Undiscovery:
Captain James Cook’s final letter to his wife, Elizabeth
A Forgery

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Introduction

‘We are not the masks we wear,
But if we put them on,
Do we not become them?’

(Andromeda, dir. Jorge Montesi, 2000)

This introduction to my dissertation is in four sections, divided as follows: my intentions, my critically related texts and my process of composition. It will conclude with a critique of my creative writing.

The creative writing element of my dissertation is a fictitious or ‘forged’ version of Captain James Cook’s final serial letter to his wife, which somehow avoided the fate of his other correspondence to her.¹ I do not seek to judge, chart, measure or quantify Cook’s character, instead this is a deliberate forgery of an intimate correspondence from a man who left no private signs of himself. I do not explain how or why this text managed to remain in existence, because to do so would necessarily add an extra layer to the fiction and require a subsequent layer of critical explanation. I feel that these explanations would detract from the stylistic isolation I seek for the text, a ‘not-knowingness’ of its origin that dangles the possibility of its authenticity.

I recognise that this same possibility has been achieved in contemporary literature. George Macdonald Fraser (1969) has Flashman’s fictional ‘memoirs’ discovered in an

¹ See Appendix A
old trunk in a disused attic, which is a device of fiction that has no intent to deceive. There is also an eighteenth-century example of this fictional sourcing, in Thomas Chatterton’s intentional deceit, that ‘discovered’ the poetry of his invented fifteenth-century monk, Thomas Rowley, within a battered and forgotten medieval chest in the muniment room of St Mary Redcliffe church in Bristol in the late 1760s (Groom (2002) p.147). Instead of following these precedents, however, my intention is to reflect the practice of James Macpherson, who never revealed the origins of the poetry that he purported to translate from the oral tradition of the Scottish Highlands, originating with the ancient bards Ossian and Fingal, in Fragments Of Ancient Poetry (1763), commonly referred to as Ossian.

I place a copy of Ossian in the hands of Cook as a gift from his Scottish father shortly after Cook’s wedding to Elizabeth Batts in 1762. I ascribe to Cook a personal and long-held attachment to the work that wants to reject Samuel Johnson’s rebuttal of its authenticity in his A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland (1775), yet his attachment to truthfulness compels a reluctant rejection. This not only opens a window on the interior character of Cook that I wish to show (an attachment to a simple, direct heroism based on upright character and endeavour), but it also opens a door on the critical discussion of the nature and value of originality, authenticity and forgery (see below).

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2 I had hoped that Johnson’s rebuttal was published after Cook sailed on his third and final voyage in July 1776, which I could then use as an example of anachronism, providing evidence of my own ‘forgery’ (n.b. see below).

3 Boswell wrote, from first hand evidence, that Cook was "a plain, sensible man with an uncommon attention to veracity" (Captain Cook Society -  http://www.captaincookssociety.com/home/detail/225-years-ago-april-june-1776)
By deliberately leaving the origin of Cook’s extended letter unstated I am also seeking to focus the reader’s attention onto the text alone, with no explanation to support it or prop up its deficiencies. It purports to start in Cape Town on Tuesday 11th November 1776 and ends on Tuesday 2nd February 1779 in Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii, at the point where Cook is welcomed as the human manifestation of the Hawaiian god Lono⁴ and where he was to be killed on 17th February. The text ends in mid-sentence, without the norm of a ‘Signature’ – either Cook’s or mine – to offer authentication. This is deliberate, in order to reflect Cook’s interrupted existence and to create a ‘Signature’ void⁵. This literary device also intends to reflect the paucity of ‘authentic’ information as to his character. In addition, I wondered, what was in those letters that Elizabeth Cook did not want the world to see? It is specifically for this reason that I end my creative text with the word ‘wondering’ (p.45).

Because of this dearth, I have had to assume his personality by extrapolating from what is known of Cook, in order to project an image of the intimate and loving family man behind the social and professional mask. My intention is to demonstrate his known public virtues, yet also his personal frailties; his anger and increasingly violent temper. I wish to portray a man who is ill, whose illness is causing a creeping deterioration of his mental health and a slow but progressive change in his personality. In order to do this I make the entries in Cook’s serial letter become more and more sparse and infrequent.

⁴ See Appendices C
⁵ For discussion on ‘Signature’, see below.
as he becomes aware of himself starting to lose his self-control. Yet I also seek to make these entries more and more revealing of his psychological condition.\textsuperscript{6} It is not my intention to undermine his reputation or demean him, but to balance a 'possible' picture of the man’s interior existence, to create a ‘new’ perspective, thereby avoiding hagiography.

Until his final voyage, all accounts of Cook are of a very austere and reserved, unbending man, yet an equable, remarkably liberal thinking and humane social companion and commanding officer, whose greatest attainment was, in his own eyes, to keep his crew free from disease (\textit{Journals}, p.422). It seems that his crew almost universally revered him and were genuinely bereft at his loss. During his final voyage, however, he underwent a personality change, becoming tyrannical and violent way beyond his usual practice or even that of the normally harsh demands of naval service. Although his temper was described as ever ‘hasty’ by his surgeon’s mate, David Samwell (1786, p.18), it became uncontrollable, and his punishments spiralled into unnecessary cruelty. In the final weeks before his death his anger and harshness became so extreme that his faithful crew were not far from mutiny (Hough (1994) pp.399-401). It has been surmised by Surgeon-Admiral Sir James Watt RN that Cook, although he was successful in avoiding scurvy, suffered from a vitamin B deficiency (Greg Dening (1992), p.162) and that he had picked up a parasitical infection of the

\textsuperscript{6} Cook’s \textit{Journals}, however, reveal that, at the time of his death, he was still very much in control of his professional writings.
lower intestine ‘that deprived him of niacin and thiamin’ (ibid), which led to an ongoing disintegration of his personality. According to Admiral Watt, such symptoms include:

- prolonged ill-health, fatigue, loss of appetite, stubborn constipation, loss of weight, digestive disturbances, loss of interest and initiative, irritability, depression, loss of concentration and memory and change of personality – all symptoms exhibited by Cook during the third voyage and faithfully recorded by eyewitnesses. (Hough (1994), p.438)

There is a further possibility, however. Cook’s third great voyage of exploration was the first in which he bore the title of Captain as a right of Post Rank and not by courtesy of command. He also had sole use of the Resolution’s Great Cabin. For the first time he dined and lived entirely alone, separated from even his officers by the awesome majesty of his authority. At last his merit had been rewarded and his image of himself and of his historical importance had been additionally empowered. Perhaps this very extended isolation affected the balance of his mental health. I suspect it was a combination of both these factors. The route of the psychological imbalance I seek to show lies through his pride, which becomes overweening. I hope to show this deterioration of his natural humility is directly caused by his illness and that Cook both recognises and fears his own progressive loss of self-control. Yet, whatever caused it, there is little doubt that Cook’s attitudes, patience, humanity and temper changed for the worse and that by the time he died he was in the process of losing his moral authority with his crew. My dissertation seeks to show the evolution of this emerging

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7 Joseph Banks, the wealthy botanist, was clearly a social superior and patron during the first voyage. Banks, Dr Solander and Sydney Parkinson used the Great Cabin to work in and to store their collections. Cook messed with them. Johann Forster gained access to the Cabin to work in and was a pain in the caulking throughout Cook’s second voyage. All of the Philosophical or Experimental Gentlemen were outside of proper Naval discipline and needed careful management.
psychological deterioration in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner.

Cook must have been acutely aware that he had not actually ‘discovered’ any lands or islands: the Polynesians did. The reality is that the only truly new thing he added to the canon of exploration was the debunking of the European myth of the Great Southern Continent. This ‘Undiscovery’ as I term it in Cook’s letter (p.19), must have rankled, and may have been the decisive factor in his agreeing to command his third voyage, so as to ‘discover’ the North Passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. From this, and the drive that must have motivated his remarkable rise from obscurity to fame, I have extrapolated a highly competitive personality – not against others, but against the barriers of rank and society and his own ignorance and human weakness. The biographies of Cook I have read do not assume this explicitly, nor do they speak of this aspect of his personality, which gives my reading of him a new angle. I shall seek to emphasise his attitude to learning through his attachment to and his quotations from the authors of his private library, which gave him the knowledge to compete and fit in society. This rise from educational deficiency to a Fellowship of the Royal Society (Hough, p.300) would also explain his gravity, guarded reserve and resolute endeavour, as a habitual means of disguising his ignorance. This became progressively unnecessary as his self-education progressed, for ultimately he was accepted by the social elite of the day. Cook’s spelling remained idiosyncratic, however, which I have

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8 After his first voyage, on 17\(^{th}\) August 1771, Cook wrote, ‘I, however, have made no very great discoveries, yet I have explored more of the Great South Sea, than all that have gone before me.’ (Captain Cook Society - http://www.captaincooksociety.com/home/detail/225-years-ago-april-june-1776)

9 For the library I have ascribed to Cook, see Appendix D.
chosen to retain, to give authenticity to his ‘voice’. For the creative text to be without this would be to leave out the only extant mirror we have to Cook’s inward mind (see Notes on the Text).

