

Geographic and Linguistic Reflections on *Moent* and *Dubbelde Ree*: Two of Australia's First Recorded Placenames

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Abstract

The year 2006 marks the quatercentenary of the first known European charting of any part of the Australian coastline, when the Dutch mariner Willem Janszoon explored 300 kms of the north-west coast of Cape York Peninsula. He bestowed seven placenames, two of which, *Moent* and *Dubbelde Ree* have ambiguous meanings or referents. This paper attempts to resolve the enigmas behind these names by considering geographic, linguistic and historical evidence. *Moent* is particularly challenging, with several possible linguistic sources, some more plausible than others. The most compelling evidence points to it either referring to the western entrance to Endeavour Strait, or a Dutch rendition of an Indigenous Australian word. *Dubbelde Ree* is less problematic. The issue surrounding this name is whether its second element is meant to be *Ree*, an abbreviation of *Reede* ('Roadstead'), or *Rev*, an abbreviation of *Revier* ('River'). The search for the meaning of these placenames has provided credible evidence demonstrating that Janszoon explored the coastline in greater detail than has hitherto been thought, and that, in all likelihood, made contact with the local inhabitants.

KEY WORDS *Toponyms; Dutch placenames; VOC; Willem Janszoon; Duyfken; Cape York Peninsula; Wik-Mungkan; Uradhi*

ACRONYMS

VOC *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* 'United East-India Company'

Introduction

Toponyms are generally a means to an end for most geographers and are seldom consciously considered in their own right. Yet, many toponyms can have frozen within them a wealth of information about the geographic nature of a named feature, when it was named, and who bestowed the name. They may also offer insights into the belief and value systems of those who bestowed the names, and are a rich source of information about a region's history of exploration and settlement, as well as its linguistic and social history. Toponyms may also supply information about altered topography. Many of

Australia's toponyms offer information on such aspects.

Australia has two toponymic systems: the Indigenous and the introduced (Tent, forthcoming). Each of these is further divided into toponyms bestowed before and after European settlement; with the vast majority of introduced and recorded Indigenous names post-dating 1788.

This paper considers two of Australia's first introduced toponyms, *Moent* and *Dubbelede Ree*, both of which have ambiguous meanings or referents. After presenting a brief historical background to Dutch placenaming and the

specific challenges in the study of Dutch toponyms in Australia, geographic, linguistic and historical evidence will be considered in an attempt to unravel the enigmas of these two names.

Historical background

The first of Australia's introduced toponyms dates back to early 1606, when the Dutch explorer Willem Janszoon¹, commander of the VOC yacht *Duyfken* ('Little Dove'), and upper-merchant Jan Lodewijkszoon van Roseingeyn, made the first recorded European landfall at *R. met het Bosch* ('R[iver] with Bush/Forest', now Pennefather River) on the north-west coast of Cape York Peninsula.² It is a rather intriguing coincidence that Australia's first recorded placename should include the word 'bush', a term which now holds such emblematic significance for the nation's psyche.

The VOC sent Janszoon out from their base at Bantam in December 1605 to extend their knowledge of 'the great land of Nova Guinea and other East- and Southlands' and to look for potential markets for trade. Unfortunately, no log of this voyage has been preserved, and the only verification we have of its occurring are: two journal entries by the English captain, John Saris, who was lying at anchor off Bantam when the *Duyfken* left, and who heard of its return to Banda six months later (Purchas, 1625, 385); various instructions (containing extracts from the log of the *Duyfken*) drawn up by the Governor-General and Councillors of Dutch East India for the leaders of later expeditions to the Southland (see Robert, 1973, 85–87); and some cartographic evidence in the form of an anonymous copy (circa 1670) of Janszoon's original chart (Schilder, 1976, 43–44) (see Fig. 1).³

This chart is held in the Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (389030-FK, XLI, 31). A copy of it is also held by the Mitchell Library in Sydney (ML XX/15 v. 5, plate 125). The chart's legend states: *Dese Pascaerte verthoont de wegh, soo int heen als in het weerom seylen, die gehouden is bij het Jacht he Duijfen in het besoeken van de landen beoosten Banda, tot aen Nova Guinea (...)* – 'This chart shows the route taken by the pinnacle Duijfen on the outward as well as on the return voyage when she visited the countries east of Banda up to New Guinea (...)'.

The chart shows that Janszoon sailed south from *R. met het Bosch* into *Vliege Baij*, then along the coast to *Cabo keerweer* where he decided to turn back north, following the coast-

line to 't *Hooghe Eijlandt* off the tip of Cape York Peninsula (see Fig. 2).

In all, Janszoon charted just over 300 kilometres of coastline, and conferred seven placenames (see Table 1), only one of which remains in use today, Cape Keerweer. As Table 1 indicates, this name fittingly encapsulates the common attitude of all other Dutch explorers towards the Southland – that it was barren and offered nothing of commercial value.

Between 1606 and 1756, there were some 30 recorded Dutch contacts with or explorations of the Australian coastline; fewer than half of these are known to have conferred placenames. These contacts include: Hartog (1616); Houtman and Dedel (1619); Carstenszoon and van Coolsteerd (1623); Nuyts and Thijssen (1627); Pool and Pieterszoon (1636); Tasman and Visscher (1642); Tasman, Haen and Koos (1644); Willem de Vlamingh, Collaert, and Cornelis de Vlamingh (1696–97); and van Delft, Rooseboom, and Hendrikszoon (1704–05). Although there are no records of some explorers having bestowed names, subsequent charts nevertheless display names that record their passing, e.g. Cape Leeuwin (WA) and Turtledove Shoal (WA) from the voyages of the vessels *Leeuwin* (1622) and *Tortleduyff* (1624). A tally of names bestowed by the Dutch appearing on charts of the Southland predating 1756 reveals there were approximately 200. Of these only about 35 (17%) are to be found on current maps and in national and state gazetteers. The remaining 83% were either forgotten, 'lost' or renamed. Approximately 60% of Dutch toponyms were eponyms (personal or ships' names), 36% descriptors (describing the topography), 3.5% commemorative (recording incidents, events or conditions), and 0.5%

