

Matthew FLINDERS

- Born 16 March 1774 at Donington, Lincolnshire
- Died 1814 at forty years of age

Raised in Lincolnshire, where men usually turned to agriculture for a livelihood, Matthew Flinders showed originality by choosing the sea. Flinders was born on 16 March 1774 at Donington, Lincolnshire. From a family of doctors, Flinders was expected to take up the same profession, but inspired by reports of Cook's discoveries, and the reading of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, he decided to go to sea. Flinders began his naval career at the age of fifteen.

During February 1801 the ambitious Flinders had been given command of the *Investigator* for this voyage of discovery, which was scheduled to take four years.

During the weeks that the *Investigator* was fitted out for the voyage, Flinders married Ann Chappell on 17 April 1801. They had hoped to travel together, but this was not allowed, and so Flinders set sail without Ann, little knowing that they would not meet again for almost nine years.

The *Investigator* sailed from Portsmouth, England on 18th July 1801, and reached Cape Leeuwin on 6 December 1801. Sailing eastwards, Flinders first charted the unknown southern coastline, unexpectedly encountering Baudin and the French expedition, and arriving in Port Jackson in May 1802. After refitting the ship, he continued his anticlockwise circumnavigation up the eastern coast and to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

In November, examination of the *Investigator* found that much of its timbers were rotting. Further repairs allowed the *Investigator* to keep sailing, but by March 1803 the ship was in such poor condition, and the crew in ill-health, that the survey was halted. The *Investigator* visited Timor for supplies, and then returned to Port Jackson down the west coast and across the Great Australian Bight. In reaching Port Jackson, he had completed the journey around the southern continent.



B 16400 Captain Matthew Flinders,
State Library of SA, Mortlock Library
South Australian database

Less than two years into the expedition, it was found that the vessel was rotten beyond repair. Flinders decided to return to England to obtain another ship in which he could continue the coastal survey. He sailed for home in the small sloop *Porpoise*, which ran aground on a reef off the coast of Queensland. After recovering the crew - no small feat of sailing - and rowing the ship's cutter back to Port Jackson to get help - Flinders again set sail for England, this time in the *Cumberland*.

The *Cumberland* was too small for the voyage and leaked extensively, so Flinders was forced to put in at Ile de France [Mauritius], hoping to find a vessel to take him back home. War had resumed between England and France, and Flinders was held prisoner on the island for 6 years. During this time, Flinders worked on his papers and charts. Sadly, Flinders' companion cat Trim disappeared.

In October 1810 Flinders finally returned home to England and Ann. Their daughter Anne was born in 1812. Flinders spent four years writing the three volumes of *A Voyage to Terra Australis*. He died in 1814 at forty years of age, the day after his account was published.

FLINDERS has been described as one of the world's most accomplished navigators and hydrographers.

He also contributed to the science of navigation, including research on tide action, and compass deviation due to the presence of iron in ships. Ill health, homesickness and loneliness did not deter him from his focus on his goals. His essay about his much loved cat Trim gives us an insight into the very human side of the man who was the first to circumnavigate Australia, prove it was one continent, create a definitive chart of its coastline, and so pave the way for colonisation.

Pre visit Activity Chart 2
(SACSA Society and environment Strand – Time, continuity and change, Standard 2)
Nicolas Baudin

Nicolas BAUDIN

- Born February 1754 at Port La Rochelle, France
- Joined the French Navy in 1774

Like the English expedition under the command of Matthew Flinders, the French expedition under Thomas Nicolas Baudin set out to explore and chart the coastline of the 'unknown southern land', determine whether 'New Holland' was one landmass, and make scientific observations. They were also looking for new land and trade opportunities. Napoleon sent out one of the most extensive expeditions in the nineteenth century. On 19 October 1800, Baudin and his large group of scientists left Le Havre in two ships, *Le Geographe* and *Le Naturaliste*.

The detailed surveys undertaken along the western coast and in Van Dieman's Land delayed Baudin's arrival on the 'unknown coast' where Flinders had already arrived from the west.

Baudin gave French place names to features in 'Terre Napoleon', meeting Flinders at Encounter Bay in April 1802, and then continuing on to Golfe de la Mauvaise [Gulf St Vincent] and Golfe de la Melomanie [Spencer Gulf].

The
STOWAWAY
and the
CAPTAIN'S
CAT

Pre visit
Activity
CHART
Nicolas
Baudin



B 5793 Captain Nicolas Baudin,
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EXPLORER 2

At Cape Adieu the survey was abandoned and Baudin sailed for Port Jackson where *Le Naturaliste* had already arrived.

Baudin's voyage suffered many misfortunes including numerous deaths and desertions.

Baudin himself died on the homeward voyage to France.

