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This is the earliest depiction of contact with Europeans in British Columbia, drawn by John Webber in 1778. The Mowachaht tried to direct Captain James Cook towards Yuquot by shouting "go around, go around," but Cook misinterpreted their words and gestures, giving rise to the word Nootka.

FOREWORD

“I pressed on, taking fresh trouble for granted.”

—CAPTAIN BODEGA Y QUADRA

The first European to reside in British Columbia was the Irish soldier John MacKay who voluntarily wintered at Tahsis in 1786—seventeen years prior to the capture of John Jewitt, the American blacksmith who survived the massacre of the crew of the *Boston* to become known as the “white slave of the Nootka.”

The first European woman to visit B.C. was eighteen-year-old newlywed Frances Barkley who circumnavigated the globe with her husband, making a lasting impression at Nootka Sound with her long red hair in 1787.

MacKay and Barkley were two of approximately 50 people who recorded their experiences as some of the first “invaders” to the Pacific Northwest prior to 1800. These commercially-minded or imperialistic Europeans and Americans were not invaders in the military sense, but their visits were invasive in terms of introducing radically new technologies, customs, foodstuffs, diseases and religion.

The surveyor Vancouver. The scientists Moziño and Menzies. The gentlemanly Bodega y Quadra. The persecuted scholar Malaspina. La Pérouse, the first Frenchman in B.C. Their adventures all generated publications that now collectively represent the literary beginnings of British Columbia.

The British Admiralty instructed 18th-century sea captains to confiscate all personal journals at the end of exploratory voyages. Sailors were likewise prohibited from divulging where they had gone until permission was given to do so. Four of Captain

James Cook's crew nonetheless beat England's most celebrated mariner to the literary punch.

John Rickman published his travelogue anonymously in 1781; Heinrich Zimmerman published in German in 1781; William Ellis published in 1782; and the remarkable John Ledyard—the Marco Polo of the United States—published his account of visiting Nootka Sound in 1783.

Cook's posthumous chronicle appeared to much acclaim in 1784. It confirmed the murdered sea captain's reputation as the world's foremost navigator and suggested that Britannia ruled the North Pacific waves. In fact, Spaniards had reached British Columbia ahead of Cook—in 1774—when Majorcan sea captain Juan Pérez opened the world's last unmapped temperate zone to exploration and European settlement.

Pérez contacted the Haida at the north end of the Queen Charlotte Islands on July 18, 1774, and his pilot produced the first crude map of the B.C. coastline to be drawn from observation.

Whereas Captains Cook and Vancouver came, saw, and published, Spain and Russia didn't broadcast their voyages. Their secrecy partially accounts for the imbalance in general knowledge of the first European approaches to B.C. to this day.

Documents are still being brought forth from Spanish, Russian and Chinese archives for translation. Meanwhile the stories of how and why scurvy-ridden sailors reached the North Pacific in the 1700s make for a fascinating hodge-podge of fact, fantasy and vainglorious quests.

In the Age of Reason, philosophers, scholars and scientists sought to dispel myths and ignorance; self-interested lobbyists such as Arthur Dobbs, Alexander Dalrymple and Joseph Banks simultaneously encouraged irrational enterprises based on speculative maps. It proved to be a fatal mix.

The Strait of Anian and the Northwest Passage were just two of the "maritime philosopher's stones." After Francis Drake dubbed the California coast Nova Albion, an opportunist named Lorenzo Ferrer Moldanado reported in 1588 that he had sailed from Iceland, across the top of Canada via Davis Strait, to the land of

Quivara in the Pacific. Other expeditions searched for Gama Land (supposedly seen by the Portuguese navigator João de Gama in 1590), Company Land (supposedly seen by an unnamed Dutch captain), and the land of Jesso (also depicted on numerous maps).

Somewhere north of Nova Albion, mariners hoped to enter the Sea of the West that Juan de Fuca had supposedly sailed within for 20 days. But most sailors were rewarded only with paralyzing cold, malnutrition, disease, harsh discipline, storms or death. The rudimentary memoirs of simple seamen such as John Nicol and Ebenezer Johnson make for fascinating but sobering accounts.

One of the most obscure literary connections to B.C. arose from the visit of the French scientist François Péron. The more I uncovered the writings of such men—and Frances Barkley—the more I wished I had known about them earlier, particularly the Spanish scientist Moziño and the American adventurer Ledyard.

In school I was never taught that Juan de Fuca was a Greek named Valerianos. If I ever had a lesson about the Nootka Incident, it didn't register. Until three years ago, I knew precious little about the most fascinating 18th-century character of them all, Chief Maquinna, or the Machiavelli of the maritime fur trade, John Meares. (The modern Mowachaht of Nootka Sound contend that Meares intentionally gave their ancestors blankets infected with disease.)

