

William Dampier

(baptised 5 September 1651; died March 1715)

William Dampier was an [English buccaneer](#), sea captain, [author](#) and scientific observer, and pirate. He was the first Englishman to explore and map parts of New Holland ([Australia](#)) and [New Guinea](#).

He was the first person to circumnavigate the world twice, and went on to complete a third circumnavigation. His observations of natural history influenced [Charles Darwin](#), among others. His navigational skills and exploratory voyages extended [imperial](#) and commercial interests around the globe and eventually led to the colonisation of Australia.

Pacific Coast, South/Central America

The coast of South America was a hotbed of pirates of several nations, hoping to capture one of the many Spanish Galleons carrying gold and other valuable plunder from its' colonies. His first significant journey, which began in 1679, took him to Pacific Coast, where he explored the coast of present-day Colombia, Venezuela, and Panama, as well as the Galapagos Islands.

The Galapagos Islands featured often in Dampier's voyages as a place to rest, ship repairs, gather food and water. A famous true story is the marooning of Alexandra Selkirk, later rescued by Dampier (upon which Danial Defoes' "Robinson Crusoe" is said to be based).

Ecuador.



1651

Born the second son of a tenant farmer at East Coker, Somerset, England.

1658

His father George dies.

1665

His mother Anne dies in the Great Plague. At school Dampier has a grounding in Latin and Arithmetic.

1669

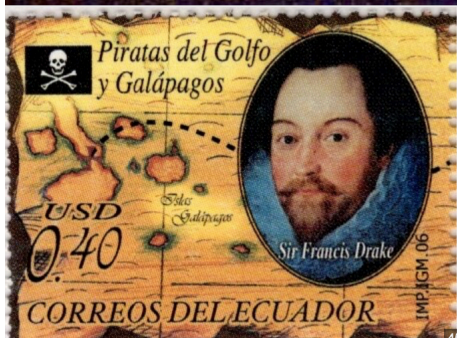
Apprenticed to a shipmaster in Weymouth. He sails to France and later to Newfoundland.

1670

Sails to Java via Cape of Good Hope on East Indiaman, John and Martha.

1672

Enlists in the 'Royal Navy'.



1673

Serves on board the Royal Prince in the battle of Texel against the Dutch.

1674

Sails to Jamaica to work on Squire Helyar's sugar plantation. William Whaley is manager.

Set Issued. 29/12/2006. US\$ 30c, 30c, 30c, 30c, 40c, \$1
40c Sir Francis Drake, Hero of England, Explorer and accepted Pirate
\$1. William Dampier, Explorer, Naturalist, condemned as Pirate

William Dampier

Christmas Island

William Dampier undoubtedly, one of the history's greatest explorers, circumnavigated the world three times, world class navigator, naturalist, successful author.

His knowledge of winds, currents ahead of his time, and contributed up to 1000 words to the English dictionary,

William Dampier, the pirate was not so successful. He died with his estate £2,000 in debt.

In 1684 Dampier joined Captain Charles Swan on the *Cygnet* and set course across The Pacific to raid The East Indies.

Christmas Island

Christmas Island began appearing on the charts of English and Dutch navigators from the early 1600s. But it wasn't until 1643 that Captain William Mynors of the British East India Company named the island after sighting it on Christmas Day.

The first known landing came in 1688, when the English ship *Cygnet* landed on the island's west coast. The explorer William Dampier was on board.



1675

Leaves the plantation and departs Port Royal by trading ketch for the Bay Of Campeachy (Captain Hudsel). Sees the illegal 'log-wooding' (dye extraction) camps in progress, sails back to Jamaica with Hudsel. They are almost captured by the Spanish.

1676

Goes back to Campeachy to enter the logwood trade. Doing well until a hurricane strikes the coast. Joins buccaneers.

Issue Date. 15/08/2017, Australia, Aus \$1 and \$2



**Christmas Island
1972/1973 Issue**



**Christmas Island
1997 Issued Visitors**



William Dampier aboard 'Cygnet'



William Dampier

New Holland



1698

Submits a proposal to the British Admiralty for a voyage of discovery and research, to the East Indies and New Holland. Proposal accepted Dampier is presented the HMS Roebuck, a ship in poor condition that continues to deteriorates during the expedition, eventually sinking.

Arrives at Dirk Hart Island August 1699, at the entrance to Shark bay near present day Carnarvon, Western Australia. Spends approx. 3 months charting 1400km of coast between Shark Bay and present day Broome.

