the river.

I grew seriously alarmed, and with a cry of ‘To your arms, men!’ leapt below, and, opening the ammunition chest, passed up a good supply of ammunition. Then, buckling on both my revolvers, and grasping my Winchester repeater, sprang again on deck, where I stood with outstretched arms calling out ‘Pouda, pouda!’ (Peace, peace.) Upon this the canoes paddled rapidly towards us. Dropping one arm, I made signs for only one canoe to approach, but as they paid no attention to my signals, I fired a shot across the bow of the nearest canoe, upon which they struck up the war song and paddled rapidly up the stream to meet us.

It was a grand and imposing sight, for no less than twenty or thirty canoes were assembled, each containing about forty men, great stalwart fellows, whose tawny black skins glistened in the evening sun. The whole line advanced in good order, the men paddling to the music of the song, while warriors on the platform beat time with the butt end of their spears.

I ordered my people to fire a volley, in the hope of frightening them, but as the shot fell short, they yelled back defiance. I kept blazing away with my Winchester, but could not intimidate them, and as the nearest canoes were now within one hundred and fifty yards of us, I up helm and ran back up the river, at the same time firing off a rocket. This fell short, near the foremost canoe and made them pause until the others came up. I then fired a second rocket, which fortunately fell in their midst, and caused them to fall back in the mangroves on either side.


B78 Exploration of the Strickland River, 1885

W. Bauer was a botanist who left Sydney, N. S. W., on 10 June 1885, with the intention of navigating the Fly River to the mountain foot-hills in the steamship Bonito (Capt. Everill), and of gathering specimens
for his collection. Bauerlen’s companions who specialised in the study of shells and insects had more luck in collecting with the help of the natives than had Bauerlen. The party was assisted by the Rev. S. Macfarlane who brought a boat from Murray Island, the Mavis, but the party failed to make their final destination, the mountains.

Continuing our way up the river, passing Ellengowan Island, and winding about between smaller islands, seeing no more villages, except now and then a deserted temporary shelter, we reached a point where a broad stream came in to our right, that is east, this was about 150 miles up the Fly River. [Strickland R., ed] As the stream at its junction with the Fly was nearly as broad as the Fly, it was difficult to say whether it was merely a large ana-branch of the Fly or an independent river; anyhow, we determined to enter it, assuming that a river trending in a north-easterly direction would lead us sooner into the mountains we intended to reach, than the Fly would, beside that, we would not be altogether following d’Albertis’ footsteps. Steaming on we soon came to the conclusion that it must be an independent river, the soundings gave pretty well the same depth as the Fly, and the scenery was much the same, the same interminable jungle and low swampy ground. Nothing of importance happened until one afternoon we struck upon a mud-bank, when it took about four hours hard work to get off again. Still pursuing our upward journey we now came near several tribes of natives, but in each instance they set up a tremendous howl and fled into the jungle, one or two, perhaps, would remain in sight, and, by frantic signs, give us to understand they wished us to go away. One day steaming round a bend on the river we unexpectedly came upon a tribe which was just in the act of crossing from one bank to the other, they set up a terrific howl and made their canoes go with the speed of lightning, as soon as they reached the other bank, they gathered up out of their canoes as much as they could and ran away. We signed and shouted to them to stop, as we did not wish to harm them, but of no avail; we cast anchor opposite their canoes, and some of us went ashore in the dingy, to try whether we could find them in the jungle, but they retreated farther. We were well armed, and had the three kings from Tsumauta with us. We could only get a glimpse of them now and then, and some dogs running about. Seeing we could do nothing, we left tobacco, flannel, handkerchiefs, fishing-hooks, hoop-iron, etc., in their canoes, and took some of their implements as curiosities—rather a questionable proceeding.

Amongst the things taken was the skin of a man’s head stretched over a model of clay, a ghastly object; as soon as our three kings saw it they became nearly frantic, and signed to us to throw it overboard at once, and as we did not so they became rather sulky and would never look at it.

