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Review by Ian McKay

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Isaac le Maire may well have been the largest shareholder in the Dutch East India Company (VOC), but he was not at all averse to independent ventures - one of which forced him to resign his trusteeship - and it was an attempt to circumvent the company's monopoly on East Indies trade, as well as the thought of finding the fabled southland, "Terra Australis", that led him to form an "Australian Company".

The voyage of 1615-16 that resulted from that decision was not the economic coup that Isaac had desired, and it cost the life of his eldest son. However, before he died, Jacob le Maire, in company with Willem Schouten, a skipper with East Indies experience and his father's business partner, had defined the southern limits of South America, opened up a new sea route to the Spice Islands, and, had they held their westerly course for longer, might even have found the eastern shoreline of Australia, 150 years before Cook.

Their story is told in this fifth title from the Australian Maritime Series, a limited edition volume presenting facsimiles of the Dutch text of Isaac le Maire's *Spieghel der Australische Navigatie* of 1622, the first true publication of the journal of the Le Maire/Schouten expedition, and an English version produced many years later by Alexander Dalrymple, the great hydrographer and chronicler of Pacific voyages.

Dalrymple's text is neither a comprehensive or exact translation, drawing on both a 1622 Latin text edition of the *Spieghel*, or "Mirror", and an English translation of a 1618 French edition of the so-called "Journal" of Willem Schouten, a widely reprinted and translated account that was only later revealed to be based on Le Maire's log.

The Dalrymple version only summarizes the early part of the voyage and ends with expedition's arrival in New Ireland, but as the introductory essay by Edward Duyker, an expert in the Dutch voyages to the Pacific, points out, "the sub-text of virtually every page is indeed an English version of *Spieghel der Australische Navigatie*". It is also vital for those who cannot read Dutch in black letter type!

In his introductory essay, Duyker explains the political, economic and exploratory background to the voyage, with some diversions into Jacob le Maire's secret dealings with Henry IV of France and Henry Hudson, and outlines the story of the voyage. Jacob commanded the expedition, though the 220 ton *Eendracht* was skippered by Schouten and his younger brother Jan commanded the 110 ton armed jacht, the *Hoorn*, named for the north Dutch town that was home to many of the voyagers. The *Hoorn* caught fire while being "scorched" clean of seaweed on Patagonian shores, forcing everyone to crowd into the *Eendracht*, which then sailed south and, ignoring the Straits of Magellan, found a new channel, the Strait Le Maire, between Terra del Fuego and an island they named Staten Landt for the Dutch parliament, or States General. Four days later, on 19 January 1616, they became the first Cape Ho(o)rnners and gave that wild end of the world its now familiar name before sailing north to Juan Fernandez island and then, taking advantage of a good wind, set out westwards across the southern Pacific.

Numerous islands were found and visited before the expedition finally reached Ternate in the Moluccas, where they were at first warmly welcomed but later refused permission to trade by the local Dutch governor. After releasing some crew members into VOC service, Le Maire and Schouten voyaged on through the Indies until they reached Jakarta and ran

afoul of the ruthless Jan Pietersz. Coen, president of the Council of the Indies and a future governor-general. Coen refused to believe that they had found a new passage to the Indies and promptly seized the Eendracht, along with its charts and papers. Le Maire and Schouten were deported to Holland, but Jacob died en route. Though Isaac did eventually vindicate his son and gain compensation for the confiscated vessel, the VOC retained its monopoly.

As usual this is a handsome publication - though larger than the small folio format of the earlier book - and is one of an edition of 950, bound in quarter tawed goatskin and marbled boards.