Table 1 Janszoon's placenames on the north-west coast of Cape York Peninsula.

| Janszoon's appellations | Current appellations |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>R[ivier] met het Bosch</i> 'R[iver] with Bush' | Pennefather River |
| <i>Vliege Baij</i> 'Fly Bay' | Albatross Bay |
| <i>Dubbelde Ree[de]</i> 'Double Roadstead' | Archer Bay |
| <i>R[ivier] vis</i> 'R[iver] fish' | Love River ⁴ |
| <i>Cabo keerweer</i> 'Cape turn-about' or 'turn-again' | Cape Keerweer |
| <i>Moent</i> (?) | Crab Island (?) |
| <i>'t Hooghe Eijlandt</i> 'the High Island' | Prince of Wales Island |

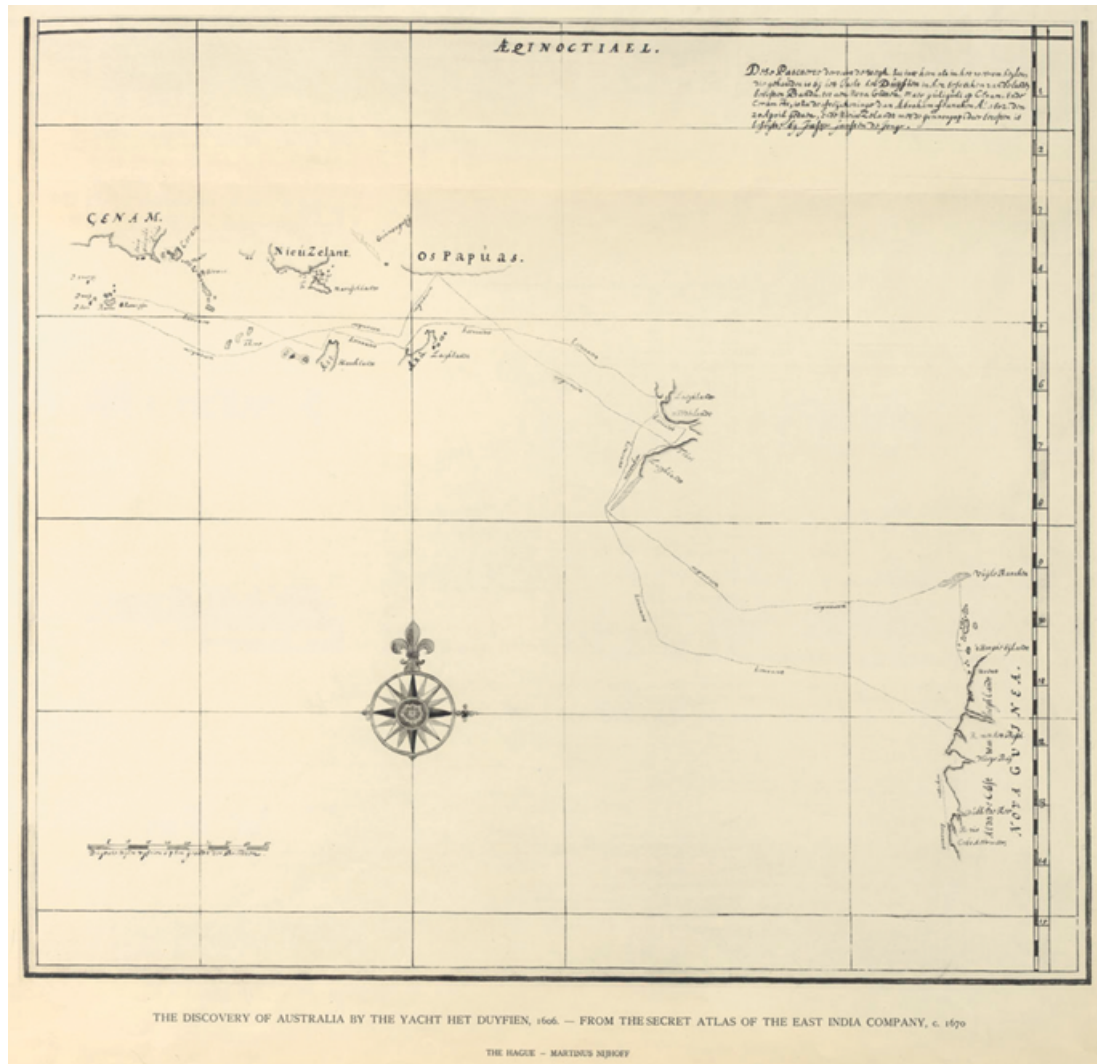


Figure 1 The 'Duyfken chart' (Source: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-ra265>, used with permission from the National Library of Australia).

other (i.e. of unknown meaning or transferred toponyms). Some explorers (e.g. Janszoon, de Vlamingh, and van Delft) favoured descriptive placenames, whilst others (e.g. Tasman, Carstenzoon and van Coolsterdt) were much more inclined to confer eponymic placenames.

Since European settlement, many more Dutch and Dutch-linked placenames have been added to the ever expanding catalogue of Australian toponyms. Today there are some 300 Dutch and Dutch-linked toponyms in Australia. These comprise only 0.004% of the estimated 5 million contemporary placenames in Australia. However, this tiny percentage features some of the most significant and well-known placenames in

Australia, they include: *Arnhem Land*, *Gulf of Carpentaria*, *Groote Eylandt*, *Van Diemen Gulf*, *Dirk Hartog Island*, *Rottneest Island*, *Swan River*, *Orange*, *Camperdown* (NSW and Vic.), *Tasmania* (and the specific toponymic element 'Tasman' in a myriad of placenames, e.g. *Tasman Sea*, *Tasman Peninsula*, *Tasman Basin* etc.)⁵ and, of course, the celebrated historical placenames *New Holland* and *Van Diemensland*.

