Cook's ship the *Endeavour*

Cook explores and maps New Zealand and Australia's east coast

After leaving Tahiti Cook headed south-west. He sailed to the north-east coast of the North Island of New Zealand and followed the coastline up and around the northern-most point and turned south. The *Endeavour* then sailed through Cook Strait and down the west coast of the South Island of New Zealand. He spent six months exploring the land and coast. He named the mountains, bays and capes as he drew charts of the rugged coastline. After proving that New Zealand was two islands he sailed across the Tasman Sea to the east coast of Australia.

Cook sighted the south coast of the Australian continent, near Gippsland in Victoria on 20 April 1770. He took 127 days to travel from Victoria to the north Queensland coast. He sailed over 4000 kilometres and named over 100 places. Cook made 11 landings including seven days in Botany Bay in April 1770. Here they scraped the *Endeavour*’s hull and gathered wood and water. He reported that the land ‘would be good for growing any kind of grain’. The botanist, Sir Joseph Banks, was also on board the ship. His job was to collect and draw plants and animals.

On 12 June 1770, as Cook navigated through the Great Barrier Reef, disaster struck. The ship went aground on Endeavour Reef, 16 kilometres from shore. They threw anything they could manage without overboard, including six heavy guns. These guns were located in 1969 and are now in museums around the world. Using the ship’s boats they managed to refloat the damaged ship. The ship was beached ashore at the Endeavour River where Cooktown is now located. It took over 50 days to repair it.

On 22 August 1770 Cook took possession of the land and named it New South Wales. He then sailed through Cook Passage in the Torres Strait and proved that New Guinea and the Australian continent were separate landmasses. He sailed on to Batavia for repairs to the ship and journeyed home to England around the Cape of Good Hope.