For my creative writing project I wanted to explore the potentialities of the eighteenth-century seafarers. I could have written of Nelson’s iconic ‘Band of Brothers’, or of naval heroes such as Edward Pellew, Lord Cochrane or Nelson himself, but I wanted the idea of adventure without the glorification of war, of a human drama of seafaring alike to Patrick O’Brian’s Far Side of the World, where the story revolved around the crew’s reaction against a perceived ‘Jonah’. I am also fascinated by the naval architecture of the ships of the day, of the hardships of existing in a wooden sailing ship that is constantly falling apart, with only the skills, efforts and fortitude of its captain and crew to wrest its fate from the violence of wind and ocean.

However, the key text relative to my creative dissertation has to be that of Cook’s own official Journals (1782) for his third and final voyage. I have quoted from this text extensively and I should clearly flag up that, although this Introduction uses footnotes, as do the Appendices, I have chosen not to clutter the Creative Text with them. Instead, I have relied on the section Notes on the Text, which separates my detailed textual notes by page number.
The *Journals* circumscribe not only the ‘Events’ and ‘Context’ of the voyage, but also delineates the ‘Signature,’ of Cook’s humanity, his writing style and his impersonal professionalism. Yet this ‘Signature’ also includes what Cook left out of his *Journal* – for example a mention of the counterfeiter he ‘invalided’ home from Cape Town, whom I ascribe to be a family acquaintance (p.19), or his violent cruelty towards the Polynesians whose theft affected ship’s stores.

‘We are not the masks we wear, / But if we put them on, / Do we not become them?’ (*Andromeda*). This epigraph at the head of my Introduction is aptly descriptive of both my creative intent and of the texts to which it is related. Adopting James Cook as the narrator for this creative writing is necessarily problematic, as he is such a historical figure whose deeds are well documented. Although in Cook’s case, due to the destruction of his letters to his wife, very little is known of their relationship, or of Cook’s private thoughts and character. The professional ‘mask’ is something he very rarely let slip willingly, even to his crew, from whom there could be little hiding. One exception is when he took his midshipmen to explore the coast of Nootka Sound on Monday 21st April 1778. James Trevennen, an eighteen year old Cornishman (Hough, p.335), wrote that Cook ‘relax[ed] from his constant severity… [and] converse[d] familiarly with us. But it was only for a time; as soon as on board the ship he became again the despot’ (Hough p.388). It is noticeable that nothing personal of this event

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10 ‘Signature Event Context’ by Jacques Derrida – See below.
11 William Herold, *Resolution’s Armourer*
12 See Appendix A
emerges in Cook’s official journal.¹³ Cook wore a mask, forged in naval service. Therefore, by putting on the intimate ‘voice’ of Cook, my creative writing is appropriating a portrait of the interior man in a conscious forgery, a mask, in the same way an actor playing him would.

The epigraph is also an apt fit to the related texts that ‘speak’ critically about the theory of forgery. The question of identity in ‘who is “speaking”?’ (my speech marks) in the creative text is key to the motivation of its underlying artistic structure. Jacques Derrida delineates this when he recognises how the presence and non-presence of a writer and / or reader profoundly affects authenticity and ‘Signature’ in any given text. As Leslie Hill describes, Derrida sees that a ‘signature is an essential act of… works of literature… [whose] purpose, it seems, is to guarantee authenticity’ (2007, p.31) and, ‘by definition, a written signature implies the actual or empirical non-presence of the signer’ (1972, p.20), that identity in writing is ‘mark[ed] by its iterability’ (p.7) as it can be read and reread in the absence of its author and / or of its addressee, which ‘produces an independent “presence” of the “actuality of intentions”’ (p.5). According to Hill, this leads Derrida to the idea that ‘no single beginning or origin is ever available as such… Identity, in other words, cannot ever be pure’ (p.17). This diametrically opposes Aristotle’s ‘Law of Non-contradiction’ (Gottlieb, 2011) that states that all things have only a single state of being and cannot co-exist as more than a single entity. Hill is clear that Derrida’s view is that ‘nothing is ever one, but always at least two’ (p.16) and so ‘all

¹³ *Journals* (p.543)
claims to identity, by definition, could therefore not not be haunted by the threat of forgery’ (p.94). This fundamental fusion and confusion of identity is the foundation stone for the semiotics of my creative text.

This multiplicity of ‘Signature’ is reflected in my creative text (p.18) when Cook describes his ‘anger’ at Hawkesworth,\(^{14}\) ascribing sentiments that are false to Cook’s character. There is a significant irony here, as it is I who put ‘Actions speak louder than Words’ in Cook’s mouth. I also appropriate his ‘sentiments’ as well as his words. This theme of deliberate irony is a main thread in the manufactured weave of the reader making the ‘Undiscovery’ (p.19) of my forgery.

The theory of identity and forgery, of what is ‘real’ in my creative text goes further. When Cook was ‘Undiscovering’ the Great Southern Continent in his ‘late Voyage’ (p.18), he carried an oceanic chart containing an imagined projection of its outline, a map that anticipated the existence of this expected landmass. Its non-existence has a strong echo to Jean Baudrillard’s theory of the Simulacrum, in which he ‘speaks’ about how the ‘territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it. Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory... it is the map that engenders the territory’ (1988, p.166). This ‘coextensivity between the map and the territory... no longer has to be rational... it is no longer real at all. It is a hyperreal’ (p.167). It is this ‘hyperreal’ I am seeking for my ‘mask’ of Cook, where, as Baudrillard points out, it is ‘no longer a question of imitation,

\(^{14}\) John Hawkesworth, the editor of Cook’s and Joseph Banks’s journals from the first voyage. The publication was received badly and Cook resolved never again to leave editing and publishing to another.
nor of the duplicate, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of
the real for the real itself’ (p.167). I give Cook this ‘hyperreal’ experience with a map
again whilst in the Arctic searching for the North-East Passage, when he found that the
chart he was using, by Jacob von Storcksburg Staehlin (1773), was hopelessly
misrepresentative of the Alaskan coast (Journals p.572).

Oscar Wilde opined that the ‘only form of lying that is absolutely beyond reproach is
lying for its own sake, and the highest development of this is… Lying in Art’ (1889,
p.85). It is this artistic ‘lie’, fiction or ‘forgery’ that underpins and informs the purpose of
the inclusion of Macpherson’s Ossian within my creative text. Nick Groom says that
‘forgery reveals the elusiveness… on which fictions, stories, myths, poetry and lies all
[rely, and that]… to call a writer a forger is to dispossess them of their own work’ (2002,
p.3). Not all critics agree with this standpoint, however. With regard to Ossian, Samuel
Johnson most strongly did not and therefore Cook’s argument (pp.30-33) on behalf of
Macpherson against Johnson sets up an internal binary for and against the acceptability
of the act of forgery. I particularly relish ‘my’ Cook’s firm rejection of the deception,
which is so in line with his character.

I have also placed in Johnson’s mouth (p.33) words that were published in James
Boswell’s The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson (1785, p.225),
published some six years after Cook’s death, thereby creating the anachronism I had
hoped for and, in so doing, leaving a trail of evidence of my forgery. By deliberate and
ironic use of this anachronism I am also demonstrating further levels of disguise, for not only do I disrupt the ‘authentic’ timeline, I am pointing out that Johnson’s words are only ascribed to him by Boswell. In other words, Boswell’s biography of Johnson – and by implication all biography, including autobiography and Cook’s official *Journals* – is itself fiction and imposture. Of Cook’s *Journals*, J.C. Beaglehole, the most complete biographer of Cook, wrote that ‘the reader [should be warned] that there are rocks and deceptive shallows, and even a quantity of fog’ (Hough, p.xiv). Cook knew he was writing for posterity and heavily edited and re-drafted his journal entries. What he wrote was selective and even downright false at times, such as when he claimed of the walrus meat that ‘there were few on board who did not prefer it to salt meat’ (*Journals*, p.574). In reality, the crew found it disgusting and refused to eat it (Hough, p.395).

Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan suggest that English literature ‘represented other people’s… as less civilised or less capable and as needing Western paternalist assistance’ (2004, p.1072) and Edward Said states that ‘[a]lmost all colonial schemes begin with an assumption of native backwardness and general inadequacy to be independent, “equal”, and fit’ (1993, p.1112), that there was an implicit perception of the ‘Native’ that ‘he stole, he lied, he was simple, suspicious, inefficient, irresponsible, lazy, superstitious, and loose in his sexual relations’ (p.1122). I have combined use of this perception with the satirically racist quotation from Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, to have Cook state it explicitly, yet apply it to his own European crew, his ‘natives of the sea’ (p.28). This enables me to raise the issue with thematic irony, without gross
offense to ethnicity. It also allows me particularly to imply Cook’s growing frustration with and contempt for his crews’ obstinacy, linked to their consequential spread of venereal disease. Cook himself, as Anne Salmond points out, ‘resolutely refused to sleep with island women’ (2003, p.383).