Challenges to the study of Dutch toponyms in Australia

Reconstructing the history, meaning and referent of a toponym can sometimes be challenging. The clues hidden in toponyms are sometimes so

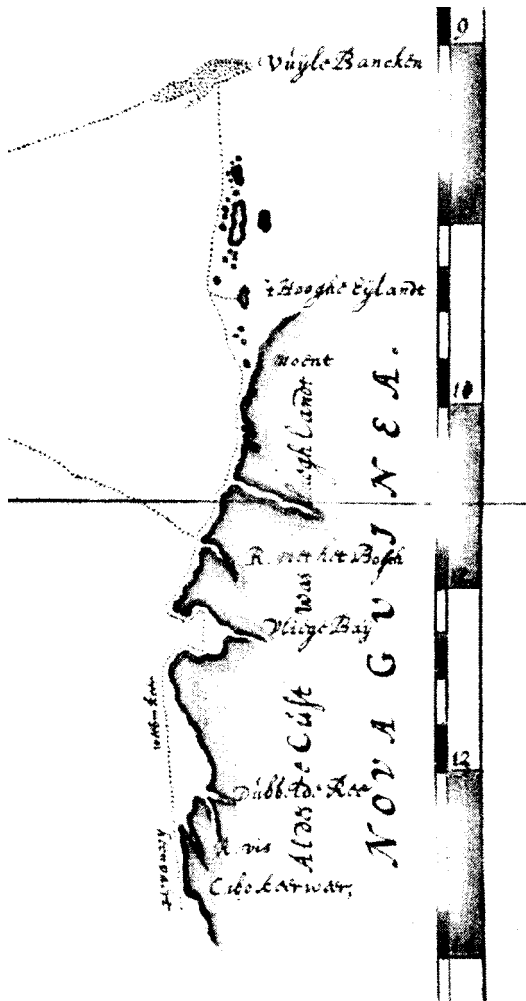


Figure 2 Section of the *Duyfken* chart showing the north-west coast of Cape York Peninsula.

obscure that we cannot confidently reconstruct the information encapsulated in them.

The journals and charts of mariners may certainly provide clues. However, quite often these sources are no longer extant, forcing the researcher to rely on secondary sources, which can either be inconsistent and/or inaccurate. An excellent example of this is the *Jacob Remmesens rivier* (near present-day Exmouth), which appears on Hessel Gerritszoon’s 1622 map of the Indian Ocean and Jodocus Hondius’ map of approximately 1625 (see Schilder 1976, 300, Map 29). These maps are not of a scale sufficient to determine to which river the name actually refers. There are also no extant records that report a ship having made landfall on this part of the coast. The only clue we have is in the

legend of a manuscript chart held in Vienna which names Jacob Remmissen, a ship’s mate, who had ridden at anchor at that place (Schilder, 1976, 77).

When we are fortunate enough to possess explorers’ original journals (e.g. those of Tasman, de Vlamingh, and Carstenszoon), they seldom explain why a particular toponym was bestowed upon a specific feature. Most cases, however, are transparent enough to establish the rationale for a naming – it is eponymic, descriptive or commemorative. In a small number of cases, it is not possible to ascertain the motivation for the name.

Secondary source material, of which there is an abundance, rarely treats placenaming practices or rationales in any great detail. Placenames are typically just listed or mentioned in passing. Two of the most useful sources for Dutch placenaming are Robert (1973) and Schilder (1976). Each provides comprehensive lists of the Dutch placenames and frequent commentaries on namings. In particular, Robert supplies a catalogue of all localities appearing on Dutch charts of the Australian coastline, their various appellations (see below), their purported 17th and 18th century coordinates and, where possible, their true coordinates (see pp. 67–81). Schilder often lists placenames that appear on the maps depicted in Part Two of his book (see pp. 244–418). In Part One, Schilder regularly presents observations on specific namings.

Some Dutch toponyms are not immediately recognisable as such because they are English calques (i.e. literal translations of the original name); these include: Crocodile Islands (NT) derived from *Crocodils Eylandt*, Red Bluff (WA) from *Roode Houck*, Steep Corner (WA) from *Steijle Houck*, Swan River (WA) from *Swarte [Black] Swaane rivier*, Storm Bay (Tas.) from *Stoorm Baij* and Maria Island (Tas.) from *Marias Eylandt*.

Furthermore, the lack of precise charting due to inaccurate calculation of latitude and, especially, longitude often caused much confusion. This resulted in either the geographical feature being inadvertently renamed by a subsequent explorer, or the original name being inadvertently given to a nearby feature. An example of this is Frederick Henry Bay near Hobart. In 1642, Tasman named what is now known as Blackman Bay, *Frederick Henricx Baij*. Confusion by subsequent explorers led to another bay, to the west, being charted and named Frederick Henry Bay.⁶

A further complication is that most of the 200 or so original placenames have been forgotten, have become 'lost', or have been replaced by other names. In 1705, Marten van Delft spent some three months exploring and charting the northern coastline of the Northern Territory (colloquially known as the 'Top End'). His very accurate chart shows he conferred 47 placenames (Robert, 1973, manuscript chart V. of the voyage of the ships *Vossenbos*, *Waijer* and *Nova Hollandia* 1705) all of which have been forgotten.

The *Willems Rivier* (named by the captain of the *Mauritius*, Lenaert Jacobszoon in 1618, after Willem Janszoon of the *Duyfken* who was also on board as the upper-merchant), the *Jacob Remmessens Rivier* (mentioned above), *Rijders Eijland*, *Rijders Waterplaets* (named by Gonzal and van Asschens in 1756), and van Coolsteerd's *de Caep Maritius*, *Tafel Berch*, *Het Gat de Goede Hoop*, *De Caep Quade Hoop*, *Het Eijlandt Goeree* and *Het Eijlandt Speult* are all examples of 'lost' toponyms – their precise locations not being known (Robert, 1973; Schilder, 1976).