First Invaders culminates with Alexander Mackenzie's overland trek to the Pacific Ocean in 1793. It was a feat of stamina that marks the beginning of the mainland fur trade and the close of the first chapter of British Columbia's literary origins.

By "literary origins" I mean words on paper. Petroglyphs and oral storytelling have resulted in many wonderful books to date—from the anthropological probings of Franz Boas to the sophisticated analysis of Robert Bringhurst—but *First Invaders* is the first cumulative accounting of those who described Canada's West Coast in published writing resulting from visits made prior to 1800.

Letters from the late 1700s are unrepresented, as are 17th-century illustrators such as George Davidson, John Sykes, Pierre Blondela, Gaspard Duché de Vancy and Sigismund Bacstrom. With few exceptions, I've limited *First Invaders* to materials that are available in a book format. Excluded materials therefore include James Hanna's Journal of 1785; Ebenezer Dorr's Log and Journal of the *Hope*, 1790–1791; the fragmentary Log of the *Margaret*, 1792–1793; Bernard Magee's Log of the *Jefferson*, 1791–1795; Thomas Manby's *Remarks on Vancouver's Voyage* and his Log of the *Chatham*; and J. Aisley Brown's Log of the *Discovery*.

This book constitutes the first volume of a literary history of British Columbia. People from all over the world come to visit Friendly Cove at Nootka Sound where Captain Cook came ashore in 1778. I hope this compilation makes Canadians curious, too.

I'm most grateful for the critical input of Robin Inglis, director of the North Vancouver Archives, and Hispanic Studies professor Derek Carr; the editorial contribution of Edward Von der Porten; the spadework of many preceding authors—such as Derek Pethick, Herbert K. Beals, Derek Hayes and Jim McDowell, to name only a few—and contributors to the invaluable *British Columbia Historical News*.

My thanks go to my friend and colleague David Lester (design), my sons Jeremy (maps) and Martin (computers), agent Don Sedgwick and publisher Ronald Hatch, who made this collaborative process into a pleasure. Financial support was received from the B.C. Arts Board.

I wish to also acknowledge Grant and Lorraine Howatt of Nootka Air in Gold River who took me to Friendly Cove in rough weather, and Ray and Terry Williams, the Mowachaht protectors of Yuquot, for their hospitality and trust. —A.T.

JAMES COOK

Usually cited as the first European to set foot in British Columbia, James Cook posthumously published the fourth-earliest account in English of the first British landing in British Columbia.

No preceding voyage had surveyed so much territory as James Cook's third and final Pacific voyage that reached Nootka Sound on March 30, 1778. The great, dispassionate mariner navigated between 49° S in the Antarctic to 70° N in the Arctic, while amassing new information on the peoples, coastlines and islands of the five great oceans.

The lionization of James Cook has been questioned by Sri Lankan anthropologist Gananath Obeyeskere in *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook* in which he debunks the notion that Hawaiians presumed Cook was their god Lono returned to them. Obeyeskere alleges Cook was a narcissistic, melancholic bore who appeared enlightened at home but was increasingly tyrannical at sea, contemptuous of natives with their "savage ways," burning villages and flogging his men for misdemeanors.

Cook's much-edited journals became the main catalyst for the North Pacific fur trade as soon as his men learned that sea otter fur was highly prized by wealthy mandarins in China. Cook observed, "There is not the least doubt that a very beneficial fur trade might be carried on with the inhabitants of this vast coast."

The story goes that Cook was also responsible for the word Nootka. Having dropped anchor in Resolution Cove off Bligh Island, keeping his distance from Yuquot, Cook and his men watched the Mowachaht approach in their canoes, calling out, "Itchme nutka! Itchme nutka!" They were urging Cook to sail his two ships around Bligh Island to an anchorage nearer their village.

Cook assumed they were introducing themselves as the Nootka, or else providing the name of their settlement. Martínez, who became the Spanish fort commander, corroborated this story in a diary entry for September 30, 1789, when he wrote, “the name of Nootka, given to this port by the English, is derived from the poor understanding between them and the natives.... Captain Cook’s men, asking [the Indians] by signs what the port was called, made for them a sign in their hand, forming a circle and then dissolving it, to which the natives responded Nutka, which means ‘to give way’ [retroceder]. Cook named it in his diary ‘entrada del Rey Jorge o de Nutka,’ and the rest of the ships have known it by the latter, which is Nutka, for which reason they have forced the Indians also to know it by that name; nevertheless, at first the new name always seemed strange; the true name by the natives is Yuquot, which means ‘for this.’” Belgian missionary Father A.J. Brabant later deduced noot-ka-eh is a verb meaning “go round.”

Conversely, Cook was not responsible for the term Friendly Cove. That name for Maquinna’s summer village at Yuquot arose from the visit of the English fur trader James Strange in 1786. Although Cook took care to anchor away from Yuquot, his crewmen did variously record their contacts with Chief Maquinna’s people and have since been blamed for the introduction of venereal disease.

