
HAKLUYT'S VOYAGES

For its knowledge of the sea dogs and the rise of English sea power the world is indebted to a self-effacing, industrious clergyman, "Richard Hakluyt, Preacher" (1553–1616). He was born, probably in London, in 1553, educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford, where he received his B.A. in 1574 and his M.A. three years later.

As a boy he visited his older cousin Richard, in the Middle Temple, and became so interested in the maps and globes he saw there that he dedicated the rest of his life to the study of English exploration. At Oxford he read all the extant travels in Greek, Latin, Italian, English, Spanish, and Portuguese. In 1582 he published his first book, *Divers Voyages touching The Discovery of America*, dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney. A year later he considered taking part in Gilbert's second voyage, but instead for five years took the post of chaplain to Sir Edward Stafford, ambassador to Paris. During this time he worked tirelessly bringing together all the accounts of the English voyages he could in any way secure. In 1589 he published the first folio editions of *The Principal Navigations, Traffics, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, and enlarged it to a three-volume folio edition in 1598–1600.

Hakluyt was a conscientious editor of enormous industry. He was faithful to his sources and was judicious in cutting and revising ornately written accounts of voyages which came into his hands. To seek out the only living survivor of a Labrador expedition of 1536, he once traveled two hundred miles. He searched English and Continental libraries and talked with English and foreign sailors on their returns from voyages. He knew every mapmaker, traveler, merchant-adventurer, explorer, imperialist of his time; and even the great men of the court—Sidney, Walsingham, Howard—passed on what they knew to him. He never sailed himself, but he knew more than any sailor.

He was a quiet, pious man, but above all (as Professor Raleigh says) he was a "zealot for the map and flag." He received ecclesiastical preferment, finally becoming archdeacon of Westminster in 1603. At his death in 1616 his manuscripts passed to the Reverend Samuel Purchas, who published further accounts of the voyages based on Hakluyt's collections.

Throughout the *Principal Navigations* one can see constant strains of British character and the qualities which make the great collection so representative of the Elizabethan spirit. The desire to see new worlds is interwoven with the lust for gold and with the hope of conquest. Along with the expressed missionary idea of adding new nations to Protestantism is the mounting hatred of Spain. The dogged energy and zeal of English navigators and seamen, which few praise even from their enemies, is graphically depicted. Fighters like Drake, Hawkins, and Grenville, dreamers such as Raleigh, empire visionaries like Gilbert, and gentlemen-adventurers like Essex crowd Hakluyt's pages.

From The Principal Navigations, Traffics, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation

From A brief and true report of the new-found land of Virginia: of the commodities there found, and to be raised, as well merchantable as others. Written by Thomas Hariot, servant to Sir Walter Raleigh, a member of the colony and there employed in discovering a full twelve-month.

The course which Sir Francis Drake held from the haven of Guatulco in the South Sea on the back side of Nueva Espanna to the northwest of California as far as forty-three degrees, and his return back along the said coast to thirty-eight degrees, where finding a fair and goodly haven,¹ he landed; and staying there many weeks, and discovering many excellent things in the country and great show of rich mineral matter and being offered the dominion of the country by the lord of the same, he took possession thereof in the behalf of her Majesty, and named it Nova Albion.

We kept our course from the Isle of Cano, which lieth in eight degrees of northerly latitude, and within two leagues of the main of Nicaragua, where we calked and trimmed our ship, along the coast of Nueva Espanna, until we came to the haven and town of Guatulco, which, as we were informed, had but seventeen Spaniards dwelling in it, and we found it to stand in fifteen degrees and fifty minutes.

As soon as we were entered this haven we landed, and went presently to the town and to the town house, where we found a judge sitting in judgment, he being associate with three other officers, upon three Negroes that had conspired the burning of the town, both which judges and prisoners we took, and brought them a-shipboard and caused the chief judge to write his letter to the town, to command all the townsmen to avoid, that we might safely water here. Which being done, and they departed, we ransacked the town and in one house we found a pot of the quantity of a bushel full of royals² of plate, which we brought to our ship.

