



# Voyages and Discoveries: Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation

*Richard Hakluyt*

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## **Voyages and Discoveries: Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation** Richard Hakluyt

Renaissance diplomat and part-time spy, Richard Hakluyt was also England's first serious geographer, gathering together a wealth of accounts about the wide-ranging travels and discoveries of the sixteenth-century English. One of the epics of this great period of expansion, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* describes, in the words of the explorers themselves, an astonishing era in which the English grew rapidly aware of the sheer size and strangeness of their world. Mingling accounts of the journeys of renowned adventurers such as Drake and Frobisher with descriptions by other explorers and traders to reveal a nation beginning to dominate the seas, Hakluyt's great work was originally intended principally to assist navigation and trade. It also presents one of the first and greatest modern portraits of the globe.

## **Voyages and Discoveries: Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation Details**

Date : Published October 28th 1982 by Penguin Classics (first published 1589)

ISBN : 9780140430738

Author : Richard Hakluyt

Format : Paperback 448 pages

Genre : History, Travel, Nonfiction, Classics

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## **From Reader Review Voyages and Discoveries: Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation for online ebook**

### **Megan says**

Voyages and Discoveries: Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nat (English Library) by Richard Hakluyt (1972)

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### **John says**

amazing reality

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### **Margareth8537 says**

Fascinating but hard going when you normally read fiction, or modern history. Sounds snobbish and isn't meant to be, but this was written at a time when only the well educated would read or be able to afford books. It was written for the people who paid up front for expeditions and was to interest them in supporting further discoveries

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### **Gavin says**

Lots of good stuff here, this being a compilation of logs, accounts and letters from sailors travelling around previously uncontacted parts. The majority are from the sixteenth century (all but 3 or 4 actually). Some are particularly striking. The one I enjoyed the most was a very matter of fact account of one man's abandonment in Mexico by his fellows and what happened to him there during the course of the next 18 years - enslavement, hardship and eventual return.

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### **Audra says**

Interesting although not long enough (I want a book about each sailor/explorer). Of course I would say that.

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### **Eddie says**

Absolutely fantastic. What a counterpoint to Shakespeare's diction. Not that I'm reprimanding The Bard, but in Hakluyt, you see the simpler side of (mostly) Elizabethan era English. Sure, it's still quite more adorned than modern usage, but generally much more accessible than Skakey's.

## Amerynth says

Incredibly dry..... I'm surprised that this is not only on the list of the 100 greatest adventure books of all time but also that it is ranked higher than Arlene Blum's "Anapurna" and William Bligh's "Mutiny on the Bounty." While this novel was said to inspire the English to explore the high seas, it only inspired me to sleep.

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## Jan-Maat says

This volume is a selection of about ten percent of the material originally published by Richard Hakluyt, an Anglican priest whose literary career took place during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James the VI & I. It is not clear if this short version was achieved just by selecting the shorter accounts of voyages, discoveries and acts of villainy & piracy, or if some of them have been edited down to a congenial length.

Hakluyt was connected to various leading figures in English political life(of the first part of the seventeenth century), collecting and publishing accounts of voyages to foreign and far off lands as a way of promoting trade and in particular the colonisation of Virginia. The divers materials gathered herein are of three types. Firstly voyages in which the ship's company do boldly set upon ships flying the flag of the King of Spain, pillage the harbours and towns belonging to said King, gain much treasure in gold, silver and tradable goods from the Indies, China or the New World but at the cost of ships and many men before returning to England. Secondly traffic to the utmost lands of the Earth undertaken for the purpose of trade in which the products of the Kingdom of England are to be exchanged for those of other lands to the enrichment of both, in these adventures the merchants are often defrauded, robbed, lost, run aground and starve most lamentably before returning to England. Finally there are lists of equipment and goods necessary for a ship's company seeking to undertake a whaling voyage or to trade with Brazil or the like.

There's a naivety about many of the accounts that leaves you wondering how the English ever managed to get established as a seafaring nation at all. For instance on one voyage to the East Indies the crew are already running short of food by the time they reach Cape Verde (so say 1/5 or 1/6 of the way there), but luckily they are able to rob a passing Portuguese ship of their food and wine. Then there is hardly an account in which a group of ships sets out without one or more lost - sometimes just blown away in a storm and never seen again, other ships are ravaged by storms, run aground or occasionally are shot up when attempted piracy goes wrong. Surprisingly groups of men appear happy to be abandoned on hostile shores on the vague promise of the Captain that he'll sail back and collect them in a years time - in one case it takes a man 18 years to get back. It's enough to leave you wanting to leave international seafaring to the Dutch.

Everything takes a long time. A reasonably straight forward voyage to the East Indies and back, or to Persia via Archangelsk and across Russia might take three years.

It's also striking that it hardly seems worth while. Apart from the long plundering voyages of Sir Francis Drake or Sir Walter Raleigh in which they essentially travel around the world stealing what ever seems valuable (people, silver, spices) (view spoiler) the amounts of goods actually traded can hardly offset the considerable costs (particularly considering the loss of ships)(view spoiler).

On the upside everything is there to be eaten. Puffins, penguins and seals are all evaluated as foodstuffs (they all seem to taste like mutton and not like chicken). This is good, because running out of food in the middle of

nowhere is a common theme to many of these stories.

The downside of this collection, in which every account could be expanded to make an implausible novel, is that the accounts of distant lands are brief and sketchy though occasionally intriguing. Landing on Newfoundland, to make friends with the locals the English reasonably enough give them iron knives but also play instruments and then bizarrely engage in leaping competitions, the true language of international understanding apparently, is competitive sports.

Fittingly the second-hand copy I have has a recipe for Soda-bread written out in pencil on the inside of the back cover. Just the thing for hungry seafarers weary of the taste of salted penguin.

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### **David Hill says**

I own a complete edition published in the early 1900s. This is absolutely invaluable for anyone interested in the voyages of discovery.

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