By September, short of water and supplies headed back to New Guinea to restock the ship intending to return to continue the charting of the Australian Coast, however the deterioration of the Roebuck forced them to abandon the mission and head back to England.

1963-1964 (SG355/60) Early Navigators of Australia (pre-decimal)



*This set provided two First Day Covers, the first including **Dampier, Bass and King.***

*The second, included **Tasman, Cook and Flinders***

William Dampier

1679

Sails back to Jamaica. After sending home the deeds of his estate, joins buccaneers.

1680

They seize Portobello. Together with the surgeon Lionel Wafer, they cross the Isthmus of Darien (Isthmus of Panama) with the assistance of the Kuna Indians. Basil Ringrose joins. They arrive at Panama Bay, capture a ship and sail with some seamen from the Mosquito Coast (then called Mosquito, Mosquito or Muskito Indians) to the Juan Fernandez Islands, arriving late December.

1681

At Juan Fernandez a Moskito Indian named Will is abandoned as Spanish ships surprise them there. They head back towards Panama and cross the Isthmus to the Caribbean coast. There in a ship commanded by Captain Wright they join a buccaneer fleet.

1682

In July he arrives in Virginia, a centre for tobacco production. 1683

1683

Captain John Cook arrives in the Revenge. After some unspecified problems ashore Dampier joins. The quartermaster is Edward Davis, the navigator Ambrose Cowley. They sail across the Atlantic to Sierra Leone where in an act of blatant piracy they seized a Danish slave ship and rename the 36-gun ship Bachelors Delight (or Batchelor's Delight). See 1709 entry.

William Dampier

New Holland

6th August, 1699 Lands in New Holland

"The 1st Englishman to set foot in Australia?" Well not quite.

This Great Southern Land was named New Holland (later changed to Australia suggested by the explorer Mathew Flinders).

In fact the first Englishmen to land in what is now Australian Territory were the crew from a wrecked English merchant ship, The Trail (Trial, Tryal, Tryall).

She slammed into submerged rocks north west of the Montebello Islands on route to Batvia, East Indies.

Captain Brooke a handful of men including his son clambered into a small skiff and escaped, eventually reaching Latvia, East Indies.

Another 35 men eventually released the ships' longboat, landing on one of the Montebello Island to search for food and water, stayed a week before also reaching Batvia. 93 Men perished.

These indeed were the 1st known Englishmen to land in present day Australia

1966 (SG355/60) Early Navigators of Australia (Decimal)



1966 Decimal Reissue.
1966



1966 Decimal Reissue. First Day Cover



1684

They round Cape Horn and sail up the Pacific coast of South America in company with Capt. Eaton in the Nicholas, attacking towns and ships. In March the privateers landed on Juan Fernandez Island and recover 'Will' the Moskito Indian accidentally left there three years earlier. They head for the Galapagos. From there they proceed to New Spain (Mexico). Cook dies in June and Davis takes command. Soon they are joined by the 16-gun Cygnet under Charles Swan and become part of fleet of 10 ships, (some French) with over 500 men in total.

1685

In August the buccaneers split up. Davis elects to go to Peru, Dampier transfers to the Cygnet under Swan for Mexico where they wait for the Manila Galleon at Acapulco.