It is undoubted that this assumption of cultural superiority is broadly true of the British perception of the Polynesians, yet Cook had a closer, first-hand and more nuanced view, although he was certainly not immune to the prevailing ethnic chauvinism.\(^\text{15}\) He was aware of and empathetic to the indigenous peoples and went out of his way to encompass their humanity and culture. His attitude was very much more liberal and forgiving than most people of the day, both that of the Europeans obsessed with the concept of the Noble Savage and the Polynesian cultural attachment to vengeance. This reinforces Said’s argument that such an opinion ‘depends on who does the interpreting, when it is done, and no less important, from where it is done’ (p.1122). It is also essential to understand the significance of these European ‘Strangers’ to the cosmology of the Polynesian Islanders, the ‘Natives’.\(^\text{16}\) As a ‘Chief’, Cook was seen as a ‘shark that walks on the land’ (Dening, p.161) and was expected to act as such. This explains why Cook acted so often with a degree of cruelty that was uncharacteristic of him, yet in keeping with a Polynesian ‘Chief’. It should also be noted that the shark proverb was Hawaiian, and so Cook’s usage of it in my creative text, before his arrival in the archipelago, is a further anachronism, another clue to my ‘forgery’, yet it also gives a

\(^{15}\) See end of Appendix A.
\(^{16}\) See Appendix B.
'Thick Description'\textsuperscript{17} to my text, which theory matches the creative writing imperative to 'show' rather than 'tell'.

The first and most important question I was asked in the process of formulating my creative dissertation was: 'what is \textit{new} about it?' I was struck by the information that Elizabeth Cook had destroyed all correspondence between Cook and herself, particularly given Cook's professional reserve and demeanour. As my 'map' of understanding of the subject grew, I became increasingly attracted to the depth, subtlety, complexity and ambition such a study entailed and the layers of meaning I could evoke through it.

I was also enthralled by the idea of using a mono-linear epistolary style that 'spoke' to an absent companion who was not just known, but also intimate to the 'voice' of the story's narrator. I had the possibility to conjure an everyman's confessional, to bring the frail man out of the myth of his apotheosis as hero. Cook's change of behaviour, explained through illness, also offered a subtle plotline that was more than just the 'this happened, then that, then this, etc.' that bedevil the extant retellings of his voyages. It is the human drama of his arc of failure that attracted me, held me and allowed me to thread the uncharted reefs of his personality.

I quickly recognised, however, that I needed to add the layer of 'forgery' to the critical

\textsuperscript{17} Clifford Geertz (1973) suggests that an anthropologist should describe a culture or society through a wealth of detail, creating a 'Thick Description', rather than by a series of facts.
theory of my composition. To begin with, I was attracted to the example of the ‘Hitler Diaries’. The irony of the Sunday Times knowingly publishing a forgery was extraordinary, so I wanted to emulate this by ‘forging’ a headline on the ‘discovery’ of Cook’s letter and ending my text with an article that revealed it as forgery. However, the Peer Review we undertook convinced me that this was unwise. This dissertation does not have the scope to include it all, so would necessarily have been weakened by including it.

Towards the end of my text I have Cook start to use ‘thee’, ‘thy’ and ‘thine’ in preference to the usual ‘you’ or ‘yours’. In this I am returning him to the language of his youth and origins. Yet more, I raise the poetry of ‘thou’, of the loved one who is absent and longed for, in keeping with his continued suffering, his yearning for home and his inexorable break-down of health.

My creative text ends very deliberately with stark suddenness, with Cook remembering Milton’s final lines from Paradise Lost (xii: 656-8). The sentence remains unfinished, cutting off a revelatory admission of home and family and remains without a signing-off, as though Cook was hurriedly called on deck and never had the opportunity to return to his letter. The reader is left to ‘wonder’ about and independently ‘discover’ what happened next and muse upon the irony of Cook’s Odyssean wandering in his referencing of his wife Elizabeth as ‘Penelope’. For his last words to Elizabeth, I have

\[18\] See Appendix F
left Milton’s text in mid-sentence and re-spelled ‘wandring’ with ‘wondering’. Unlike his Homeric hero, for Cook there was no return, no cathartic homecoming. In the interruption of Milton’s poetry lies an anguish, a creative not-knowingness that reflects back upon my text and upon James Cook in particular.

With Cook’s voice I write, ‘I would have no eyes but thine upon these my most heartfelt words’ (p.43). I have not forgotten the elderly woman Elizabeth who destroyed the letters of her long lost husband James, and that ultimately this work is an intrusion into their intimacy, which has a right to be private and hidden from the reader’s gaze. I may only hope that I have not given offense to that love and intimacy and that I have done justice to their memory.
Undiscovery

Tues 11th November 1776

Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope.

My Dearest Wife,

The Discovery arrived yesterday and our last letters from the Cape have just sailed. I am Sensible that you shall have no further word of me until I return, unless by Providence we meet some home going vessel by which I could trust this letter. I feel our separation most keenly and all that I am of husband and father cries out against such. Be assured that you are ever in my thoughts and that your strength, faith and uncommon decency support me greatly in my Duty. Whenever I think of you and the boys, always do I feel a tenderness such as I cannot express.

I think of our lost children often and my Sense aches in special when I think of our beautifull little Elizabeth. I read last night in my treasured Ossian Father gave me just after we were wed. I saw again the words; My Daughter! Thou wert fair; fair as the moon on the hills of Jura; white as the driven snow; sweet as the breathing gale. I am unable to find words of regret sufficient at not being with you to offer support to your own Sensibilities at such difficult times. It was a happiness for me to be close to you in May when little Hugh was born. You and our Sons have all my Fond thoughts and Affections.
I have just found the extra Stores you packed for me and I am most Gratefull for your thoughtfulness. The Warm drawers and stockings Specially shall be most Welcome when we reach the Northern ice. I greatly value your fruit Preserves as a taste of Home amidst the wild wastes of Ocean. The new published volume from D’ Johnson about his journeys in Scotland is an unlooked for treat. You know how much his writings mean to me. I have placed it alongside the copy of Rasselas you gave me so long ago.

In thinking of writings, I am Minded of the Publication of my Journal of the late Voyage. I am trusting that it finds a Reception more amenable than that of M’ Hawkesworth. The way he misused my Sentiments angers me still. Yet I am Comforted to recall a letter published in Boston in the Last Age, in which was Actions speak louder than Words, and are more to be regarded. I am Content that men of Sense will see my Actions for thier true Worth. By thier fruits ye shall know them, indeed.

When, the late Voyage, the ice brought a halt to my Southern exploration, I wrote in my Journal that Ambition leads me not only farther than any other man has been before me, but as far as I think it possible for man to go, which I think discovered too much. When I look back at that time, I am glad indeed that I took the trouble to go into the bows to wave my hat and call out No Man Further. No man has been Farther South than I and it places me among the Explorers of all Times. It is my regret I find I have not truly Discovered any Land of size on which No Man ever placed Foot. My only true Attainment in this regard is in the finding that the Great Southern Continent does not exist where it was said to be, which
Discovery of an absence, or Undiscovery, does not satisfy, despite the rewards it has brought. I look with much Determination to Out Match its equivalence at the North Pole. If it indeed exists, I am confident that I shall be successfull in the Discovery of the North Passage it self and return Home Triumphant.

Wed 13\textsuperscript{th} November 1776
Table Bay

I am minded to tell you as to the truth of the reason why I invalided W\textsuperscript{m} Herold home in the Indiaman. He was found to be counterfeiting coins, abusing his place as armourer a board ship. As our Isaac’s friend, for his sake and yours, I could not in conscience have Herold arrested, for in doing so he should be hanged. Yet I cannot and shall not keep him. I abhor the thought of all counterfeits and do not recommend Isaac's continued friendship with such. I have written to him and given my reasons privily.

Thurs 14\textsuperscript{th} November 1776
Table Bay

You will remember I was obliged to take M’ Williamson as my Third Lieutenant. I should have liked to have had Isaac himself, or Jem Burney, but Lord Sandwich’s Interest took precedence. I have been uncertain as to M’ Williamson’s qualities but now have had cause to wish he had never been put upon me. Having placed a shore His Majesty’s sheep to graze, I enjoined him to strictly insure thier safety, yet he allowed some persons to put a dog into the night pen to scatter them. We were unable to find the two Rams and two of the best Ewes, which has driven me to a fury. I should Dearly like to be rid of him, but you know too well I cannot.
My new Master also, M’r Bligh, altho he has a fine reputation as Seaman and Navigator, has angered me. He is young, yet froward overplus. We shall have to wait and see with him, but I do wish I had M’r Gilbert again.

However, all in all I am Content with my Crew. Every man is rated Able at the least. Old W’rn Watman looks after me well enough, despite his infernal muttering. He is a good Cabbin Steward and it is fortunate I have been able to Rate him Gunner’s Mate, so his pay as my Servant shall not come out of mine. Altho my Rank now means we need not concern our selves with such an Oeconomy, I find no need to suspend our habit of thrift.

I wish I could say the same about the State of Resolution. There has been much false Oeconomy in her refitting. The quality and state of the Masts, Rigging and Sails are not what I could have wished. I left the task of ensuring the fitting out to John Gore and M’r Bligh and they have been found Wanting in this Regard. I blame my self, for I should have Supervised the fitting out in person, but you know I had not the time. I would that I had not assured Lord Sandwich and Sir Hugh of my satisfaction with Resolution’s condition. It is no longer possible to make complaint, or to replace the lower masts, which offer me of the greatest anxieties. We had the Mortification to find the Ship exceeding leaky. The Proofing of the sail rooms is the worst of the Caulking, which is greatly concerning for such a long voyage, yet all of us slept wet throughout the passage here as the work is so poor. I am most angered by this neglect!