Consequently, published accounts of the voyage were made by Francois Peron and Louis de Freycinet, and Baudin was unable to defend his version of events. Official reports did not refer to Baudin, partly due to the personal conflicts between Baudin and members of the expedition, and also due to the political upheaval in France in the period following the return of the expedition.

Only in more recent years have the considerable achievements of BAUDIN's voyage been recognised, including the charting of previously unknown coastline, and discoveries in various fields of science.

French place names remain on the southern coast of South Australia, mainly in the south-east, and on the south coast of Kangaroo Island, where the French had been the first to survey.

Missionary voyage
to the South Pacific,
published in
London, 1799

AUSTRALIA

The
STOWAWAY
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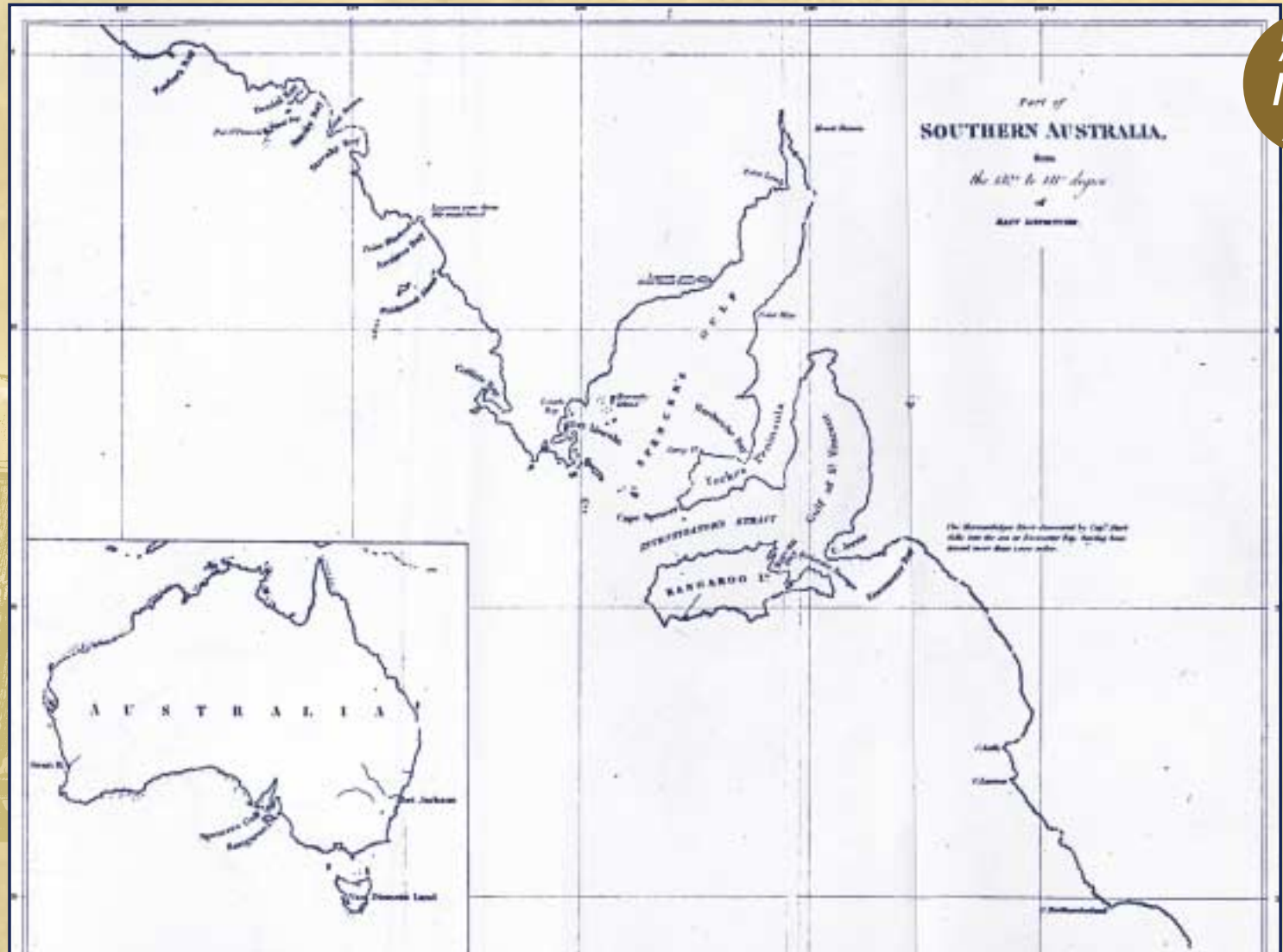


Pre visit
Activity
MAP
Australia

Edward Gibbon Wakefield
Plan of a
Company,
published in
London, 1832

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The
STOWAWAY
and the
CAPTAIN'S
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Pre visit
Activity
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