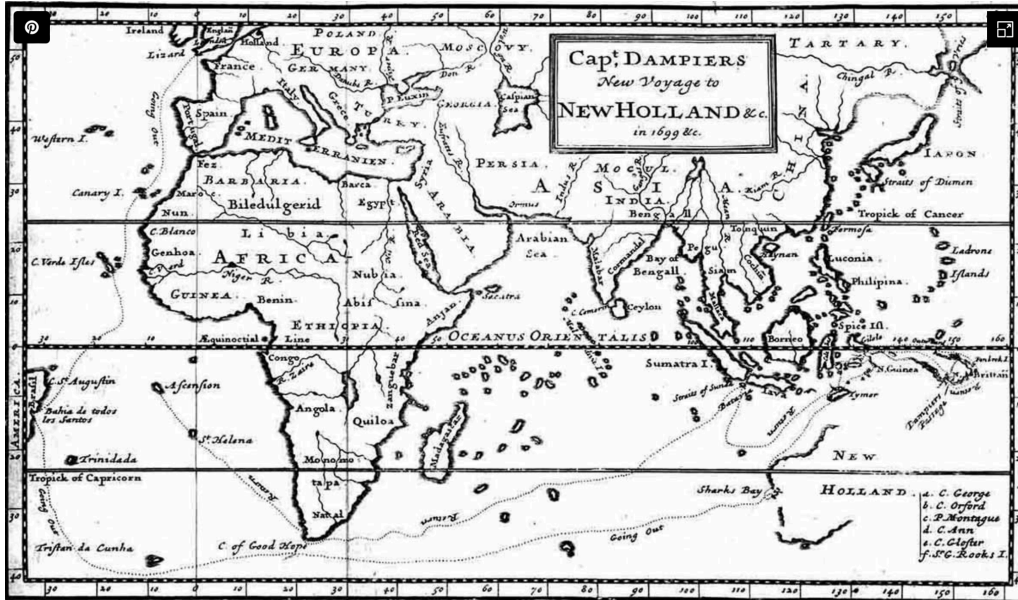
1686

After just missing the galleon, Swan, with Dampier's backing, decides to sail across the Pacific from Mexico to the East Indies in search of a galleon. They leave in March. In May when an acute shortage of provisions led to a plot to eat those responsible (Dampier and the captain). This was believed by their fortuitous landing at Guam and their obtaining of food including an abundance of breadfruit.

William Dampier

New Holland

Dampiers' Voyage to New Holland, 1699



1687

Swan is replaced as captain by John Reed (Read) at Mindanao. They cruise the China Sea, the mouth of the Mekong, Thailand, Canton (Guangzhou). They decide to head for the southern tip of India which they do via the Philippines and the Celebes in the East Indies. They reach Timor and deviate south on the voyage to India to New Holland.

1688

On 6 January they landed near Swan Point, east of Cape Leveque. On 12 February they sail out into the Indian Ocean, towards the Cocos, stopping at Christmas Island and Sumatra. On to the Nicobar Islands and in May Dampier was put ashore. Escaping he sails in the Nicobar Canoe towards the English factory at Achin (Banda Aceh) and he is hit by a violent storm. In July he leaves Achin for Tonquin (Tonkin) in north Vietnam, then, Cachao (Hanoi).

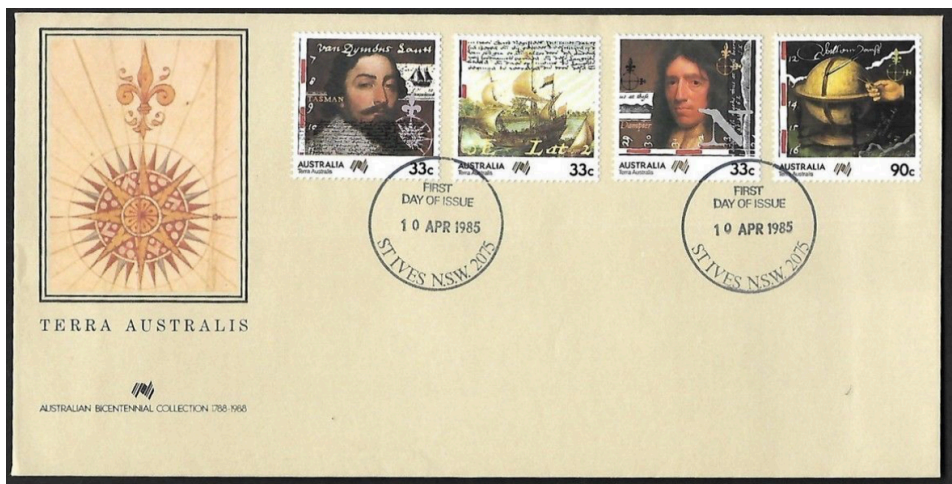
1689

In February he leaves Cachao to return to Achin and in September leaves as mate on an English trading vessel bound for Malacca. There he learns William and Mary are crowned King and Queen of England. Leaves for Fort St George.

1690

See Final Page....

33c Abel Tasman,
33c Dirk Hartog
'Eendracht'
33c William
Dampier,
90c Dampiers
Globe
Issued:
10/04/1985
Terra Australis



"New Holland is a very large tract of Land. It is not yet determined whether it is an island or a main Continent; but I am certain that it joyns neither to Asia, Africa, nor America. This part of it that we saw is all low even Land, with sandy Banks against the Sea, only the points are rocky, and so are some of the Islands in this Bay."