There are, however, some Incouraging and Positive parts to this voyage. I am gladdened to have M’r William Anderson as Surgeon and as Naturalist, he is a most competent and amiable man and very good Company. Thankfully the Expedition Artist, M’r John Webber, is the only Philosopher a board. I sat for him
whilst at anchor here at Table Bay. He has promised me the first copy, and you shall have it for when we are parted. Yet I am glad to have no other Experimental Gentlemen, in especial after the Experience of the late Voyage. It leaves me the freedom of the Cabbin, which is mine alone for the first time, as is proper for an Officer of Post Rank. As Ossian says; Here I must sit alone, by the rock of the mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar; nor can I hear the voice of my love.

To larboard of the ruther post all is blue sky and calm seas, yet to starboard a black squal comes down upon us. I hear John Gore on deck; all is in hand, and here I remain.
Mon 30th December 1776

Christmas harbour, Island of Desolation
We leave this dreadfull place that has such bleak amenities, combined with damps and cold most severe. All hands are gratefull to go.

Cold bathing was encouraged and then enforced by my example, yet it was arduous to do and so far away from our joyous times with the boys at the tin tub before the fire.

My heart is cold here. The moon is dropping to the horizon. Ossian says; Often by the setting moon I see the ghosts of my children. Indistinct, they walk in mournfull conference together. Will none of you speak to me? – But they do not regard thier father.

Sun 19\textsuperscript{th} January 1777

At sea

We lost the Fore Topmast and Main Topg\textsuperscript{1} in a squal before dawn this morning. It took alday to replace the Topmast, but we have no replacement for the Topg\textsuperscript{1}. This makes us sure to lose this season's Reigning winds for the North and I was driven to an ungovernable fury by this. I fear I lost control of my self.

Dearest, I know you was troubled when I was losing my temper at home. You said it was not like me, but I fear that it is becoming more so. It seems I am costive always, and liable to fly into a passion at such things as cannot be altered. I must endeavour more fully to attain Equability. I am sure that I shall succeed and you shall find, when we cast anchor again at Deptford, the husband you wed.

Sun 16\textsuperscript{th} February 1777
Undiscovery by David P Chaplin

Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand

Today I went to Grass Cove, where the men of the Adventure were so butchered and ate. Our curiosity prompted enquiry of the Natives there, through Omai, of the reason for the killings. It seems it happened sudden and was not premeditated, our people at Victuals when a theft led to a beating which, when resented, insued a quarrel where two of the Natives were shot dead. Before a third musket could be discharged or a reload occur they were all seized and knocked on the head. A chief named Kahoura was most involved and it seems all the Natives expect me to take vengeance on him, indeed they wish it so, as he is not loved but very much feared by all. I am convinced I must not do so. For the continuance of our supplies and our future connections, I am decided such a course to be most unwise.

Omai is taken in a passion in the opposite opinion. He suggests that the Natives here consider me to be astonishing weak in doing nothing. He argues that in England even a Lord who murders a Servant will be hanged, so I do not do justice, which is reasonable enough. You know I should like to, all my Sense rejects such inactivity, yet Duty comes before all and my course is set. I have made clear that what is past I shall think no more of, as it was done some time sence, but if a Second attempt of the same kind is made they might rest assured of the weight of my resentment.

Tues 25th February 1777

Cook Strait roads

We weighed yesterday, but anchored again in the roads to await the Tide of Ebb. A number of canoes put off to visit us and Kahoura came on board. He cannot be
ignorant of our knowledge of his guilt, so it is a matter of wonder to me that he should place himself so often in my power. I challenged him directly on the matter, whereupon he was certain of his destruction. When I assured him of his safety he asked for his Portrait to be drawn by Mr Webber. I confess I admire his courage and am not a little pleased at his confidence in me. I was glad to press Mr Webber for a copy of the picture and I inclose it for you here.
Sat 1st March 1777

At sea
There is much of Dissatisfaction a board. Under some duress, Wm Watman it is which tells me the men are angered, and for your ear alone I may say I am no longer convinced I have done right in my dealings with Kahourah. I am but unsure he has not used my desire for peace in Queen Charlotte Sound, to establish a Station for refit and Provisions, so as to avoid the natural Justice of rightfull punishment, and that he has Bested me in this. The men are not content with how I refused to take revenge for the eat of thier shipmates of the late Voyage. While still in New Zealand they put Ned Riou’s dog on trial for being Canibal, as it had bit so many, and so ate it. And also to shew me mock.

In especial as there has been a spate of pelfering on the lower deck, of food and sundry items. The men refuse to give up the culprits so I have put them on short rations of beef. They now refuse to eat that to shew me thier contempt. They are the dogs and I wish I could hang them all. Like the Cyclops in my Homer, they see only with one eye and they only look at what they wish to see. Infants they are in thier Faculties, enchained by thier ways which they refuse to Alter by any Means and for any Reason. I shal incourage them to do thier Duty by me, even if I must flog every man the distance to Otaheite. I shall find Just punishment for them for Daring to raise them selves so Insencibly against my Command.

These are the natives Dean Swift spoke, natives of the sea, the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.

Mon 17th March 1777
At sea
My Dear Penelope at Home,

It is become a tiresome passage to Otaheite, with contrary winds all the way. My proceeding to the North this year has depended on a quick passage. Our delays in England and the Cape made it even more important to have help from the Reigning winds of Providence in this regard. I shall be a further year away from you.

My Spirits hurry forward to the compleation of my Orders and my return Home. I miss my faithfull Penelope, my Beth.

I have determined that on my return I shall request Lord Sandwich for the Squadron in the Downs. We shall find you a place in Deal, so when the Fleet is not out, we can be together. After such voyaging, it would be pleasure to me to return to the pilotage of my youth.

I have just now determined to bear away for the Friendly Isl<sub>ds</sub>, where I am sure of being supplied with every thing I want. I shall just give the Order.

Dearest Beth,

I have found it more troublesome to maintain my Equilibrium than I might have thought possible. More than once I have become so angered I threw down my hat and stamped upon it. In amid my rage, I have caught many of the crew a’grin and later overheard that I was tipping it the Heivah again, which is a country dance in Otaheite. For you alone I say this stung my Pride, and I was near to be haughty with them, which would not do.

I am bilious always, my dear, and Wm Anderson, tho a good man and Companion, has not the knowlidge for what ails me. It is also become clear to me
that I miss Society. As of Rank I dine most alone, and the Cabbin is empty unlike my late Voyages. Even that difficult man M’ Forster would be welcome to me now. It is Right that I am above the men, but I wonder at my decision not to carry an Experimental Gentleman on board Resolution. It is sure that it is uneasy to be close confined for upwards of years with a man you cannot respect, but to be alone, I find, is harder still. Wm Watman is my only Companion, and it is good that he is here. He is much beloved by his fellows, for his good and benevolent disposition. We speak of the old times we sailed in the Friendship together, but there must always be a barrier tween us, and it is meet that this is so.

Wednesday 26th March 1777

At sea

Dearest Beth,

I have just finished reading your Gift to me, the new book by D’ Johnson about his Journeyings in the NW of Scotland. The way he has Exploded my Ossian has brought me to tears and rage again. I threw down the book and was forced to my feet, such was the outrage of my Senses. The book fell to the floor and I took it up and hurled it out the stern windows into the sea. Immediatily, I was most Chagrined, to have thrown away your Gift, but then realised it was not the volume, but that of the new work on Oeconomy by M’ Adam Smith, which I was most looking forwards to study.
Then I wept. It is such a private blow. True it is that Mr Hume says that poets are liars by profession, yet also he says that they always endeavour to give an air of truth to their fictions. For Macpherson to be so proved a liar, so false, is as much and more than I might withstand. It is like to the loss of our children again and beyond bearing. Mr Johnson says that Ossian is too long to be remembered, yet did not Homer compose all his works in speech alone? And does Dr Johnson not also speak of deceit where no personal injury is the consequence? Why then must we condemn and reject work, which has such strength to Inspire and give Comfort to Sense in pain.

Yet I must not hide from Truth. Dr Johnson also writes that Credulity on one part is a strong temptation to Deceit on the other. He urges Macpherson to deposite the manuscript in one of the colleges at Aberdeen, where there are people who can judge. Why is not the original deposited in some publick library, he says; Why do you not produce the Man? In Conscience I cannot but admit to the Justice of Dr Johnson’s Sentiment, for this is of Magna Carta, the very base of our Greatness as a Nation. I must it seems but concur that Ossian is as gross an imposition as ever the world was troubled with. I must put a side this fancy, as a Childe puts a side his hobby. I must be ruthless firm in my regard for the Truth of things. But O, my dearest Beth, my Heart is broke.

