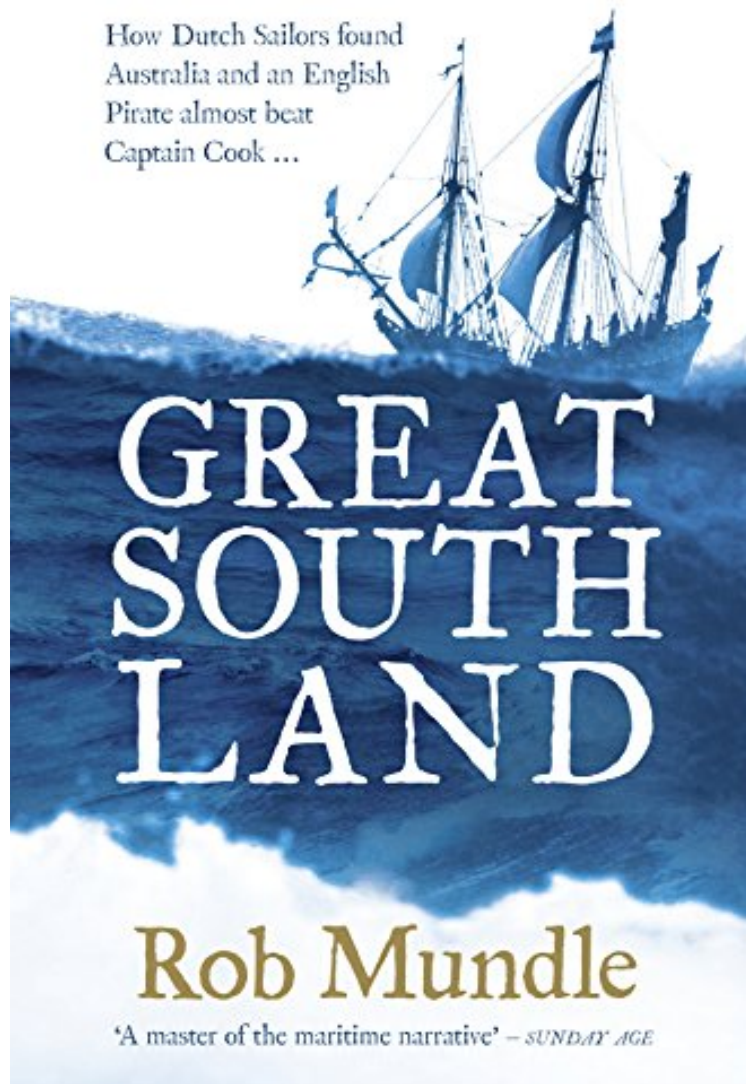


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Australia's bestselling maritime historian explores the story of how the Dutch discovered Australia. For many, the colonial story of Australia starts with Captain Cook's discovery of the east coast in 1770, but it was some 164 years before his historic voyage that European mariners began their romance with the immensity of the Australian continent. Between 1606 and 1688, while the British had their hands full with the Gunpowder Plot and the English Civil War, it was highly skilled Dutch seafarers who, by design, chance or shipwreck, discovered and mapped the majority of the vast, unknown waters and land masses in the Indian and Southern Oceans. This is the setting that sees Rob Mundle back on the water with another sweeping and powerful account of Australian maritime history. It is the story of 17th-century European mariners - sailors, adventurers and explorers - who became transfixed by the idea of the existence of a Great South Land: 'Terra Australis Incognita'. Rob takes you aboard the tiny ship, *Duyfken*, in 1606 when Dutch navigator and explorer, Willem Janszoon, and his 20-man crew became the first Europeans to discover Australia on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria. In the decades that followed, more Dutch mariners, like Hartog, Tasman, and Janszoon (for a second time), discovered and mapped the majority of the coast of what would become Australia. Yet, incredibly, the Dutch made no effort to lay claim to it, or establish any settlements. This process began with British explorer and former pirate William Dampier on the west coast in 1688, and by the time Captain Cook arrived in 1770, all that was to be done was chart the east coast and claim what the Dutch had discovered.

About the Author Rob Mundle OAM is a bestselling author, journalist and competitive sailor whose family heritage is with the sea, dating back to his great-great-grandfather, who was the master of square-riggers. Rob has spent a lifetime combining his passions for sailing and writing. He has written thirteen books - including the international bestseller *FATAL STORM* - reported on more than 40 Sydney-to-Hobart yacht races (and competed in three), and covered seven America's Cups, four Olympics and numerous international events. He is the winner of many sailing championships and has been a competitor in local and international contests.