After continuing north through the Bering Strait and into the Arctic Ocean, Cook found great walls of ice blocked his search for a Northwest Passage. Cook headed back to the warmer Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) where he was famously stabbed to death on February 14, 1779. He had been investigating the alleged theft of a large boat by an islander. In frustration, Cook captured the Hawaiian king at Kealakekua Bay, hoping to ransom him for the return of his boat. Sensing danger, Cook released the king before a crowd of several thousand islanders. When an islander made a threatening gesture, Cook turned and fired. The extent to which Cook provoked his own demise is a matter of conjecture. The crowd rushed forward. During the fracas, Cook was stabbed and drowned in the surf. Four shipmates were also killed as his

men fled back to their ship. It has never been clear whether Cook was stabbed in the back or not.

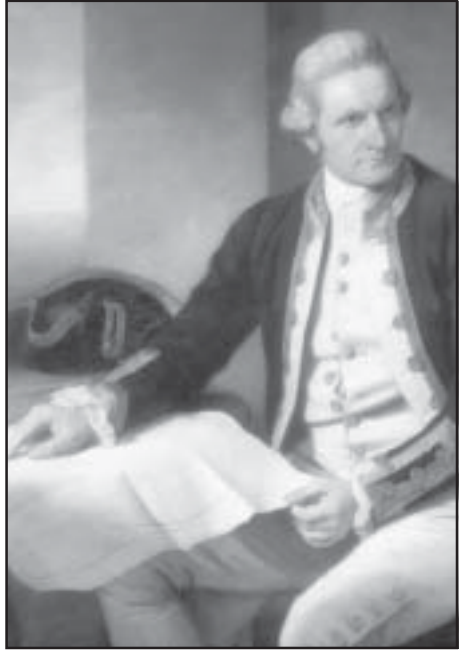
Lieutenant James King did not witness the killing but he reported “it was remarked that while he faced the natives, none of them had offered him any violence, but that having turned about, to give his orders to the boats, he was stabbed in the back, and fell with his face into the water.” There has been speculation that Cook was ill at the time, and perhaps his judgment of the situation was impaired. Evidence that he had become unusually cruel towards his crew is contained in John Ledyard’s memoir of the voyage. The Sandwich Islanders hacked Cook’s body into sections, taking it away. When some of Cook’s body parts and his scalp were returned a few days later, Cook’s crew went on a rampage, shooting many islanders and burning their village. A week later, the remains of Captain James Cook were buried at sea.

The British Admiralty published an edited account of Cook’s voyages in three quarto volumes and a large atlas in 1784–1785, now generally known as *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*. The journals were heavily edited by Dr. John Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury. As commissioned by the Lords of the Admiralty, Douglas embellished much of Cook’s original journals with material gleaned from Cook’s officers. In particular, Douglas extrapolated from Cook’s reports of ritualistic dismemberment among the Nootka, beginning the belief that the Indians engaged in cannibalism when Cook had, in fact, described them as “docile, courteous, good-natured people.” Some of the more sensational revelations added to the text were designed to encourage the spreading of “the blessings of civilization” among the heathens and to help sell books.

For almost 200 years Douglas’ version of Cook’s writings was erroneously accepted as Cook’s own. Cook’s journal, with its bloody ending supplied by James King, proved popular. Within three days of its publication in 1784, the first printing was sold out. There were five additional printings that year, plus 14 more by the turn of the century. Translations were made throughout

Europe. The original version of Cook's journal was edited by J.C. Beaglehole and finally published for scholars in the 1960s. It reveals that Cook was a somewhat dull reporter, more interested in geography than anthropology.

The profits from the publication of Cook's journals went to the estates of Cook, James King and Charles Clerke (Commander of the *Discovery*), with a one-eighth share for William Bligh, master of the *Resolution*, because his surveying work was so essential. The irascible Bligh wrote in ink on the title page of his own copy, "None of the Maps and Charts in this publication are from the original drawings of Lieut. Henry Roberts, he did no more than copy the original ones from Captain Cook who besides myself was the only person that surveyed and laid the Coast down, in the *Resolution*. Every Plan & Chart from C. Cook's death are exact copies of my works."



James Cook's undoctored journal about the Pacific Northwest was not published until 1967.

The major English voyages to British Columbia in Cook's wake were commanded by Hanna (1785 and 1786); Strange (1786); Lowrie and Guise (1786–1787); Meares and Tipping (1786–1787); Portlock and Dixon (1786–1787); Duncan and Colnett (1787–1788); Barkley (1787), Meares and Douglas (1788); Douglas and Funter (1789); and Colnett and Hudson (1789).

Information about the life and times of James Cook is easily gleaned from dozens of biographies (see appendix) and www.captaincooksociety.com.