17th July 1777

Tongatapu, Friendly Islds

Thus we take leave of these Friendly Isles, after a stay of between two and three months, where I have learned so much of these people. No where have we
received such warmth of welcome but in these Isles. There has, it must be said, been much of the very, and worse it is that the Cheifs and other Persons of Rank generally Commission their servants to the act.

I have learned the meaning of the word *tabu*. In which I ought say meanings, for it has signification of a thing Sacred, and yet also a practice Forbidden. The Cheifs are *tabu*, as they are, in the Religion of these Parts, embodied of their Gods. The higher the Cheif, the more bound by ritual and *tabu* they are. There is a saying here, that Cheifs are Sharks that walk on land, dangerous to and predators of the Commoners.

Here I am accounted with the highest of the Cheifs, *atiu* by their naming, and a Shark also. Hence I must need deal with these Natives in terms of their understanding. I cannot consent to kill them as their own Cheifs do, so I have been made to be more harsh in my punishments than I should like, or than my Officers and Crew regard as righteous. I find I must trust in my own judgement. In this way both I and all my men are safe from the fearsome callousness of the Cheifs. As *atiu*, they would not dare to harm me, nor, through me, any of my Crew.

Tuesday 23\textsuperscript{rd} September 1777

Matavai Bay, Otaheite, Society Isl\textsuperscript{ds}

Dearest Beth,

I must tell you of the most strange and terrible of events. Otoo the King here in Otaheite is planning to fight Maheine, Cheif of Eimeo where we go next, tho many, if not most here, do not agree with him and would not go along. In order to
propitiate his Gods, he Sacrificed a Man, a Commoner, who was surprised and knocked on the head with a stone before he knew what was about. In very truth the Cheifs here are Sharks that walk on land. I have heard that these Sacrifices are not so very uncommon and that this is not the only barbarous custom we find amongst these people, we have reason to beleive there was a time when they was Canibals.

After the ritual, which I should have stopped if the Man were not dead already, Otoo the King asked me again to assist him with his fight against Maheine and by my refusal I intirely lost his good will. Before we parted he asked us what was our opinion of the Ceremony we had seen and if we observed such Customs in our Country. We made no scruple but of Course we condemned it freely. I thought it pointless to speak of the Moral of such an act, so I told him that his Sacrifice would not work and that his fight against Maheine would not succeed. This I knew from the general opinion, for I was sure he would not be Supported.

Omai told him that if he a Cheif in England had put a Man to death as he had done he would be hanged for it. On this we left him with as great a contempt for our customs as we could possibly have of thiers.

This most barbarous Custom I ascribe to thier way of Religion. I am reminded of M’ Hume, who tells us that in al ages of the World, priests have been the enemies of liberty, and of M’ Defoe, who asserts that of all the plagues with which mankind are curst, Ecclesiastic tyranny’s the worst. I must be carefull tho, I find, as it does not do to go Widdershins against such long held, even tho empty Superstitions. Religion is, in all places and peoples, despite thier lack of the true Light, too close held to the Heart to disturb without the resk of outrage. It is different, in Course, yet I find this in my self also, when I read of D’ Johnson’s
explosion of *Ossian*, how liable the mind of man is to credulity? When such things are broken, it leaves a heartfelt Void, and in that Sense a desirze for vengeance.

Tuesday 24\textsuperscript{th} September 1777

Oparre

My dearest Beth,

My Rheumatick pain, down from my lefboard hip to my foot, has been getting very much worse just lately, to the point that I was unable yesterday to go with Otoo to the celebration of the Peace, just negotiated with Maheine. Mr King and Omai went in my place and I returned back on board with a number of Otoo’s women relatives. I was most startled to discover they were come to heal me. I had thought they but wanted passage to Matavai Bay.

They made up a bed and laid me down on the Cabbin deck, upwards of twelve of them, and wanted to remove my cloaths, yet I would do no such thing. They but laughed at me, but I would not relent, thinking of you and saying *tabu*. Yet in other I did submit my self to thier direction and as many as could get round me then did squeeze me with both hands from head to foot, but more especial the part which was desordered with pain, till they made my bones crack and a perfect Mummy of my flesh – in short after being under thier hands about a quarter of an hour I was glad to get away from them, tho I had immediate relief and found my self pretty easy all the night. The next morning they repeated, and again in the evening, and this morning I am entirely clear of the desorder. This they call *Romy* and I wish I could teach it you.
Tues 30\textsuperscript{th} September 1777
Eimeo, Society Isl\textsuperscript{ds}

We have had a difficulty with Maheine, the Chief here at Eimeo. He wanted goats of me, but I refused him as I seek to hold what store of them remains. One was stole, despite this. I made clear it should be returned, with some threat. It was returned by the man who took it – a thing I never before saw in these islands. He said he took it as men from Discovery had taken his wood without paying for it. I believed him and let him go, but at the same moment it was discovered another goat was missing, one in kid and therefore valuable.

I was most inraged and set upon the Country, burning houses and canoes – tho I spared those who came to plead. I was now very sorry I had proceeded so far, as I could not retreat with any tolerable credet.

It was with relief I found the goat returned, but, my Dear, I fancy I gave my anger too much rein, and I regret the hurt I have done most sincerely. It will take many years, even a Generation, before the loss is made up.

I tried, even in anger, to be a Shark who would not kill, yet I fear I have caused a degree of hardship that troubles my Conscience. It is to you alone I may say this; not even W\textsuperscript{m} Anderson, a most amiable and discrete Confidant, might hear such thoughts. I must never be seen to be bested, nor weak.

Sunday 2\textsuperscript{nd} November 1777
Huaheine, Society Isl
ds

Omai is left with his servants well settled. He behaved here with as much circumspection as any of his friends might wish and has a fine place to live and good status with the people. I was much affected when he wept at our final leaving. I wish him well.

You would also have been deeply moved by the farewell of Omai’s youngest servant from New Zealand, Cooa by name. Privily I tell you that it is possible that he may be Joseph Banks son, tho I think it is not probable. Cooa has become close attached to the Ship and Crew, and is a witty and smart boy. He wanted to stay with us, and the crew wanted it also, but it would not do. He had to be taken by force into the boat and dropped a shore. It was desperate affecting, but I could do no other. He would be cast adrift back in England and would be an embarrassment to Mr Banks, which I cannot countenance.

Thursday 25th December 1777
Christmas Isl
d

My dearest Beth,

I know the unswerving strength of your Faith, my Dear, but I find my self in struggle with my own. I have found no God among the Deeps, nor in the constant toil of Ocean do I perceive but an upheaval of Nature. It carries neither Conscience, nor Pity, nor Compassion. In its rage it is al of Awe, but it holds no Passion of it self. It is but a Surface, what is beneath, what is real, I know not. It
does not burn, as I do, with the need to Know. Because of this, my ambition of Knowledge unfulfilled, I find I can take no joy in my soundings and chartings of the many islands I encounter. Yet I find I must hold to my Course, with the Ship as with God, and like our Milton, I may assert Eternal Providence, And justify the ways of God to men, though such must include the loss of our boys and our little Elizabeth. I find it hard indeed for my Faith not to rebel against my Sense of thier loss. Despite what Dr Johnson says – and such a man of letters I cannot refute – I turn again to my Ossian, who says; Sad! I am sad indeed: nor small my cause of woe! – Kirmor, thou hast lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty. Speak to me; hear my voice, sons of my love! But alas! They are silent; silent for ever!

Monday 19\textsuperscript{th} January 1778

Atouï, Sandwich Islands

My dearest Beth,

You will laugh, I know, when I tell you I have been made a God. I find it hard to keep a stern demeanour my self. The very instant I leaped a shore, all the Natives fell flat on thier faces, and remained in that humble posture till I made signs for them to rise. Apparently they did the same for Cap\textsuperscript{i} Clerke, tho not as much. He did not like it attall, but I did not mind it. I am not foolish enough to believe my self a God as they do, but it makes clear my Rank and that shall smooth our path with these people.

We are come upon this new set of Islands, unknown even in Otaheite, though they are the same peoples, with the same language, but for small and local
difference. I know not how we shall account for this Nation spreading it self so far over this Vast ocean? They are Masterfull Mariners indeed.

They have not seen the like of us before as we are the first Europeans to make landfall here, tho I am surprised that the Spanish have never come upon the Islands. It is not so far North of thier line of Latitude tween Acapulco and Manila. As a Station, these Islands would be most usefull to them.

Monday 20th April 1778

St George’s Sound

Yesterday I took the cutters, with a crew of my young Gentlemen, and explored the Sound. We went a shore in several places and viewed some villages – some young women gave us a most charming dance. It was very good to relax with the youngsters for a change, to unbend from my stern Rank for a while. I enjoyed the day much.

Yet, the day being far spent we were making way for the Ships and I saw a crowd of canoes heading for us. The youngsters at the oars were spent intirely and could do no more, so I could do nothing and must hide my fears. For it seemed so much to me like to that time in the St Lawrence before Quebec, when the Indians were coming at us in their canoes. I remembered finding those poor soldiers, how they was tortured, scalped and mutilated and I was seized by the conviction we would suffer so. I remembered how I just managed to step off the
canoe onto the land and safety as the Indians were stepping into it. My dearest Beth, I must tell you, tho I hid it from the youngsters, I was most desperate afraid and am left most disturbed by the event. Of course, in this occasion the canoes were but fishermen returning with thier catch, yet even so, I am troubled by my reaction and do not know what to think of it.