And here one Thomas Moone, one of our company, took a Spanish gentleman as he was flying out of the town, and searching him, he found a chain of gold about him and other jewels, which we took and so let him go.

At this place our general among other Spaniards, set ashore his Portugal pilot, which he took at the Island of Cape Verde, out of a ship of Saint Marie port of Portugal, and having set them ashore, we departed thence.

Our general at this place and time thinking himself both in respect of his private injuries received from the Spaniards, as also of their contempts and indignities offered to our country and prince in general, sufficiently satisfied, and revenged, and supposing that her Majesty at his return would rest contented with this service, purposed to continue no longer upon the Spanish coasts, but began to consider and to consult of the best way for his country.

He thought it not good to return by the straits, for two special causes: the one, lest the Spaniards should there wait and attend for him in great number and strength, whose hands he, being left but one ship, could not possibly escape. The other cause was the dangerous situation of the mouth of the straits of the south side, with continual storms raining and blustering, as he found by experience, besides the shoals and sands upon the coast. Wherefore he thought it not a good course to adventure that way. He resolved therefore to avoid these hazards, to go forward to the islands of the Malucas, and there hence to sail the course of the Portugals by the Cape of Bona Sperança.

Upon this resolution, he began to think of his best way for the Malucas, and finding himself, where he now was, becalmed, he saw that of necessity he must be enforced to take a Spanish course, namely to sail somewhat northerly to get a wind. We therefore set sail and sailed 800 leagues at the least for

1. I.e., San Francisco Bay. "Guatulco": Acapulco.

2. Gold coins.

a good wind, and thus much we sailed from the 16th of April (after our old style) till the third of June.

The fifth day of June, being in forty-three degrees towards the Arctic pole, being speedily come out of the extreme heat, we found the air so cold, that our men being pinched with the same, complained of the extremity thereof, and the further we went, the more the cold increased upon us, whereupon we thought it best for that time to seek land, and did so, finding it not mountainous, but low plainland, and we drew back again without landing, till we came within thirty-eight degrees towards the line. In which height it pleased God to send us into a fair and good bay, with a good wind to enter the same.

In this bay we anchored the seventeenth of June, and the people of the country, having their houses close by the water's side, showed themselves unto us, and sent a present to our general.

When they came unto us, they greatly wondered at the things which we brought, but our general, according to his natural and accustomed humanity, courteously entreated them, and liberally bestowed on them necessary things to cover their nakedness, whereupon they supposed us to be gods, and would not be persuaded to the contrary. The presents which they sent unto our general were feathers and cawls³ of net work.

Their houses are digged round about with earth, and have from the uttermost brims of the circle clefts of wood set upon them, joining close together at the top like a spire steeple, which by reason of that closeness are very warm.

Their bed is the ground with rushes strawed on it, and lying about the house, they have the fire in the midst. The men go naked, the women take bulrushes and kemb⁴ them after the manner of hemp, and thereof make their loose garments, which being knit about their middles, hang down about their hips, having also about their shoulders a skin of deer, with the hair upon it. These women are very obedient and serviceable to their husbands.

After they were departed from us, they came and visited us the second time, and brought with them feathers and bags of tobacco for presents. And when they came to the top of the hill, at the bottom whereof we had pitched our tents, they stayed themselves, where one appointed for speaker wearied himself with making a long oration, which done, they left their bows upon the hill and came down with their presents.

In the meantime the women remaining on the hill, tormented themselves lamentably, tearing their flesh from their cheeks, whereby we perceived that they were about a sacrifice. In the meantime our general, with his company, went to prayer, and to reading of the Scriptures, at which exercise they were attentive and seemed greatly to be affected with it. But when they were come unto us they restored again unto us those things which before we had bestowed upon them.

