



## HMB Endeavour's journey

Voyage duration: 1769 - 1771

Destinations: Plymouth (United Kingdom) – Madeira – Rio de Janeiro – Cape Horn (South America) – Tahiti – Straits of Magellan – New Zealand – Stingray/Botany Bay (Australia) – Great Barrier Reef/ Cooktown/Cape York (Australia) – Batavia – Plymouth (United Kingdom).

Originally, HMB *Endeavour* was to be captained by Augustus Dalrymple who proposed that a large continent existed somewhere in the south Pacific. He was an accomplished seaman and had scientific leanings, but was not an Admiral. His arrogant personality prevented his appointment to lead the HMB *Endeavour* voyage and James Cook was selected based on his excellent record.

HMB *Endeavour* was James Cook's first ship that he captained. Originally, it was the Whitby collier *Earl of Pembroke*, which was four years old and was converted to become HMB *Endeavour*. HMB *Endeavour* set sail with a crew of 94 (including 11 scientific members) from Plymouth, England on August 26 1769.

Cook received two sets of instructions – the second set was to be opened after first set of instructions had been carried out. Firstly, HMB *Endeavour* was commissioned by the Royal Society of Britain to observe the transit of Venus on June 3 1769 from King George's Island or Tahiti. The eclipse was predicted by Astronomer Royal Edmund Halley, who saw it as an opportunity to calculate the distance between the Earth and the Sun.

Secondly, HMB *Endeavour* was ordered to explore south of Tahiti for a southern continent and to establish whether New Zealand (which had been mapped by Tasman) was part of this southern continent or separate. The potential for colonisation of the southern continent was apparent to the Lord High Admiral, so specimens were to be collected, indicating the fertility of the soil and plants or animals that may have been of use. Cook was to learn of this order only after they had completed their observation of the eclipse in Tahiti.

Cook successfully completed the observation of the eclipse and was able to establish that New Zealand was separated from Australia. Cook travelled along the east coast of Australia, from Botany Bay (Sydney) up to the Great Barrier Reef (Queensland). While Cook was not the first European to discover Australia, Tahiti or New Zealand, he did successfully chart part or all of their coastlines and was able to reported thoroughly on their cultures, flora and fauna.

As well as successfully mapping various countries and observing the transit of Venus, HMB *Endeavour's* voyage collected new plant and animal specimens that were highly prized back in the United Kingdom.