Many of the remaining original Dutch toponyms were naturally supplanted by the British after 1788, either because they were unknown and were inadvertently renamed by subsequent explorers and settlers, or because a conscious decision was made to assert British sovereignty over the land. To name a place is a symbolic way of taking possession of it. The Dutch conferred very few placenames considering they had charted, over a 150 year period, almost all of the Southland's coastline westwards from the tip of Cape York Peninsula to the Nuyts Archipelago (just west of Ceduna, SA), including a good deal of the southern half of Tasmania. Their lack of interest in this land is exemplified by this paucity of placenames. Essentially, names were applied only to those topographic features that had some significance for navigation. Further naming was, therefore, unnecessary.

Various features were also renamed by the Dutch themselves, once again, because of inaccurate navigation and cartography. Some examples include: *Groote Eylandt* which had been previously named *Van der Lijns Eylandt* and *Van Speults Land*; the renaming of Janszoon's *Vliege Baij* to *Rivier Batavia* by Carstenszoon, and *Mossel Baaij* (after Governor General Jacob Mossel) by Gonzal; and Carstenszoon's renaming of Janszoon's *Dubbeldre Ree* to *Rivier Coen*.

Sometimes, separate names were bestowed on the same topographic feature during the same voyage, with the different names appearing on

separate charts. For instance, Carstenszoon's journal reports the naming of a *Revier de Carpentier* (from which the Gulf later obtained its name), but Carstenszoon's chart-maker, Arent Martenszoon de Leeuw, records it as the *Revier Batavia*. This is also a case of renaming because the 'river' they were referring to was Janszoon's *Vliege Baij*.

As principal examples of the difficulties toponymists, historians and geographers may encounter in determining the meaning of a placename, we shall now examine two of Janszoon's placenames – *Moent* and *Dubbeldre Ree*.

*Moent*⁷

Moent is perhaps the most intriguing and inscrutable of all Dutch toponyms on the Australian continent. It has generally been thought to refer to the tiny crescent-shaped island less than three kilometres off the north-west tip of Cape York Peninsula, just south of the western opening to Endeavour Strait (see Kenny, 1995, 151; Reed, 1973, 73; Robert, 1973, 10, 53, and chart VI; Schilder, 1976, 47). The island has been known as Crab Island from at least 1890 when it appeared on the *Map of Torres Strait and Islands, Queensland (1892)*, which accompanies the 1890 *Annual Report of the Government Resident at Thursday Island* (Queensland Government, 1908).

Although not immediately recognisable as a current Dutch word or name, *Moent* nevertheless conforms to Dutch morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling). To date, there have been no satisfactory explanations of its meaning or origin. One forthright and scholarly attempt was made by Thomas D. Mutch, the former New South Wales Minister of Education (1921–1922) and Trustee of the Public Library and Mitchell Library, New South Wales.⁸ In his privately published book of 1942, *The First Discovery of Australia*, Mutch offers a number of possible explanations (p. 34). Firstly, he suggests that Janszoon 'would have picked up a native pilot or interpreter at the Kei or Aru islands to facilitate intercourse with the natives in the new lands they were visiting' and accordingly, *Moent* might be the Dutch spelling of a Malay word.

Secondly, Mutch suggests that *Moent* may be a transferred placename from Dutch East India. There are quite a number of current placenames in Malaysia and Indonesia that contain the element *munt*.⁹ These include *Muntu*, *Munyit* (streams in West Malaysia), *Munde*, *Muntai*,

Munte, *Muntilan*, *Muntjakabau*, *Muntjang*, and *Muntjar* (settlements in Indonesia), *Muntai* and *Munti* (mountains in Indonesia).

Mutch's third suggestion is that *Moent* may derive from the Dutch spelling, *moenyet*, of the Malay word for monkey, *monyet*. He correctly observes that the tip of Cape York Peninsula is the habitat of the spotted cuscus (*Spiloguscus nudiacaudata*, or *Phalanger maculatus*). Although the cuscus looks a little like the primitive monkeys of Africa and South America, it is in fact an extremely shy nocturnal marsupial, and is also found in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands.

While intriguing, Mutch's suggestions have a number of flaws. Firstly, we cannot readily assume that Janszoon had any indigenous Malays on board the *Duyfken* to act as interpreters. We cannot rely on the few extant muster rolls of the contemporary VOC ships to verify whether the Dutch actually used Malay interpreters since the muster rolls rarely, if ever, list non-European hands, either because they were not considered important enough, or because they were not on the payroll. Moreover, Boxer (1988, Section I: 86) claims the VOC never sanctioned the recruiting of 'coloured mariners' in the 17th century, and 'very few Asian hands [were] aboard even their "country ships" [i.e. VOC ships trading in Southeast Asia]'. This view is corroborated by Bruijn and van Eyck van Heslinga (1980, 16–17) and the historians Herman Ketting (personal communication, 19 February 1997) and Femme Gaastra (personal communication, 24 June 1997). The situation changed drastically though in the 18th century when the VOC was forced to recruit many Indigenous Malays and other Asians. This was due to the extremely poor living conditions on board its ships, which made Europeans very reluctant to sail with the Company (Boxer, 1988, Section I: 86; Bruijn and van Eyck van Heslinga, 1980, 17).¹⁰ Although the VOC might not have sanctioned the use of Malay interpreters, this does not necessarily mean ships' captains complied with this policy. Captains often flouted VOC directives. For instance, all charts and journals produced on VOC ships had to be surrendered to the company so that they could be used to make up-to-date charts and moreover, they would be prevented from falling into the hands of rival seafaring nations. Nevertheless, captains often held on to their charts and journals (Schilder, 1976, 49).

Even if there were indigenous Malays on board the *Duyfken*, it is highly improbable they

would have been given the privilege of naming, let alone suggesting, a name for a geographical feature. Equally unlikely is the transfer of an East Indies placename. With the exception of the Portuguese *cabo* 'cape' and the French *recif* 'reef' (see below), the Dutch rarely used foreign words in placenames, or transferred foreign placenames to newly discovered climes.¹¹

Mutch's third suggestion also has weaknesses. Firstly, the derivation of *moent* from *moenyet* is not linguistically plausible, because the elision (deletion) of the onset and nucleus of a syllable is not a natural linguistic process. In other words, the reduction of <yet> to <t> is not realistic. Secondly, the spotted cuscus was well-known as a species in the region and was often traded (Heinsohn, 2004) and would, therefore, hardly be worthy of mention on a chart largely intended for navigational purposes.