The news of our being there being spread through the country, the people that inhabited round about came down, and amongst them the king himself, a man of a goodly stature, and comely personage,⁵ with many other tall and warlike men, before whose coming were sent two ambassadors to our general, to signify that their king was coming, in doing of which message, their speech was continued about half an hour. This ended, they by signs requested our general to send something by their hand to their king, as a token that his

3. Hakluyt prints "cals," which may be netted baskets, or "cauls," netted caps or headdresses.

4. Comb.

5. Appearance.

coming might be in peace. Wherein our general having satisfied them, they returned with glad tidings to their king, who marched to us with a princely majesty, the people crying continually after their manner, and as they drew near unto us, so did they strive to behave themselves in their actions with comeliness.

In the forefront was a man of goodly personage, who bare the scepter or mace before the king, whereupon hanged two crowns, a less and a bigger, with three chains of a marvelous length. The crowns were made of knit-work wrought artificially with feathers of divers colors. The chains were made of a bony substance, and few be the persons among them that are admitted to wear them, and of that number also the persons are stinted, as some ten, some twelve, etc. Next unto him which bare the scepter, was the king himself, with his guard about his person, clad with cony⁶ skins and other skins. After them followed the naked common sort of people, every one having his face painted, some with white, some with black, and other colors, and having in their hands one thing or other for a present, not so much as their children, but they also brought their presents.

In the meantime, our general gathered his men together, and marched within his fenced place, making against their approaching a very warlike show. They being trooped together in their order, and a general salutation being made, there was presently a general silence. Then he that bare the scepter before the king, being informed by another, whom they assigned to that office, with a manly and lofty voice, proclaimed that which the other spake to him in secret, continuing half an hour, which ended, and a general amen, as it were, given, the king, with the whole number of men and women (the children excepted) came down without any weapon, who descending to the foot of the hill, set themselves in order.

In coming towards our bulwarks and tents, the scepter-bearer began a song, observing his measures in a dance, and that with a stately countenance, whom the king with his guard, and every degree of persons following, did in like manner sing and dance, saving only the women, which danced and kept silence. The general permitted them to enter without our bulwark, where they continued their song and dance a reasonable time. When they had satisfied themselves, they made signs to our general to sit down, to whom the king, and divers others made several orations, or rather supplication, that he would take their province and kingdom into his hand, and become their king, making signs that they would resign unto him their right and title of the whole land, and become his subjects. In which to persuade us the better, the king and the rest with one consent and with great reverence, joyfully singing a song, did set the crown upon his head, enriched his neck with all their chains and offered unto him many other things, honoring him by the name of *Hioh*, adding thereunto, as it seemed, a sign of triumph, which thing our general thought not meet to reject, because he knew not what honor and profit it might be to our country. Wherefore in the name, and to the use of her Majesty, he took the scepter, crown, and dignity of the said country in his hands, wishing that the riches and treasure thereof might so conveniently be transported to the enriching of her kingdom at home, as it aboundeth in the same.

The common sort of the people leaving the king and his guard with our general, scattered themselves together with their sacrifices among our people,

6. Rabbit.

taking a diligent view of every person; and such as pleased their fancy (which were the youngest) they, enclosing them about, offered their sacrifices unto them with lamentable weeping, scratching, and tearing the flesh from their faces with their nails, whereof issued abundance of blood. But we used signs to them of disliking this, and stayed their hands from force, and directed them upwards to the living God, whom only they ought to worship. They showed unto us their wounds, and craved help of them at our hands, whereupon we gave them lotions, plasters, and ointments agreeing to the state of their griefs, beseeching God to cure their diseases. Every third day they brought their sacrifices unto us, until they understood our meaning, that we had no pleasure in them. Yet they could not be long absent from us, but daily frequented our company to the hour of our departure, which departure seemed so grievous unto them, that their joy was turned into sorrow. They entreated us, that being absent we would remember them, and by stealth provided a sacrifice, which we disliked.

Our necessary business being ended, our general with his company traveled up into the country into their villages, where we found herds of deer by a thousand in a company, being most large and fat of body.

We found the whole country to be a warren of a strange kind of conies, their bodies in bigness as be the Barbary conies, their heads as the heads of ours, the feet of a want,⁷ and the tail of a rat, being of great length; under her chin on either side a bag into the which she gathered her meat when she hath filled her belly abroad. The people eat their bodies and make great account of their skins, for their king's coat was made of them.