Friday 19th June 1778

At sea
We have lost two whole weeks of fair winds in exploring an inlet that resolved into only a river, which I have named Turnagain. This loss of time is crucial to our exploration. I am most concerned about M Staehlins Map, which I am following. Already it does not concur with what we find. I did not expect his Longitude to be correct, but it is so far out that I fear the distance across the North of Canada to be much too far for a navigation in a single season. I doubt it much. This back and forth of exploration could take upwards of a decade of Summers, but the Ships and Crews could not survive such extended voyaging. I have fears enough for this season a lone.

We have one happy circumstance tho, I have traded for a very fine set of sea-otter furs, which you shall have on our return. They are in plenty here, and not much valued. A fur trade could do well in these parts.

Friday 26th June 1778

At sea, North of Aleutian Isl
doors

Dearest,

I am disturbed in my Senses, I find, and I do not feel a Moral Righteousness in what I do. We have been forced to sail ever Southwest, even further away from the Atlantic, with the Alaskas to Starboard on our North. Then we came to a Channell. I could swear I saw land beyond, tho no one else could. I learned sense that it could not have been, yet I trusted to my Self alone, as is my Practice, and sailed on SW. A thick fog came down, and we could see no further than the length of the Ship, yet I took a risk to crack on with the fair wind, for as I have told you previous, we are far short of time in this season of exploration. A
lookout heard breakers and we hauled to and anchored only just in time, for, when
the fog lifted we saw we had passed a dreadfull reef of rocks I would not dare to
sail in clear weather and were but moments from compleat distruction.

The crew is looking at me sideways whenever I come on deck, and Mr Bligh
is so angered he does but glare at me.

My dear, I am at fault in this, and feel greatly abashed for my hesitance and
recklessness, yet I must not shew weakness, and so I must stare all down.

Monday 3rd August 1778
At sea

Oh, my Dearest,

This is a day of grief indeed. Wm Anderson, after lingering under a
consumption for more than twelve months, expired between three and four this
after noon. He was the Best of men, and the closest I have had to a Companion
these years past. I miss him so much already.

M^ Law, Surgeon of Discovery, is good enough at his trade, and knows
what ails me, yet he shall never be a friend as William was.

Wednesday 21st October 1778
Unalaska, Aleutian Isl^s

My Beth,

I had a chance today to send you this long letter, by way of the Russians
here in Unalaska. Here is a man I like, M^ Ismyloff, who is happy to take our letters
and send them back in thier Post. To his care I intrusted a letter to the Admiralty in which was inclosed a chart of all the Northern coasts I had Visited. This shews that M Staehlins Map is intirely false, there is no Chennell East of Alaska.

The letter shall take upwards of a year to reach London, which yet shall be long before we return, and in Course shall be opened, which matters not as I have already given a copy to M' Ismyloff, yet this letter to thee is too Precious, and I would have no eyes but thine upon these mine heartfelt words.

Friday 11th December 1778

At sea, off O'why'he, Sandwich Islnds

My Beth,

I have been reading in M' Hume again, my dear, who asks, how many frivolous quarrels and disgusts are there, which people of common prudence endeavour to forget, when they lie under the necessity of passing their life together. I am resolved to make use of his common prudence, which I have forgot of late, and been harsh to the men, to the point of stopping thier grog intirely when they would not drink of a spruce decoction I had brewed as a succedaneum for liquer.

The crew are restless to extreme. It has been hard going in the Arctic and they are seeking of relief now we are in Tropic climes once more, which I fear they should be quite brutal in taking. I do not chuse to anchor nor come ashore, for to do so would strip a small place of supplies and have us in want again too soon, and I am determined our sailors should not infect these Natives, but I fear I shall
fail again in this regard. The women here seem to have no other purpose than to have congress with the crew, and the men as always are nothing loth.

1st February 1779
O'why'he, Sandwich Isl
ds

Oh thee, my Honey Beth,

Our good Wm Watman died this day of a paralytic stroke he suffered some days ago. First Wm Anderson, now our old Will. I am wholly affected and feel so very much alone my dear. I would have you near so much more than I can describe.

2nd February 1779
Karakakooa Bay, Sandwich Isl
ds

This is a day to mark with amazement. We cast anchor surrounded by such a Crowd of canoes. What it signifies I know not, but that we are welcome here I cannot doubt. Such a welcome we could not expect at home, even if we were to find the Passage, yet it is much like a home coming of sorts. It is in this way it brings thee to my mind and recalls me of our times Together. We spoke of my return and that I should request a Command in Home waters, where we should not be altogether parted. As Post Captain thee could join me a board, thee and little Hugh, if the unnecessary disagreement with the American colonies is resolved, as
it should be by now. I remember clear how on our last evening thee read to me from our Milton, of how for Adam and Eve, as for me and thee, the World was all before them, where to choose thier place of rest, and Providence thier guide; they hand in hand with wondering
Notes on the Text

Cook’s spelling, capitalisation and syntax were idiosyncratic. I have emulated this extensively. All misspellings and some syntactical oddities are taken directly from his Journals, yet much of the syntax is my own invention. Steeped in Cook’s own words and the process of ‘being’ Cook, I ‘feel’ that he would have written just so.

However, there are a number of rules to which I have adhered:

Cook’s use of capitalisation is extensive and does not appear to follow any regular pattern or theme. I have made use of it in order to convey immediacy, intensity or emphasis.

Cook only very rarely used possession apostrophes for any common or irregular nouns, so, for example, “boat’s” would most often be written as “boats”. The exceptions are for proper nouns, such as given names, yet Cook was not consistent even then. I have followed his lead.

In his use of adverbs, Cook usually writes ‘-full’ rather than ‘-ful’. I have followed this spelling throughout.

Cook did not habitually use speech marks or quotation marks, so I have omitted them and sought to ensure that they are evident through context and Notes.

There are some words, such as ‘their’, that Cook was highly inconsistent in spelling. Sometimes in the same paragraph he wrote ‘thier’ and also ‘their’ (Journals p.434). For the sake of consistency, I spell it ‘thier’ throughout.

Cook occasionally used ‘which’ where modern syntax would require ‘that’. I have made use of this (p.19 and p.27).

(N.B. From now on, all page numbers refer to Cook’s Journals)
Cook habitually separated the ‘a’ from ‘a shore’ (p.442), ‘a board’ (p.472), ‘a sleep’ (p.483), ‘a breast’ (p.580), ‘a cross’ (p.529), ‘a mongst’ (p.439), ‘a side’ (p.451) and ‘a nother’ (p.441). I have made this common, but not universal, yet any word starting with ‘a’ is liable to have it separated.

Similarly, Cook split ‘my self’ (p.489), ‘it self’ (p.537) and ‘our selves’ (Cook, J. (1893), p.53).

The same applies to ‘in land’ (p.478), ‘where ever’ (p.448), ‘to wards’ (p.487), ‘every thing’ (p.463), ‘any more’, ‘out right’ (p.575), ‘after noon’ (p.463), ‘day breake’ (p.527), ‘fare well’ (p.513) and ‘sea shore’ (p.531)

Where a word is prefixed with ‘des’, such as destruction, Cook habitually (but not universally) replaces it with ‘dis’, thus ‘distruction’ (p.454), ‘discription’ (p.468), ‘disign’ (p.444), ‘disire’ (p.583), ‘dispatched’ (p.442), ‘dispence’ (p.599), ‘distitute’ (p.576), ‘distroy’ (p.453) and ‘distuction’ (p.454)

Conversely, where a word is prefixed with ‘dis’, such as disgrace, Cook habitually (but again not universally) replaces it with ‘des’, thus ‘desgrace’ (p.514), ‘desorder’ (p.532), ‘desturb’ (p.598), ‘despossission’ (p.552), ‘desposition’ (p.533) and ‘distant’ (p.513).

Cook habitually exchanged ‘in’ for ‘en’ as a word prefix, such as ‘inable’ (p.454), ‘inclose’ (p.586), ‘incourage’ (p.476), ‘inraged’ (p.548) ‘ingenuty’ (p.570), ‘intangled’ (p.441), ‘inticed’ (p.594), ‘intirely’ (p.468), ‘intitle’ (p.586), ‘intrusted’ (p.586), ‘insured’ (p.453) and ‘invied’ (p.521).