The meaning of *Moent* has, therefore, remained obscure. Neither this nor any similar name is used on any Dutch extant chart. Damsteegt's (1942) PhD thesis on Dutch names on sea charts of the 17th and 18th centuries confirms this. There are only a few possible explanations for this name – some more plausible than others.

Moent could firstly be an eponym (a name derived from a proper noun). However, apart from the occasional transferred Dutch placename, eponyms consisting of specific elements are rarely found on Dutch charts; *Trial* or *Tryal* (for *Trial Baij* – the bay where the English ship *Tryal* foundered in 1622), *Aernhem* (for Arnhemland) and *Tortelduyf* are three rare examples on charts of the Southland's coastline. Perhaps *Moent* is such an example. However, *Moent* is not a known Dutch place- or personal name. The Meertens Institute (the research institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, whose chief interest is the study of Dutch onomastics and language variation) does not have such a name in its database of more than 58,690 family names. However, it does list *Moentje* as a given or nickname. It is the diminutive form of the Friesian name *Moen* or *Moene*, itself a contraction of *Simon*, *Simoen*, or *Simoon*. The name derives from the Old Friesian and Old High German name stems, *-mund* ('guardian') and *-munt* ('protector') respectively. Old English *mund* ('guardian, protector') is a cognate of this. It is unlikely that the meaning of *Moent* lies within this word stem because it is very doubtful anyone on board the *Duyfken* would have been aware of this etymology.

A somewhat more appealing, and perhaps more plausible, explanation is that *Moent* is a variant spelling or dialectal form of a Dutch word. During the 17th century, spelling was not standardised, and words, as well as proper nouns, often had a variety of representations, as the following examples from Dutch charts show:

- *eilandt* ~ *eyland* ~ *eylant* ~ *eijlandt* ('island')
- *Duyfken* ~ *Duyffken* ~ *Duijfen* ~ *Duijfen* ('Little Dove')
- *hooge* ~ *hooghe* ~ *hoog* ('high')
- *droogte* ~ *drogte* ~ *droochte* ('shoal')
- *Nassau* ~ *Naßau* ~ *Nassou*
- *hoeck* ~ *hoec* ~ *houck* ~ *houcq* ~ *hooch* ('point')
- *revier* ~ *rivier* ~ *riuier* ('river')
- *laegh* ~ *laagh* ~ *laeg* ~ *laag* ('low')

Likewise, *Moent* can be a variant of a number of words used by the Dutch in the 17th century:

- *mont* (French) or *monte* (Portuguese) 'mount, mountain'
- *munt* (Dutch) 'coin'
- *moenc*~*monic* (Dutch) 'monk'
- *mont*~*mond* (Dutch) 'mouth'

Mont or *monte* ('mount, mountain'), seems to be at first sight a credible explanation, especially since the Dutch sometimes used Portuguese generics in their placenames (e.g. *Cabo* 'Cape' as in *Cabo Keerweer*, *Cabo Maria van Diemen* (NT), and *Cabo Vanderlins* (NT); and *Abrolhos*, from *abri voll olos*, 'open your eyes' or 'keep your eyes open', as in the renowned Houtman Abrolhos, on which the *Batavia* foundered in 1629. The use of Portuguese elements is not all that surprising given the long history of Dutchmen sailing as crew aboard Portuguese ships. Moreover, Portuguese was used extensively as a lingua franca in the Dutch settlements in the East Indies. Although the use of simple (loose, unattached) generics on Dutch charts of the era is not all that uncommon (see below), the use of simple Portuguese generics is extremely rare. When they are used they invariably refer to littoral features, not terrestrial ones.

In addition to this, the topography of the region does not support 'mount/mountain' designation because it is low lying and extremely flat. This did not go unnoticed by Janszoon either, as the *Duyfken* chart declares: *Al dese Cust was laegh land* – 'All this Coast was low land' (see Fig. 2).

Carstenszoon also commented on this in 1623, saying that the land at 11°45' (April 12)

was '(...) low-lying without mountain or hill (...)'. And again on May 23 at 15°20' that '(...) the appearance of the land here is low-lying and monotonous as before (...) has no mountains or hills at all, so that it may be safely presumed that it contains no metals (...) and in our judgement the most arid and barren country, that may be found in the world.' (Carstenszoon 1859: 33, 41, my translations). Matthew Flinders recorded the flatness of the Peninsula as well, on the chart made during his 1802–1803 circumnavigation of Australia in the *Investigator* (Flinders, 1966 [1814]: Section from *Chart of Terra Australis by M Flinders, Commr of HM Sloop Investigator. 1802–1803. North Coast. Sheet 1*).

The only notable high country in the region is Prince of Wales Island (just to the north of Crab Island and Endeavour Strait), which Janszoon duly named 't *Hooge Eijlandt* ('the High Island'). The highest point on Prince of Wales is Mt Scott, 247 metres above sea level. There are some hills (viz. Left Hill, Puddingpan Hill and Shadwell Peak) on the eastern side of Cape York Peninsula, but these are between 75 and 85 kilometres from Crab Island and are only just over 100 metres high, too low and far away for Janszoon to have seen from his vantage point.

The *munt* ('coin') and *moenc*~*monic* ('monk') variants are even less appealing options, as it is difficult to conceive of anything in the region which would assign the meaning 'coin' or 'monk' to anything.

Perhaps a more promising solution is the *mont*~*mond* ('mouth') option, where *Moent* refers to what was perceived to be the mouth of a river, or the entrance to a strait. It is not uncommon for *mond* or *monde* to form the generic element of Dutch placenames; for example, *Ijselmonde*, *Rupelmonde*, *Dendermonde*, *Warmonde*, *Roermond*, *Leksmond*, *Wichmond*.

Further evidence to support this contention comes from the image in Figure 3, a photograph taken from an altitude of 241 kilometres by the *Atlantis* Space Shuttle during its November 1990 mission (ref # STS038-73-108).

