



**Trans-Pacific
Exploration and Trade:
1780-1830**

(Two Volumes)

by Rhys Richards

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76 illustrations.
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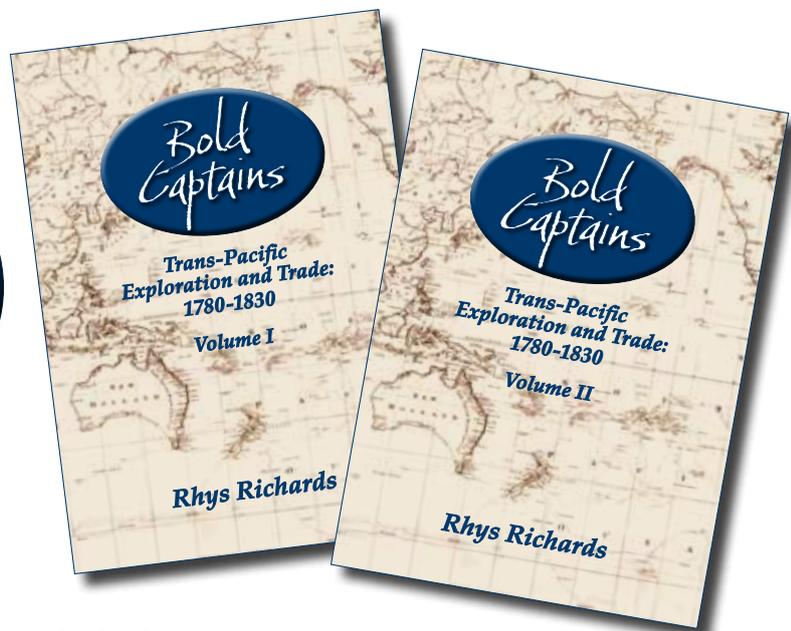
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As soon as Captain Cook had shown how to cross the Pacific Ocean safely, foreign traders began to exploit the Pacific hemisphere for personal profit. There was no co-ordinated plan. Just a straggle of single voyages by bold captains ready to brave the unknown, to sail into the vast Pacific where only a few very narrow tracks had been charted. For in those early days, open spaces on maps and charts did not indicate an absence of land, but rather an absence of knowledge, and the prospect of unknown dangers. Thus in one generation, from 1780 to 1830, the early traders were often explorers themselves.

This book explores how 25 colourful but barely-known traders expanded Pacific trade episodically, striving for profits day by day and year by year. The traders knew that unless their travels were highly profitable, more voyages would not be repeated. It is

only in retrospect that their episodic voyages appear as if cumulative, as if opening the Pacific to British, American and other foreign 'development.'

This unprecedented collection combines scattered sources from the UK, USA and elsewhere into one Pacific narrative. Though presented as history and geography, this entirely new review provides a gold mine for novelists who choose to romanticise the hardships and triumphs of the early trans-Pacific traders from 1780-1830.

Rhys Richards, a former career diplomat, has lived and traveled extensively in Polynesia and Melanesia. He has published sixteen of his books since 1986, while another eleven have been published elsewhere.

Rhys was awarded the prestigious L.Byrne Waterman award, 'for Maritime History,' in 2000.