Examples of Cook’s idiosyncratic language, syntax and spelling:

‘who was the late voyage with Capt Furneaux’ (p.444)
‘laid aside almanner of distrust’ (p.451)
‘for accord to their ideas’ (p.452)
‘claw of a lee shore’ (p.459)
divers curiositys (p.455)
‘most probable for this’ (p.448)
‘runing plump upon’ (p.474)
durst not (p.474)
nor was we (p.474)
‘in the greatest plenty’ (p.464)
‘fish dress’d the same way’ (p.465)
pull of our hats (p.479)
‘what was doing’ (p.487)
‘succedaneum for bread’ (p.587)
‘reigning winds’ (p.601)
Individual Notes on the Creative Text
(as an alternative to footnotes or end-notes):

Page 17:

James Cook and Elizabeth Batts married on 21 December 1762 at St. Margaret’s Church in Barking, Essex (Hough (1994), p.30), Ossian was published in 1763 and again in revised editions over the 1760s. Cook’s father was a Scot.
‘My Daughter! Thou wert fair; fair as the moon on the hills of Jura; white as the driven
  snow; sweet as the breathing gale.’ Ossian (1763), XI. l.16-19

Page 18:

‘Late Voyage’ Journals, p.444 – see previous page.
‘Actions speak louder than Words, and are more to be regarded’ A.M. Davis (1911) quoting Melancholy State of Province (1736).
‘By thier fruits ye shall know them’ Matthew 7:20.
‘Ambition leads me not only farther than any other man has been before me, but as far as I think it possible for man to go’ Journals, p.331.
‘No Man Further’ Hough (p.288).

Page 19:

‘it self’ Journals, p.537.
Nicholas Thomas (2003, p.286) and the Captain Cook Society
Isaac Smith was Elizabeth Cook’s cousin and had sailed with Cook in his first two voyages, gaining his Commission at the end of them. After he retired from the Navy as a superannuated Rear Admiral in 1807, Elizabeth resided with him at his home, Merton Abbey, until his death in 1831 (Robson (2004), p.207).
Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty (Robson, p.199).

Page 20:


‘altho’ *Journals*, p.436.

‘overplus’ *Journals*, p.436.

‘M’ Gilbert’ Sailing Master of *Resolution* during the 2nd Voyage.


‘Cabbin’ *Journals*, p.455.

‘William Watman, an old sailor… in whom Cook took a special interest’ (*Journals*, p.608), but nowhere is he described as Cook’s cabin servant. Watman sailed with Cook on his second voyage (1772-1775), after which, when Cook was Captain of Greenwich Hospital he obtained a comfortable place for Watman as a Pensioner, yet still the aged sailor (he was 44) volunteered into *Resolution* again when Cook decided to command the third voyage (Hough, p.337).

‘our selves’ (Cook, J. (1893), p.53).  


‘my self’ *Journals*, p.489.

Sir Hugh Palliser, Comptroller of the Navy Board, Cook’s patron (Hough, p.438).

Page 21:

‘replace the lower masts’ It was the Foremast that eventually broke and forced Cook to return to Hawaii, which occasioned his death (Hough, p.438).  

‘We had the Mortification to find the Ship exceeding leaky’ *Journals*, p.437.

‘slept wet’ *Journals*, ibid.


‘a board’ *Journals*, p.472.

‘Here I must sit alone, by the rock of the mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar; nor can I hear the voice of my love’ *Ossian* (1763), X. i11-14.

‘ruther’ *Journals*, p.604.

‘squal’ *Journals*, p.444.
There has long been debate as to how many stern windows Resolution had in her Great Cabin. I have chosen to follow the analysis of Karl Marquardt (1995, p.11), and suggest that the middle window of five is false and covered internally by the rudder post.

Page 22:
James Cook by John Webber, Cape Town: December 1776
http://www.captaincookssociety.com/home/detail/225-years-ago-october-december-1776

Page 23:
‘Cold bathing’ Journals, p.21.
‘Often by the setting moon I see the ghosts of my children. Indistinct, they walk in mournfull conference together. Will none of you speak to me? – But they do not regard thier father’ Ossian (1763), XI. l.80-85.
‘Topg’ Topgallant mast - Journals, p.444.
‘Reigning winds’ Journals, p.601.

Page 24:
‘Omai’ see Appendix E.
‘insued’ Journals, p.453.

Page 25:
‘but if a Second attempt of the same kind is made they might rest assured of the weight of my resentment’ Journals, p.457.
‘it is a matter of wonder... his confidence in me’ Journals, p.456.

Page 26:

Page 27:
‘Canibal’ Journals, p.506.
‘shew’ Journals, p.449.
‘and so ate it’ Salmond (2003, p.1).
‘pelfering’ Journals, p.490.
‘short rations of beef’ (Salmond, p.319).

Page 28:
‘the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl
upon the surface of the earth’ Gulliver’s Travels (1735, p.77).
‘compleation’ Journals, p.433.
‘every thing’ Journals, p.463.

Page 29:
‘knowledge’ Journals, p.498.
‘Friendship’ A North Sea collier in which Cook was Mate, owned by the Walker
brothers, who were Quakers based in Whitby. This was the vessel the
Walkers’ offered to Cook as a Command in 1755, when he was aged twenty-
seven; Cook joined the Royal Navy as an Able Seaman instead (Hough,
p.10). I have invented Cook’s early association with William Watman. For ‘his
good and benevolent disposition’ (Hough, p.337).

Page 30:
Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations (published 9th March 1776 - Cook sailed from
London on 15th June 1776).
‘poets are liars by profession, yet also he says that they always endeavour to give an
air of truth to thier fictions’ (Hume, D. (1739), bk.1, pt.3).
‘Ossian is too long to be remembered’ Johnson, S. (1775, p.78).
‘deceit where no personal injury is the consequence?’ Ibid.
‘Credulity on one part is a strong temptation to Deceit on the other’ Ibid.

Page 31:
‘deposite the manuscript in one of the colleges at Aberdeen, where there are people
who can judge’ Boswell, J. (1785, p.47) (his spellings).

‘Why is not the original deposited in some publick library? Why do you not produce
the Man?’ ibid, p.225.

‘Ossian is as gross an imposition as ever the world was troubled with’ ibid, p.135.

‘thevery’ Journals, p.552.

‘Cheifs’ Journals, p.467.

Page 32:

‘Cheifs are Sharks that walk on land’ (Dening, p.161). This proverb is Hawaiian,
where Cook does not reach for another seven months, so its use here is
anachronistic evidence of forgery.

As chief of the European ‘Strangers’ (see Appendix B), Cook was certainly atiu (of
the
gods), but not of the highest. This suggests that Cook does not have as clear
an understanding of his place in the Polynesian social hierarchy as he thinks
he does.

‘they would not have dared to harm me’ The chiefs were actually conspiring to kill
Cook and his officers from ambush, then to take over the ships, killing all on
board. It did not happen only because they could not agree on how (Thomas
(2010), pp.317-8).

‘what was about’ Journals, p.487.

Page 33:

‘these sacrifices… they were Canibals’ Journals, p.506.


‘Canibals’ Journals, p.506.

‘interely lost his good will’ Journals, p.507.

‘We made no scruple but of Course we condemned it freely’ Journals, ibid.

‘On this we left him with as great a contempt for our customs as we could possibly
have of thiers’ Journals, ibid.

‘enimies’ Journals, p.506.

‘priests have been the enimies of liberty’ Essays, (Hume, D. (1741-2), p.38).
‘of all the plagues with which mankind are curst, Ecclesiastic tyranny’s the worst’ *The True-Born Englishman*, (Defoe, D. (1701), p.25).

‘Widdershins’: a North British superstition: to go counter-clockwise, ‘against the sun’, was considered unlucky: this is ironically used to contrast Cook’s dismissal of Polynesian superstition.

Page 34:

‘how liable the mind of man is to credulity?’ Boswell, p.225.

‘disire’ *Journals*, p.583.

‘Rheumatick’ *Journals*, p.510.

‘cloaths’ *Journals*, p.434.

‘They made up a bed… of the desorder’ *Journals*, p.510.

Page 35:

‘a thing I never before saw in these islands’ *Journals*, p.515.

‘inraged’ *Journals* p.548.

‘tolerable credet’ *Journals*, p.516.

Page 36:

‘it is possible that he may be Joseph Banks son’ Alexander (1977), p.158.

Page 37:

‘I may assert Eternal Providence, And justify the ways of God to men’ *Paradise Lost* (1674), I. l25-6.

‘Sad! I am sad indeed: nor small my cause of woe! – Kirmor, thou hast lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty’ *Ossian* (1763), XI. l.38.

‘Speak to me; hear my voice, sons of my love! But alas! They are silent; silent for ever!’ *Ossian* (1763), X. l.48.

Page 38:


‘Sandwich Islands’: the Hawaiian archipelago.

‘all the Natives fell flat on thier faces, and remained in that humble posture till I made
signs for them to rise’ *Journals*, p.533.

‘He did not like it’ *Journals*, p.607.

‘attall’ *Journals*, p.469.

‘I know not how we shall account for this Nation spreading it self so far over this Vast ocean?’ *Journals*, p.537.

Page 39:

‘St George’s Sound’: later renamed Nootka Sound, Vancouver Island. The Captain who gave his name to the island, George Vancouver, was a midshipman on *Resolution* for this voyage.

‘how they was’ *Journals*, p.474.

‘affraid’ *Journals*, p.452.

Page 40:

Jacob von Storcksburg Stahlin’s map of the Arctic (1773)

[http://vilda.alaska.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/cdmg11/id/10443/rec/1](http://vilda.alaska.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/cdmg11/id/10443/rec/1)

Page 41:

The fur trade did do well, yet it drove the sea-otter to near extinction (Robson, p.165).

‘desturbed’ *Journals* p.598.

‘Channell’ *Journals* p.528.

‘resk’ *Journals*, p.474.