The land mass at the north-east extremity is Prince of Wales Island, the land mass to the south-east is Cape York Peninsula, the passage of water between the two is Endeavour Strait, and the crescent-shaped islet, just off coast, is Crab Island. There are obvious water flow patterns emanating from the western opening of Endeavour Strait entering the Arafura Sea. It is not inconceivable that Janszoon witnessed such a flow and deduced that the gap was a river



Figure 3 Crab Island, Endeavour Strait and Prince of Wales Island (Source: Satellite image courtesy of NASA).

mouth, or more likely, that of a strait. If the latter, it would certainly warrant documenting on the chart. Moreover, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that, as an experienced mariner, Janszoon understood that such a strong flow of water could not emanate from a river.

The *Duyfken* chart also suggests that Janszoon was aware of an opening between *Moent* and *'t Hooge Eijlandt*, because the coastline of the Cape is drawn veering off to the east. In addition, the chart shows a small side-track marked off the main route leading to *'t Hooge Eijlandt*. This deviation was important enough to indicate on the chart and implies a boat was sent to this island. Since the entire region is so flat, an expedition to *'t Hooge Eijlandt* to scale Mt. Scott makes perfect sense. The summit of Mt. Scott would provide an excellent view into the strait.

The 1623 chart of de Leeuw also shows a wide gap between *het hooge Landt* ('the high Land', Janszoon's *'t Hooge Eylandt*) and the south coast of New Guinea, with *Droogte* ('Shoal') and *De droge bocht* ('The dry bight') both part of the then unknown Torres Strait in the middle (see Figure 4). Most subsequent maps show this gap to varying degrees (see Schilder 1976, Map 39, 321; Map 40, 323; map 42, 327; Map 43, 329; Map 45, 333; Map 62, 367; Map 64, 371; Map 67, 377; Map 69, 381; Map 74, 391; Map 75, 393 etc.).

These charts suggest that the Dutch, at the very least, suspected there was a strait between

the land to the north (New Guinea) and *Moent*. Access into its western entrance may not have been possible due to the strong current and the contemporary limitations of navigating by sail.

Further evidence to support the Dutch suspicion of the presence of a strait comes from the alternative set of instructions given to Tasman for his 1642–43 expedition. Tasman's main task was to find a southerly route from the Indian Ocean into the Southern (Pacific) Ocean and to Chile. In so doing he was also directed to investigate the extent of the Southland. Tasman was given two alternative routes depending on the weather and circumstances. After having sailed to Mauritius, he was either to:

1. Sail south to between latitudes 52–54° S, then sail along this corridor eastwards until the longitude on which the Solomon Islands lay (i.e. between 156° and 171° E). He was then to sail north to the Solomon Islands, turn west and follow the north coast of New Guinea right around to its southern coast and follow Janszoon's route to Cape Keerweer. Tasman was then ordered to continue following the coast to Willems River (possibly the Ashburton River) at which point he was to return to Batavia. Or,
2. To follow the southern coast of the Southland to St Peter and St Francis Islands (in the Nuyts Archipelago) and set a course due north following the coast to discover the extent of the east coast of the Southland, then to sail north towards New Guinea to determine if '(...) this discovered Southland is attached to New Guinea at about Cape Keerweer, (...) or is separate' – (...) *dit ontdeckte Zuijdlant aen Nova Guinea omtrent Caep Keerweer vast is, oftewel (...) gesepareert sij* (Posthumus Meyjes 1919, xli).

Tasman only completed part of the first alternative. His second voyage to the Southland in 1644 was aimed at completing this task, and to determine whether '(...) the known Southland is connected with [Nova Guinea], or separated (...)' (Posthumus Meyjes 1919, lxxv, my translation). Although he failed to find the strait, Tasman did chart the entire Gulf of Carpentaria and the coast of the Northern Territory.

If Janszoon's discoveries led to the suspicion that a strait lay between New Guinea and the Southland, it is perhaps a little puzzling that the *Duyfken* chart labels Cape York Peninsula, 'Nova Guinea'. Is this labelling the work of Janszoon and/or his chart maker, or an interpretation of



Figure 4 Arent Martenszoon de Leeuw's 1623 manuscript chart of the discoveries of the *Pera* (Source: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-rm392>, used with permission from the National Library of Australia).

the anonymous cartographer who copied Janszoon's original chart? Janszoon may also have alluded to the existence of the strait in his log because it was used for some time before it was lost. Carstenszoon certainly refers to it in his journal and seems to have been quite familiar with its contents (see below).

The use of the simple generic element *Moent* ('Mouth'), if that is indeed what is meant, may at first sight seem perplexing or peculiar. Compound generic descriptors abound on VOC charts; for example, *vlakke hoek* ('flat point'), *ruige hoek* ('wild/overgrown point'), *lange zand* ('long sand'), *Zant duijnen* ('Sand dunes'), *verse spruit* ('fresh spring'), *Droge bocht* ('Dry bight'), *Laegh lant* ('Low land'), and numerous examples of *Water plaets* or *waterplaets* ('watering place'). However, there are also examples of simple generics, which are simply being used as descriptors, not placenames, on these charts, for

example, *Droochte* ('Shoal'), *Sneeberg* ('Snow-mountain'), or *Bergen* ('Mountains'), all of which lend support to *Moent* simply meaning 'Mouth'.¹²

In spite of the evidence that appears to support the 'mouth' premise, there is still a slight catch. *Moent* is written on the mainland, somewhat inland from the coast, at the approximate location of the Jardine Swamps. It may, therefore, not be referring to the mouth of the strait or indeed to Crab Island, but to something on the mainland – perhaps the swamps?¹³ If its referent were the western entrance to Endeavour Strait it seems logical to write the name in or just outside the entrance itself. If, on the other hand, it is meant to refer to Crab Island, it seems somewhat puzzling that Janszoon would confer a name to such an insignificant islet while he leaves many other larger islands, which are more substantial and obvious navigational signposts, to the north unnamed. James Henderson (1999,

42), author of *Sent Forth a Dove: Discovery of the Duyfken*, also questions whether *Moent* was originally ‘applied to the claw-shaped island’. Likewise, the Queensland Department of National Resources and Mines Topographic Information Service’s Placenames Database is sceptical. The entry for Crab Island states: ‘Possibly named Moent by Willem Janszoon (...)’ (Queensland Government Department of Natural Resources and Mines, 2004).