William Dampier

William Dampier

Ascension Island

5th September, 1699 Departs New Holland

Initially, with the intention of heading to Timor for water and food supplies, he charted the north coast of New Guinea and intended returning to his mission, the Roebuck now leaking badly, decided to return to England. The route took the around The Cape of Good Hope, St Helena where stay stayed for approximately 11 days, setting sail next for Ascension Island where she sank.. The crew were marooned there for 5 weeks before being picked up by an East Indian returning to England.



1691

In January he leaves for England with Jeoly in the Defence under Captain Heath, calling at Cape Town where he describes the Hottentots. He leaves in May, reaching the Downs in September. He reunites with Judith.

1693

In August Dampier joins the 'Spanish Expedition Shipping', a privateering venture. A mutiny breaks out led by William Avery.

1694

Dampier and all who did not join the mutiny are forced to remain at La Coruña in Spain.

1695

In February, the 'Spanish Expedition Shipping' finally folds. In May Dampier testifies at a lawsuit in London for wages owing to him and others..

1696

In October he testifies for the defence at the trial of the captured pirates.

1697

In January he is still in court. In April he signs power of attorney to his wife Judith. A New Voyage Round the World is published. He is appointed to a post in the customs at £35 per annum.

1698

Submits a proposal to the British Admiralty for a voyage to the East Indies and New Holland. Dines with diarist John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys. His portrait entitled 'Pirate and Hydrographer' is commissioned by Hans Sloane and executed in this year.



25p Dampier, 35p The Roebuck, £1 The Sinking, £1.5 Recovering The Bell
Issued: 2015

The Discovery of the Roebuck

In 1999, to mark the Tricentennial of William Dampier's landing at Shark Bay, these expeditions became international with the decision to search for the wrecks of Dampier's and de Freycinet's ships Roebuck and Uranie off the Ascension and Falkland Islands in the Atlantic.

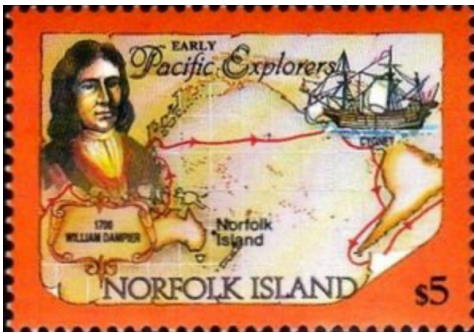
The Roebuck was found 300 years almost to the day since the ship was lost. The wreck still contained some of the Dampier's specimens including a clam shell, perhaps one he had collected in Shark Bay. At the request of the Island's administrator, the ship's bell and clam shell were raised with the assistance of local divers. Both objects were conserved and returned to the Island with replicas presented to the Western Australian Museum.



15p Captain Dampier, 35p A Fish Rater, 40p Dampier's Drip, 50p Map of Ascension.

William Dampier

Oddities



Norfolk Island (Australia)

A set of 12 stamps commemorating Pacific Explorers including this \$5 William Dampier/HMS Roebuck. Issue: 03/05/1994.

Strangely, Norfolk Island was not discovered until 1774 by Captain Cook and named after the Duchess of Norfolk, 49 years after the death of William Dampier.

1699

Sails from England in the Roebuck, down to Bahia, Brazil, mistreats and abandons Lt Fisher RN, rounds the Cape of Good Hope, anchors in 'Sharks Bay' and lands on Dirk Hartog Island, East Lewis Island, Dampier Archipelago, Lagrange Bay and then Timor. At what is now Selat Dampier near New Guinea his men land on an island he called Cockle Island recovering clams ranging from 10 pounds (c.4 kg) to 258 pounds (c. 110 kg) weight. Wafer's and Crowley's accounts on their exploits are published. Dampier publishes Voyages and Descriptions, a second volume to New Voyage, including as Part III a section entitled Discourse of the Trade-Winds, Breezes, Storms, Seasons of the Year, Tides and Currents of the Torrid Zone throughout the World.

1700

Sails around New Guinea to New Ireland, names New Britain then, with his ship in need of repairs, heads back home.

1701

Roebuck founders at Ascension Island, South Atlantic. They remain on Ascension Island 24 February to 3 April when they are picked up by British ships. Arrives England in August 1701.

1702 Court-martialled for his treatment of Lt. Fisher, and for the loss of the

Papua New Guinea

A set of 12 stamps issued 15/06/1987. The Roebuck, 5t. William Dampier spent some considerable time in these waters, charting the north coast of New Guinea and naming Islands such as New Britain.