At night the youngest of them, Gisa, who was a great orator, came into our cabin and explained to us, by signs and pantomime, all the different uses of the articles, and great he was that night, speaking for nearly two hours, but at the head he would not look, and gave us plainly to understand that all manner of misfortunes would befall us while we had that on board, and very likely our own heads would be cut off, therefore we ought to throw it overboard.

The following morning we made an early start, and now, for the first time, we saw pebbles on the banks of the river. Up to this place it was alluvial deposit. Turning round a bend, we saw on the right hand bank an open piece of land, with high grass, a kind of sugar-cane growing on it; in front was a clear shingly point, and a little further up, the bank rose to about twenty feet, where stood a few native houses. On the shingly point were a number of canoes, and a few dozen natives going about. As soon as they heard us they ran up to stir houses making a short cut through the cane, so that it looked as if they were also running away from us. We steamed up, and before we could get opposite their canoes, a great number returned with their bows and arrows, having their war paint on them and profusely ornamented with plumes and feathers. We saw the women and children running back into the jungle carrying their children. Some of the men manned their canoes, while others drew up on the shingle, and others still ran in great excitement backward and forward. We stopped the steamer opposite them, and got our three kings to parley with them, which lasted for some time, but I do not think they understood each other much, for at one time they would tell us, it is all right, they would be friendly, and in a few minutes after, they would ask us to go on, as those fellows wanted to get our heads off. At last, the natives on shore getting somewhat more quiet, as if they were only standing on self-defence, Captain Everill very bravely ventured to land and go amongst them, taking a lot of presents with him. They did not oppose his landing, but, for all that, they were in no way friendly disposed. The presents they scarcely took notice of, some they left lying on the ground, and the brightest coloured handkerchiefs they dragged along the mud. Captain Everill thought he saw some suspicious movements amongst them, and therefore he judged it best to get back on board again. As soon as he was on board, they commenced their war dance, accompanied by a rather spirited and harmonious song. The dance was really an imposing sight. They were all strong, splendid looking men, painted in various colours and designs, and most of them gaily decked out in different coloured plumes and feathers. One of them, who had a very light colour, looked imposing in a headress made of the white tail feathers of the hornbill; others had some material round their waist, with part of it hanging down at the back and reaching to the ground so that it looked exactly like a tail; and some had fine grass and fibre plaited into their hair, so that from afar it looked like a mass of fair hair, falling curtain-like down to their loins. We remained and tried our best by signs to conciliate them. After a pause they repeated their war dance, and then they marched off toward their houses, close into which we had to pass round the point, as there was shallow water farther out in the river. The engineer blew the steam whistle, but they took no notice of it, as if they had heard it every day in their lives; two only seemed to be disturbed by it. By the time we steamed round the point, we saw them all assembled before their houses, standing about twenty feet above the water, and when nearest to them, they sent a shower of arrows over, most of which fortunately went right over the vessel. I have one here, which came within two inches of me. Some struck the deck, and some the side of the vessel; others also fell short. One penetrated the side of the vessel to an inch and a half. Luckily none of us got hurt. The arrows still continued striking the vessel. Order was given to fire. When they heard the volley they raised a terrific yell, and ran back into the jungle, but only for a few minutes, after which they came out again and sent another shower of arrows. A second volley routed them effectively. We heard them
Survey of the North-east Coast

howling and yelling as they retreated—men, women and dogs all joining together. It will be seen that we only fired in self-defence, therefore we did not go up to the village to ascertain the effect of our firing. Our three kings were very anxious that we should; they were highly delighted with the affair, and, no doubt, thought of plunder. Gisa maintained that he saw three of them fall, but no reliance could be placed on his word.