Given *Moent*’s position on the chart and the problems with other meanings and referents, perhaps more a promising proposition is that it is a Dutch rendition of a word from an Indigenous language. The Indigenous language spoken in the region is Uradhi, which has the word *munhtha*, meaning ‘charcoal, hot coals’ (Crowley, 1983, 409).¹⁴ A similar word, *munhth*, without the final <a>, meaning ‘coals, charcoal; cremation ground’, occurs in the Wik-Mungkan language, spoken a little further south, near Cape Keerweer (Kilham *et al.*, 1986, 120) – cremation of the dead being practiced in the region. Since the digraphs <nh> and <th> represent dental articulations of the sounds /n/ and /t/, the Indigenous words would have been perceived and rendered as *moent(a)* by the Dutch.

However, the Dutch were not generally in the habit of recording indigenous names on their charts, unless the name was an already established local placename that the Dutch were, or became, aware of. This can be clearly seen elsewhere on the *Duyfken* chart, which records a number of local Indonesian names, such as *Banda*, *Kee* (now Kepulauan Kai), *Aru* (Kepulauan Aru), *Ceram* (Seram), *Gorans* (Kepulauan Gorong), *Quaus* (Kampong Kwas), *Guliguli* (Gulegule), *P Ron* (Pulau Run), *P Naij* (Pulau Ay), *Rosangijn* (Rozengain), and a coastal profile sketch of a mountain range labelled *Gounongapij* (literally *gunung* ‘mountain’ + *api* ‘fire’, and probably referring to the Pegunungan Maoke range). But most interestingly, the chart also records the name *Tiuri* on the north coast of Pulau Yos Sudarso in West Papua (currently known as Irian Jaya) (see Figure 1).¹⁵ Robert (1973, 8), Mutch (1942, 35) and Schilder (1976, 44) all comment on this name’s obscurity. Given the occurrence of other local placenames on the *Duyfken* chart, Schilder’s suggestion that it might be a ‘native name’ is entirely feasible, and is also supported by the existence of the village, *Teri* or *Térö* (see Drabbe, 1949, 1954; Voorhoeve, 1975), close to the point where *Tiuri* is written on the chart. If *Tiuri* is the Dutch rendition of

that local placename, then *Moent* may be also be such an interpretation of the Uradhi or Wik-Mungkan *munhth(a)*, which would surely make it the first recorded word of any Indigenous Australian language!

Another factor that should be borne in mind is that the *Duyfken* chart is a copy of Janszoon’s original, and errors in reproducing it could have been made. As has already been mentioned, about 1% of placenames are misspelt or erroneously transcribed on copied Dutch charts. *Moent* may simply be a misspelling of a word on Janszoon’s original chart. However, it is difficult to construe a potential meaningful form of the intended word if it is a misspelling.

Whatever its meaning or referent, the enigma of *Moent* may also be explained by its appearance on only two of the 37 charts showing Cape York Peninsula in the extensive appendix to Schilder’s book *Australia Unveiled* (1976), viz the 1670 anonymous copy of Janszoon’s chart (Figure 1.) and João Teixeira’s 1643 chart (Map 25, pp. 292–3). Its conspicuous absence on other early charts suggests its meaning may also have been obscure to 17th and 18th century cartographers and seafarers.

Dubbelde Ree

The second of Janszoon’s placenames is less problematic, though no less intriguing. The *Duyfken* chart records the name *Dubbelde Ree[de]* (‘Double/Twin Roadstead’), which sometimes has been interpreted or cited as *Dubbelde Rev[ier]* (‘Double/Twin River’) (e.g. Mutch, 1942, 31; Kenny, 1995, 151). The most likely reason for this is the chart depicts the mouths of two distinct rivers, now known as Archer Bay into which the Watson and Archer Rivers empty. Robert (1973, 9, 53) proposes *Ree* to be a ‘corruption’ of *Rev*, and points out that Janszoon and his men must have ventured into Archer Bay, ‘otherwise it would have been impossible to see the rivers which flow into [it]’. Although the chart does not indicate that Janszoon ventured into the bay, it is a most reasonable suggestion for, in the centre of the bay’s mouth, lies a small island, Wallaby Island, which obscures the two rivers (see Fig. 5). Since the *Duyfken* chart clearly shows the south-north line of the Archer River course, Janszoon would have had to enter the bay and sail up the river to discern this. Given that the *Duyfken* was a yacht with shallow draught (the reason it was chosen for this expedition) it is, therefore, not unreasonable to presume Janszoon found a safe anchorage in



Figure 5 Archer Bay, Wallaby Island at entrance and the Watson and Archer Rivers which flow into it (Source: Satellite image courtesy of NASA).

the bay. This would certainly seem to explain the generic name element *Ree[de]* 'roadstead'.

Alternatively, being a low-lying sand island, Wallaby Island may not have been in existence in 1606 and may have developed since Janszoon's visit, especially if an extreme weather event occurred sending a large pulse of sediment down the rivers into Archer Bay. Moreover, the island may also have been gradually aggrading over time and thus was below water level when Janszoon charted the bay (Jonathan Nott, personal communication 31 August 2005).

