

Review by **Brian Marshall**

Datum Magazine

This volume continues the history of exploration and colonisation that began with Howgego's guide up to the year 1800, reviewed in the April 2003 issue of *Datum*. Much of what was said in that review applies equally to this new volume. The title page of the new volume tells us that this is a comprehensive reference guide to the history and literature of exploration, travel and colonisation between the years 1800 and 1850. The new volume is a substantial one, although at 690 pages it is 478 pages shorter than the first volume. The advantage of this is that the new volume is rather easier, physically, to handle.

The concluding date for the coverage in this volume - 1850 - has been carefully chosen by Howgego. He argues that this date represents "the conclusion of a distinct period of exploration and European colonial expansion". In the Arctic a renewed interest in the Northwest Passage had culminated in the loss of the Franklin expedition, while further south the extent of the United States had to a large extent been established, and the California gold rush was under way. In South America Spanish rule had been overthrown and political boundaries established that were similar to those existing today. In Africa the Sahara had been crossed, while the exploration of central Africa and the European scramble for Africa had yet to get underway. In Asia British, French and Russian rivalries saw Iran, Afghanistan and the area to the north fairly clearly demarcated, and the survey of India had been completed. Howgego says that by 1850 "much of New Zealand had been colonised and mapped", while there was sufficient knowledge of central Australia to confirm its inhospitality. The French in particular had ensured that there was very little left to discover in the Pacific by 1850.

Arrangement of the entries in this volume is alphabetical, by the name of the traveller. Each entry has an entry number, and an indication (in one or two words) of where the traveller was travelling. Brief biographical details follow, along with rather more detailed accounts of the explorations made. Each entry concludes with a bibliography of works by and about the traveller. If the traveller made more than one journey, there will be more than one entry.

As with the first volume, entries for particular topics are interspersed with the entries for people. A criticism of the first volume was that the topical entries were difficult to locate, and it is pleasing to see in the latest volume a listing of the special topics in the introduction. New Zealand and the New Zealand Company are included as special topics.

Given the wide and international scope of this work, it is hardly surprising that the occasional error has slipped in. On page 439 Richard Matthews from the Wanganui Mission Station is ascending the Wairarapa River - this should be the

Wanganui River. On page 552 William Mein Smith is completing a coastal survey to Castle Poin, - this should be Castlepoint. Although Howgego is usually very good at giving complete names for the people he mentions it is surprising that someone like G.H. Richards (page 573) who accompanied John Lort Stokes on the Acheron survey, is not given his full name. George Henry Richards and Frederick John Evans (who in the same paragraph gets his name in full) later compiled the first edition of the British Admiralty's New Zealand Pilot (1856), based largely on the Acheron-Pandora surveys. Richards's full name is obtainable from the British Library online catalogue. I wondered why Thomas Wing was omitted, other than being briefly mentioned in passing as the captain of the schooner Deborah chartered by Frederick Tuckett to explore the southern South Island.

Yet it is far too easy to sit at one's desk and hunt for minor errors or think of explorers who might have been included. The fact is that this volume continues the fine standards set by Howgego in volume 1. It is an amazing achievement for one person to accomplish, and it is going to be a basic work of reference for many years to come. The body of travel and exploration literature for the period 1800 to 1850 is immense, and for one person to distil it into a single volume is indeed a fine achievement. Howgego deserves both our thanks and our congratulations.