



## Artists and Illustrators

Official artists were carried on board HMB *Endeavour*, HMS *Resolution* I and HMS *Resolution* II. They were vital in recording the places, people, flora and fauna viewed during the various voyages.

### HMB *Endeavour*

HMB *Endeavour* carried the official artists Sydney Parkinson (illustrating landscapes, plants and animals) and Alexander Buchan (illustrating people and landscapes). However, Buchan died from epilepsy in Tahiti, so Parkinson's workload increased dramatically. Also on board was Herman Diedrich Sporing, secretary and artist to botanist Sir Joseph Banks. Sporing also assisted Parkinson, until they both died from fever and dysentery near Batavia on the return voyage to England.

Overall, Parkinson left 955 drawings of flora and 377 of fauna, plus dozens of scenery sketches which were translated by other artists into engravings. After visiting the Society Islands, there were too many specimens to illustrate fully, so Parkinson did outline drawings which were redrawn and completed by Thomas Burgis, John Cleveley, John Frederick Miller, James Miller and Frederick Polydore Nodder back in England (using pressed and dried specimens).

The HMB *Endeavour* artists experienced problems in the tropical climates. Banks claimed the Tahitian flies ate the paint from the paper as soon as it was applied and swarmed around the specimens they were trying to draw. To counter this, artists would sit under a mosquito net and set flytraps. Only four mammalian illustrations were produced because the specimens decayed quickly and they drew in the ship's great cabin where the officers and civilians ate their meals! Plants (and to a certain extent invertebrates and fish) could be kept fresh by wrapping them in wet cloth, giving artists a little time to sketch their likeness.

### HMS *Resolution* I

William Hodges (1744 – 1797) was the official artist on board HMS *Resolution* I. Hodges was very interested in the observation of atmospheric and climatic conditions and formed a close friendship with the naturalist on board – George Reinhold Forster. Hodges specialised as a landscape artist, while George Reinhold Forster (employed as a naturalist) produced the plant and animal illustrations. When Cook published his account of the voyage, he used 12 charts, 51 monochrome engravings of places, people and artefacts based on originals by Hodges. He produced many drawings and small oils on panel, although his signature style was Indian ink washes and light yellowish watercolours.

### HMS *Resolution* II

John Webber was chosen to sail on HMS *Resolution* II based on a portrait he had painted of his brother and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1776. Portraiture was seen as an important skill to record the physical appearance and costumes of the people they met during the voyage. He usually completed portraits with Indian ink wash and pencil or watercolour and pen work. Normally, the outline was sketched and watercolour was used to finish the portrait.

John Cleveley was chosen by Banks to go on HMS *Resolution* I and was also on HMS *Resolution* II. Only six of his paintings survive from HMS *Resolution* II. His younger brother James Cleveley was *Resolution's* carpenter and had some artistic skill. Only two of James' natural history paintings survive today. The botanist David Nelson who sailed on HMS *Resolution* II and HMS *Bounty* may have completed a few sketches as well.

### HMS *Bounty*

Artists were not officially carried on board HMS *Bounty*, but a few members of the crew were interested in botany and illustration. The official botanist on board – David Nelson – was believed to have sketched a few specimens.

William Bligh did brief sketches to accompany his charts, but they were produced to provide survey information rather than have any great artistic merit.