Conclusion

The careful detail of the *Duyfken* chart suggests Janszoon spent quite some time surveying the

north-western coast of Cape York Peninsula. The length of his expedition, six months, also alludes to this. Taking into account the sailing time to and from Bantam, Janszoon must have spent between three and five weeks surveying the 300 kilometre stretch of coastline. The chart tracks the route of the *Duyfken*. However, with the exception of the lone side-track to 't *Hooge Eijlandt*, it does not show if or where other landings were made. If *Moent* is an Indigenous word, it would evince Janszoon's landing on the mainland and having conferred with the local inhabitants. It is generally accepted that he did step ashore on the mainland, because Carstenszoon's journal states: '(...) in the afternoon we sailed past a large river (which those of the

Duijffken A.D. 1606 went up in a boat and lost a man by the throwing of the savages) (...)' (Carstenszoon, 1859, 47, my translation) and '(...) 2 times have seen blacks or savages, who received us much more hostilely than those more Southward, they are also acquainted with muskets of which they would seem to have experienced the fatal affect in 1606 by the men of the *Duijffken*, who have landed here also.' (Carstenszoon, 1859, 49, my translation). Furthermore, several Aboriginal stories allude to the Dutch having landed at Cape Keerweer and having clashed with the local inhabitants (see Hercus and Sutton, 1986, 83–93; Karntin, 1986). However, these stories seem to be quite embellished and could also refer to the various skirmishes Carstenszoon and his men had with the Indigenous people.

Nevertheless, entry into Archer Bay and rowing up the Watson and Archer Rivers would certainly have been necessary for the accurate charting of their courses, as it would have been for the charting of *R. met het Bosch* (Pennefather River), *R. Vis* (Love River), and the unnamed Ducie River which flows into Port Musgrave.

Details of where the landings were made may have been omitted on the anonymous 1670 copy of Janszoon's original chart. Topographical details, such as Wallaby Island at the entrance to Archer Bay, may also have been omitted, making the bay to look like the mouth of two rivers, and leading Mutch, Kenny and Robert to treat *Ree* as a corruption of *Rev*. Copies of charts were never exact, and were sometimes inaccurate. For instance, the anonymous 1670 copy of de Leeuw's chart of the voyage of the *Pera* (in the van der Hem Atlas held in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, 389030-FK, XLI, 33) shows much stylisation and innovation (see Schilder 1976, 317, Map 37). There are differences in the course of the *Pera*, the coastline is less detailed and much more stylised, and the words *Alle Dese Cust is Laeglandt* have been added and were obviously copied from *Duyfken* chart. Indeed, both the 1670 *Duyfken* and de Leeuw copy charts are quite similar in style and handwriting and could have been drawn up by the same cartographer. Since substantial detail has been omitted from de Leeuw's original chart, similar details may also be lacking on the 1670 copy of Janszoon's chart.

With the current evidence available to us, the most plausible meanings of *Moent* are either 'Mouth', or more likely a Dutch rendition of an Indigenous word. Even so, unless Janszoon's

journal or original chart is recovered, or further linguistic, historical or geographic evidence comes to light, the precise meanings and referents of *Moent* and *Dubbelede Ree* will remain uncertain.

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NOTES

1. The patronymic name *Janszoon* (literally, 'Jan's son', equivalent to the English 'Johnson') is often abbreviated to *Jansz*, *Jansz.*, or *Jansz'*. Such patronymic names were commonly abbreviated in 17th Dutch century writing: otherwise these names were pronounced in full. The abbreviated forms should, therefore, not be perceived as the full surname.
2. See Wharton (2005) for an extensive analysis of this river's history.
3. Other cartographic evidence is found on Hessel Gerritszoon's 1622 map of the Pacific Ocean (Schilder, 1976, 289, Map 23), the 1633 chart *Indiae Orientalis Nova Descriptio* by Joannes Janssonius (Schilder, 1976, 291, Map 24), and João Teixeira's 1643 chart of the East Indies (Schilder 1976, 293, Map 25). See also Schilder (1976, 49).
4. Also formerly known as the Tokalee (or Dugally) River.
5. Toponyms usually consist of a generic element and/or a specific (unique) element where, for instance, in *Limmen Bight*, 'Limmen' is the specific element, which specifically identifies the generic element 'Bight', which in turn identifies the type of topographic feature named.
6. 'It does not seem to be well determined which is Frederick Henry Bay or Hendrick's bay of Tasman. In the chart, I affix that name to the space which lies to the northward of, and between Cape Frederick Henry and Cape Basaltes; and I have extended it to those large pieces of water, on each side of Green Head, calling them the upper bay.' (Flinders, 1965 [1801], 3)
7. <oe> is pronounced as the <oo> in 'book'.
8. Indeed, it was through Mutch's efforts that the Mitchell Library obtained a copy of the *Duyfken* chart.

9. <oe> is the Dutch spelling of Modern Malay/Indonesian <u>, which is pronounced as the <oo> in 'book'.
10. See Tent and Geraghty (2001, 190–192) for a more extended discussion on this.
11. There are of course occasional exceptions. For instance, in 1642, Tasman named a rocky outcrop 24 kilometres off South-East Cape, Tasmania, *Pedra Branca* (now *Pedra Blanca*), because it reminded him of the Portuguese-named *Pedra Blanca* ('White Rocks') off the south coast of the Malay Peninsula.
12. The rendering of a placename on Dutch charts with or without capitalisation is not an issue – simple descriptors are either written with or without capitals, as is often the case with proper names.
13. The Dutch word for swamp is *moer* or *moeras*. It is intriguing that the first three letters of *Moent* correspond to the first three of *moer(as)*. Even though about 1% of toponyms are misspelt or erroneously transcribed on copied Dutch charts (Ormeling personal communication 29 January 2005), I cannot see either a close enough phonological or orthographic link between *moer-moeras* and *Moent*.
14. <u> is pronounced as the <oo> in 'book'.
15. *Tiuri-Tiury* also appears on a number of other maps, including Hessel Gerritszoon's map of the Pacific (1622), I. Janssonius's map of the East Indies *Indiae Orientalis Nova Descriptio* (1633), João Teixeira's map of the East Indies (1643) (Schilder 1976, 288, 290, 292), as well as the so-called Bonaparte Map of Tasman's voyages (held in the Mitchell Library, NSW, ML 863). The word *tierra* also appears in the same location on the map of Abraham Ortelius (1589) and the planisphere of Plancius (1592). Pulau Yos Sudarso is also currently known as Pulau Kolepom, Pulau Kimaam, Pulau Dolok. During Dutch colonial rule it was referred to as Frederik Hendrik Island.

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