St Helena

St Helen featured at least twice in the career of William Dampier. Employed as a gunner for 5 months in Bencoolen, British East Indies, much against his wishes. He secured a passage home with Captain Heath, 1691, aboard The Defence. Set of XX Issued XXX



Germany

Biber Post
Private Modern Post Offices
Magdeburg
Germany (Saxony-Anhalt)
0.45E
43mm x 34mm

Why William Dampier, why private post in Germany?

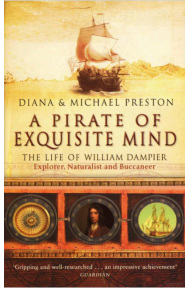


1703

A Voyage to New Holland &c. is published. Dampier is introduced to Queen Anne by the Lord High Admiral. Arrested in a civil action brought by Lt. Fisher. Dampier is bailed and leaves England in command of the St George for a privateering voyage. He teams up with the Cinque

William Dampier

Summary



A Pirate of Exquisite Mind

The Title of this presentation is taken from a very good overview of the life and career of William Dampier by Diana and Michael Preston

Dampier The Author

Damoiers Books where best sellers of the time being reprinted several times.



1704

Rounds the Horn, up to Juan Fernandez Islands and the coast opposite. Heads up to Panama Bay takes several small ships. Cinque Ports goes back down to Juan Fernandez Islands where Alexander Selkirk is marooned. Dampier in St George remains in Panama Bay. The mate John Clipperton and twenty others mutiny and leave in a captured prize. His crew and fleet depleted and heavily outgunned, Dampier fails to seize a Manila Galleon after a short skirmish.

1705

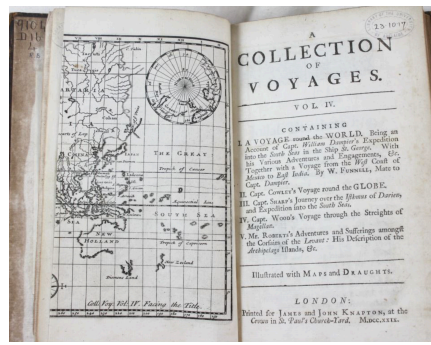
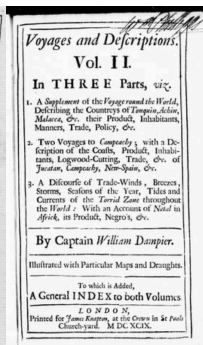
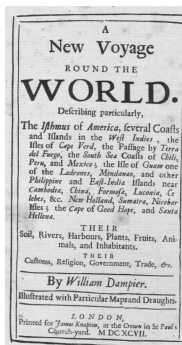
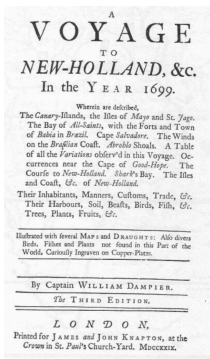
Another mutiny occurs, this time on the Mexican coast. William Funnell, the mate, and John Welbe desert and set off with others in a captured ship. Heading back towards Panama and the Gulf of Guayaquil, Dampier attacks the island of Puna, seizes a Spanish brig and abandons the now rotten St George in readiness to sail across the Pacific. (There are no records of this voyage).

1706

They arrive in Batavia, but unable to produce his Letter of Marque, authorising him to be a privateer, Dampier is imprisoned.

1708

Agitates for a new privateering voyage. Appointed 'pilot' (navigator) under Woodes Rogers. Together the vessels Duke and Dutchess travel via Brazil and the Falkland Islands, to Cape Horn. Edward Cooke is



Prince Joely (Giola)



Dampiers Prince A sad tale but true....

1690

In April he meets Captain Moody who has with him Prince Jeoly and his mother who are originally from the island of Meangas near Sulawesi. He purchases Prince Jeoly and his mother, but she soon dies aboard ship. He returns to England intent on Displaying Jelly but eventually sells him to the owner of The Blue Boar Inn to display to customers. Joely dies 3 years later of smallpox.

1709

They proceed to Juan Fernandez Island picking up Alexander Selkirk who is made mate on the Duke. They head up the coast taking small trading vessels, sack Guayaquil, capture a French and some Spanish ships, sail up to Acapulco, capture a rich galleon, but then miss one even larger. They rename the captured galleon Batchelor after one of their backers

1714

'Diseased and weak in body but sound and perfect mind', living in Coleman Street, Old Jewry, in the Pash of St Stephen;

1715

In March Dampier dies and is buried in an unmarked grave.