Our general called this country, Nova Albion, and that for two causes: the one in respect of the white banks and cliffs, which lie towards the sea, and the other, because it might have some affinity with our country in name, which sometime was so called.

There is no part of earth here to be taken up, wherein there is not some special likelihood of gold or silver.

At our departure hence our general set up a monument of our being there, as also of her Majesty's right and title to the same, namely, a plate nailed upon a fair great post, whereupon was engraven her Majesty's name, the day and year of our arrival there, with the free giving up of the province and people into her Majesty's hands, together with her Highness' picture and arms,⁸ in a piece of sixpence of current English money under the plate, where under was also written the name of our general.

It seemeth that the Spaniards hitherto had never been in this part of the country, neither did ever discover the land by many degrees to the southwards of this place.

1600

7. Mole.

8. This brass plate is presently in the Library of the University of California.

RALPH LANE

ca. 1530–1603

Sir Ralph Lane accompanied an expedition to the new world organized by Sir Walter Raleigh and led by Sir Richard Grenville in 1585. As the governor of the Virginia colony established on Roanoke Island that year, Lane was the first English governor in America. The next year, however, shortages of provisions and difficulties with the Indians caused the Roanoke colonists to abandon the settlement and return to England. Lane's letter, a hyperbolic description of the wonders and benefits of the new colony, was one of many such accounts intended to promote settlement and financial investment in the colonies. It was published by Richard Hakluyt, geographer, clergyman, and promoter of colonization, in his three-volume collection, *The Principal Narrations, Traffics, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1598–1600). Hakluyt's work was a major repository of accounts by adventurers, explorers, and travellers, exemplifying and promoting interest in the new world, its exotic curiosities and its attractions for colonists. The nineteenth-century historian J. A. Froude termed the work "the prose epic of the English Nation."

From Hakluyt's Voyages

An Extract of Master Ralph Lane's Letter to M[aster] Richard Hakluyt, Esquire, and Another Gentleman of the Middle Temple from Virginia

In the meanwhile, you shall understand that since Sir Richard Grenville's departure from us, as also before, we have discovered the main to be the goodliest soil under the cope¹ of heaven, so abounding with sweet trees that bring such sundry rich and pleasant gums, grapes of such greatness, yet wild, as France, Spain, nor Italy have no greater, so many sorts of apothecary drugs, such several kinds of flax, and one kind of silk, the same gathered of a grass as a common there as grass is here. And now within these few days we have found here maize or guinea when whose ear yieldeth corn for bread, four hundred upon one ear, and the cane maketh very good and perfect sugar; also *terra samia*, otherwise *terra sigillata*.² Besides that, it is the goodliest and most pleasing territory of the world; for the continent is of a huge and unknown greatness, and very well peopled and towned, though savagely, and the climate so wholesome that we had not one sick since we touched the land here. To conclude, if Virginia had but horses and kine³ in some reasonable proportion, I dare assure myself, being inhabited with English, no realm in Christendom were comparable to it.

For this already we find that what commodities soever Spain, France, Italy, or the East parts do yield unto us, in wines of all sorts, in oils, in flax, in rosins,⁴ pitch, frankincense, currants, sugars, and such like, these parts do abound with the growth of them all; but, being savages that possess the land, they know no use of the same. And sundry other rich commodities that no

1. Vault.

2. Two kinds of earth valued for their medicinal properties.

3. Cattle.

4. Resin, a residue of turpentine, used in making varnish.

parts of the world, be they West or East Indies, have, here we find great abundance of. The people naturally are most courteous, and very desirous to have clothes, but especially of coarse cloth rather than silk; coarse canvas they also like well of, but copper carrieth the price of all, so it be made red. Thus good Master Hakluyt and M. H., I have joined you both in one letter of remembrance, as two that I love dearly well, and commending me most heartily to you both, I commit you to the tuition of the Almighty. From the new fort in Virginia, this third of September, 1585.

Your most assured friend,
RALPH LANE

1585

1600