SOURCE W. Bauerlen, The Voyage of the 'Bonite': an account of the Fly River expedition to New Guinea, Sydney, 1886, pp. 14-16

B79 Otto Finsch Surveys the North-east Coast of New Guinea, 1884-5

Dr Otto Finsch was a zoologist, anthropologist and explorer. He was commissioned by the German Neu Guinea Kompanie to survey the north-east coast of New Guinea to find suitable places for German colonization. Finsch left Sydney in the steamship Samoa (Captain Dallmann) in September 1884 for Mioko, Duke of York Islands. From his base at Mioko, Finsch made five voyages to the north-east coast of the New Guinea mainland, a region he named 'Kaiser Wilhelmsland'. This region stretches from the Huon Gulf to Humboldt Bay and includes the Maclay Coast. Finsch claimed that the least-known part of this coastline was the 360 miles stretching between Astrolabe Bay and Humboldt Bay. This part of the coast had been visited by Duperrey in the Coquille in 1823 and by Dumont D'Urville in the Astrolabe in 1827. As early as 1616 Jacob Le Maire and Willem Schouten had remarked on the changes in the colour of the water where the Sepik River flows out into the sea and had presumed the presence of this large river. The river mouth was penetrated by Otto Finsch in May 1885 and, unaware of the native name for the river, he called it after the German Kaiserin. Finsch named the Bismarck Range after the German Chancellor. The site he selected for the first settlement was named Finschhafen, after its surveyor. See also B120.

The coast looked flat with strings of hills and trees. Further inland should be good agricultural land...

We passed another big river that I named 'Prince Wilhelm River'...

We came up to another river that had a half-mile effluent. The coast and the broad bay four miles wide showed thick tree growth and plenty of nipa-palms indicating swamps. We found the river completely free. It is the biggest not only in Kaiser-Wilhelmsland but on the whole of the north-east coast. I called it 'Kaiserin Augusta River'. Ships have since navigated it for 300 miles. This river provides a path for the exploration of the interior nearly to the Dutch border. We were happy to have found this river which was assumed over the last 250 years to be in the vicinity.

We travelled along the 65 miles of coast which I named 'Hansemann-Coast' after the founder of German colonization in the north-east. The land was flat with trees, and it should be important for agricultural reasons later on. It appeared thinly populated. Only on the outlets of the two rivers (Hammacher and Eckstein Rivers) did I see coconut palms and count five villages. The landing facilities did not look promising as the surf was very strong...

We travelled on. After the Caprivi River inlet the coast was lined with flat lands and trees until we reached Humboldt Bay. We stopped at Dallmannport. The Natives came to us. They were completely unspoiled and gave us presents without expecting any in return. They looked the same as the people from the Caprivi River district. They wore just one unusual headdress: a sort of pipe about fifteen inches long made from leaves fastened on with pins made from the bones of birds. One chief wore little shells in his beard. They seemed to like boar tusks as well.

We walked with them over good grassland to their village. It contained twenty houses that had no windows, 40 to 50 feet long, 24 feet wide and up to 20 feet high. The roof was made from grass, the floor from boards cut from betel palms, and the sides from leaves. Inside in the middle of the room was the sand-filled fireplace. At the sides were beds made from split bamboo with cocoa matting. Clay pots were there too. The houses seemed to house more than one family. Outside the houses stood carved drums. At first the women were shy. Their hair was short, they wore aprons and appeared to have good figures. Little children had their heads shaved except for one lock which was left so that decorations could be affixed. There were two unusual houses of a type I had not encountered before. They were long and narrow with a bowl-shaped roof. They stood on stilts and had two doors. They seemed to be used as 'a teahouse for bachelors'. We had a meal: sago dumplings to be swallowed whole, fish, eatable earth, water and coconut milk. The people had carved masks often depicting birds' beaks and decorated with beads of human hair. They also had headrests made from carved wood with bamboo legs. They were not interested in matches and mirrors but they all longed to own a black toy colt I showed them...

Kairu (d'Urville Island) is 8 miles long and very fertile... Muschu seems ideal for cattle... Guap is two miles long, flat, thickly wooded and has plenty of coco-palms and must be heavily populated. Islands like that give good protection against attacks. Often these well-off islanders use their superiority to invade places on the coast and rob. These people gave us plenty of yams and wanted only iron in return. They offered us wooden masks on sticks to be put in the earth to ensure a good harvest. They had carved wooden animal figures:—easily recognizable lizards and dogs for instance...