‘compleat’ *Journals*, p.433.

‘distruction’ *Journals*, p.454.

Page 42:

‘after lingering under a consumption for more than twelve months, expired between three and four this after noon’ *Journals* p.567.

Page 43:

‘To his care I intrusted a letter to the Admiralty in which was inclosed’ *Journals*, p.586.

‘intirely’ Journals, p.468.
‘succedaneum’ p.587.
‘liquier’ Journals, p.477.
‘chuse’ Journals, p.483.

Page 44:

‘my Honey’ The Walker brothers’ elderly nurse / housekeeper, who had cared for Cook as a youth, greeted him home after his first voyage with, ‘Oh honey James, how glad I’s to see thee!’ (Hough, p.219).

‘Wm Watman… paralytic stroke’ Journals p.607.
Appendix A

By 1835, Britain’s maritime empire had achieved global dominance and the Royal Navy was its primary instrument. Captain James Cook had ceased to be regarded as just a man and had undergone apotheosis, becoming an imperial icon and ranking second only to Sir Horatio Viscount Nelson in terms of heroic stature and tragic fate.

Cook’s wife Elizabeth, née Batts, an innkeeper’s daughter from Wapping in East London, died in that same year of 1835, aged ninety-three, some fifty-six years after the death of her husband, and forty-two years after the death of the last of her six children. At some point in the weeks or months before her death, Elizabeth took the large packet of letters she had received from her husband over sixteen years of married life and burned them in her hearth. In all that time, in a letter-writing age, they spent less than four years in each other’s company, so there must have been many. She left no reason for her action and it has deprived posterity from knowing the private man behind the professional mask.

In all of Cook’s surviving correspondence, we see the consummate professional who drove himself from his humble origins as a migrant Scottish farm labourer’s son to his attainment of the critical promotion in the Royal Navy, which would, had he lived, gained him the rank of Admiral. He was accepted by the great and the good of society and has become both revered and reviled as a history maker. Yet what is known of the private human who attained such heights is minimal. His writings are impersonal, discreet and
official. What the man, James Cook, thought and felt remains conjecture. The closest history comes to seeing the man behind the uniform is when 'His Majesty's Bark'\(^1\) Resolution reached the ice shelf in the Antarctic and Cook wrote in his official journal: 'Ambition leads me not only farther than any other man has been before me, but as far as I think it possible for man to go'.\(^2\) George Vancouver,\(^3\) one of Cook’s midshipmen, later reported that Cook, before turning back, had climbed out onto the Resolution’s bowsprit, waved his hat in the freezing air and called out ‘Non plus ultra.\(^4\)’ This uncharacteristically wild, even reckless elevation of his spirit, which briefly emerges in this journal entry, is an aberration not repeated.

David Samwell, Surgeons-Mate of the Resolution, wrote of him:

> He was a modest man, and rather bashful; of an agreeable lively conversation, sensible and intelligent. In temper he was somewhat hasty, but of a disposition the most friendly, benevolent and humane. His person was above six feet high: and, though a good looking man, he was plain both in dress and appearance. His face was full of expression: his nose extremely well shaped: his eyes which were small and of a brown cast, were quick and piercing; his eyebrows prominent, which gave his countenance altogether an air of austerity (1791, p18).

I have Cook using the words ‘Actions speak louder than Words’ (see Notes on the Text) and it is instructive to read what the editor of my copy of Cook’s Journals, Philip Edwards, says of his actions:

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\(^1\) Properly, Resolution was, like HMB Endeavour, a ‘bark rigged cat’ (Marquardt (1995) p.7), having the hull of a Whitby ‘cat’, three masts and the characteristic sailing rig. However, in naval parlance, Resolution would be defined as a ‘Sloop’ due to the rank of its commanding officer (O’Brien (1969) p.60).

\(^2\) Cook, The Journals p.331

\(^3\) Vancouver later Commanded the Chatham sloop and again explored the North East Pacific ocean between 1790-1795, searching for the North-East Passage. He gave his name to Vancouver Island and city.

\(^4\) ‘No man further’
In all his dealings with ‘natives’, he was humane, tolerant, patient, anxious for peaceful relations, deeply interested in their customs and manner of life. But there was a strict and firm boundary to his tolerance and patience. It was peaceful coexistence that he wanted, but it was coexistence. His presence had to be accepted, and... it was a constant refrain throughout the three voyages that natives should never be allowed to think that they had defeated him, outwitted him, or got the better of him in any way...

'‘It is remarked by every commentator that, for whatever reason, Cook was less patient and tolerant, more given to anger, more severe in his punishments, both in regard to his own men and the people they encountered, during this last voyage. (2003, p.612)
Appendix B


‘Polynesians… held in common… an understanding of themselves – call it a historical consciousness – expressed in the mythical opposition of “native” and “stranger”. This opposition… was prior to and independent of the European intrusion. The Polynesians were native and stranger among themselves and to themselves. They saw themselves as made up of native, those born of the land of the islands, and stranger, those who had at some time come from a distant place. “Tahiti” is, in different forms the Polynesian word for a distant place. Strangers come from Tahiti. Typically in their myths the first stranger, a chief, came many generations ago in a canoe from a distant place…

‘Political power was thought to come through usurpation by the stranger and was given legitimacy by the native… the conqueror, the stranger, came from the sea; the conquered, but founding force, the people, were of the land. So Land and Sea had the positions of Native and Stranger. And because Polynesian cosmology imagine the sky as a great dome reaching down all around the island to the circle of the horizon, those who came by sea came from "beyond the sky". They were the atua, gods. Being called atua, gods, as they almost universally were, the European Strangers who came to Polynesian islands from beyond the sky were both flattered and reinforced in their judgements of savage simplicities. We may hazard a guess that the Polynesians, just as they saw in their own Stranger Chiefs the incarnation of usurping power, so they expected the European Strangers from beyond the sky to play out their mythical usurping roles. Native was to Stranger as Land was to Sea. There were other associations as well. Strangers from the Sea, from Beyond the Sky, Usurping Power were Chiefs; they were also man-eaters, sacrificers. That Hawaiian proverb caught it all: “Chiefs are sharks that walk on the land”...'
Appendix C

Cook was accepted as a human avatar of the Hawaiian God Lono because: ‘In Hawaii ‘there were four months beginning October – November that were sort of Carnival time, when the ordinary was overturned. These four months belonged to the people of the land, the commoners, the natives. It was a reversed world in which the Chiefs ritually lost their power to the people, when kapu and protocols were put aside, in which there were no sacrifices or wars, in which the God of the land, Lono, returned to the islands… It began with a procession of the priests of Lono right-handedly around the island. That is, the land was always on the right and the sea on the left. Right hand, life, land: left-hand, death, sea. The procession of Lono was a symbolic act of his possession of the land.’ (Dening, pp.160-161)

Appendix D

(The library I ascribe to Cook)
The King James Bible

Alexander Dalrymple  
*Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean* (1770-1)

William Dampier  
*A New Voyage Round the World* (1697)  
*Voyages and Descriptions* (1699)  
*A Voyage to New Holland* (1703)  
*A Supplement of the Voyage Round the World* (1705)  
*The Campeachy Voyages* (1705)  
*A Discourse of Winds* (1705)  
*A Continuation of a Voyage to New Holland* (1709)

Daniel Defoe  
*The True-Born Englishman* (1701)  
*Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

David Hume  
*A Treatise upon Human Nature* (1739)  
*Essays, Moral, Political, Literary* (1741-2)  
*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748)

Samuel Johnson  
*The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (1759)  
*A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775)

John Locke  
*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)

John Milton  
*Paradise Lost* (1674)

James Macpherson  
*Ossian* (1763)

Alexander Pope (tr)  
*The Odyssey* by Homer (c 550 BCE)

Adam Smith  
*Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1762)  
*The Wealth of Nations* (1776)

Jonathan Swift  
*Gulliver’s Travels* (1735)
Omai was a Polynesian from Raiatea, who was brought to England aboard the 
*Adventure*, Captain Tobias Furneaux commanding. Joseph Banks adopted him as a 
protégé and he was lionised in English high Society for his elegance and grace as the 
epitome of the ‘Noble Savage’.

King George III loaded him with gifts, as did others, and he was sent back to Tahiti 
aboard *Resolution*. Cook did not think very much of his character, but he was very 
useful as a translator.

Omai’s adventure brought him no lasting benefit. Within three years of settling back in the Society Islands, he and his two young servants from New Zealand had died, seemingly of natural causes.
Appendix F

The Hitler Diaries

Forgeries by Konrad Kujau, which emerged into the news media on 22\textsuperscript{nd} April 1983 in Stern magazine, the articles being written by Gerd Heinemann. They were syndicated by the Sunday Times, which ran a front page spread on 24\textsuperscript{th} April. According to Amy Davidson (2011) of New Yorker magazine, the night before, after the print run, the forgery was finally exposed by the Sunday Times's in-house historian, Lord Dacre, who had initially authenticated the diaries. The newspaper’s proprietor, Rupert Murdoch, was called to inform him of the disaster. Murdoch decided to publish. According to Davidson, 'he famously remarked, “After all, we are in the entertainment business”.'
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