We travelled on to near the Albrecht River and a place called Tagai. Here there were high trees and the spot could be ideal for saw-mills. The trees were the best I had seen in the north-east. The canoes there were made from the stalks
of palmleaves bundled together. Young men went in these one and a half miles out to sea. The boats were too small to carry anything else. The paddles were made from palm leaves. Other canoes were 30 to 40 feet long and could carry twenty people. They had masts and sails and seemed to be warboats. They had a platform with a box filled with weapons including bows and arrows better made than at any other place in the north-east. The arrows were two feet long, the points of wood or bamboo and the handles finely woven and decorated with feathers and seeds glued on. Bows were made from wood with engraved patterns and strings with tassels and feathers tied to them. They had necklaces from shells, breast plates from tridacna, breast shields from boar tusks, narrow tortoise-shell rings for the ears and nose jewellery made from mother-of-pearl. Hair baskets were rare; some had feathers in their hair. Some of the men had thickly tangled hair twelve inches broad and nine inches long covering the neck. The chiefs wore a sort of comb with the feathers of the Goura overhanging the forehead, and on the part, two bunches of feathers of the bird of paradise. They wanted only iron. They didn't seem to have much to eat...

We went on past the Torricelli mountains. The top showed a few bald spots caused through landslides. Nearer the coast the countryside was wooded and seemed to be well-populated...


### B80 The Navigation of the Kaiserin Augusta (Sepik) River, 1886

In May 1885 Dr Otto Finsch on a voyage along the north-east coast of the New Guinea mainland recognized in the changes in colour of the water and in the floating trees and branches, the outflow of a great river. (See B79) These signs had been noted previously by Le Maire and Schouten in 1616, by Abel Tasman in 1643 and by D’Urville in 1827. It took Finsch one and a half hours to navigate two miles of the mouth of the river, so strong was the current. Finsch’s discovery excited great interest among his countrymen and a small expedition was organized in April 1886 to explore the Augusta. On this expedition, under the command of Captain Dallmann, in the Samoa, went Herr Mentzel, Dr Schellong and Dr Hunstein. The river was navigated for about 35 miles. Dallmann concluded that the river would provide an easy path into the interior. In July of the same year another expedition was prepared under the command of Vice-Admiral Freiherr G. E. G. von Schleinitz, the High Commissioner for German New

**Plate 36: Navigation of the Kaiserin Augusta (Sepik) River by Dallmann (April 1886) and Von Schleinitz (August 1886).**
Navigation of the Sepik River

Guinea. It left Finschhafen on 24 July in the Ottelie, accompanied by Dr Knappe, the Vice-Consul at Apia, Carl Hunstein, an albino prospector who had at one time managed Andrew Goldie’s store at Port Moresby, and members of a scientific expedition, Dr Schrader and Dr Hollrun. The mouth of the Augusta was reached on 1 August. It was the dry season, and when the river became shallow, Schleinitz went on in a steam launch and whaleboat and reached a point above Ambunti (See Pl. 36) about 156 seamiles from the sea. They descended the river on 6 August. Both Schleinitz and Schrader thought the land around the upper reaches would be excellent for an agricultural settlement. Reporting on the explorations in 1887, Bonaparte said: ‘This river is very important from the point of view of future colonisation ... The Company intends to establish a station in this area as soon as possible — that is to say when they get the personnel. It will be established at the point where the river approaches the mountains.’

The following year, 1887, the Kompagnie sent another expedition under Dr Schrader accompanied by Schneider, Hollrun and Hunstein. This time it was possible to ascend the river for 380 miles. The following extract is from the observations made by Dr Schrader on his first trip in 1886.

It was seldom that we were able to land. The high water mark left by the river in some places was up to six metres above the actual level of the river; we concluded that during the rainy season floods extend right back to the area of the dwelling-places. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that the houses in many villages stretching along the river banks are built up very high on big tree trunks. The banks are covered at many places with sago palms and wild sugarcane. The villages, often of more than one hundred houses are enclosed by palisades. In the upper reaches of the river there are huge forests covering the mountains.

1 Prince Roland Bonaparte, La Nouvelle-Guinée, Bk. 3, Le Fleuve Augusta, Paris, 1887, p. 12