

**AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT**

**LESLIE J. WILMOTH**

**Manuscript entitled 'The Finding of Australia'**

**Reel M399**

**Mr Victor J. Wilmoth  
Rest Harrow  
Jordans  
near Beaconsfield Bucks.**

**National Library of Australia  
State Library of New South Wales**

**Filmed: 1960**

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Leslie James Wilmoth (1881-1963) was born and educated in Melbourne. He worked as a geologist in many countries, including Australia, the Netherlands East Indies, Japan, South Africa, the Gold coast and South America. In his later years, when he had settled in London, he was a director of Lomax, Erskine & Company, a publisher of technical journals. He was an active member of the Royal Empire Society in London and was chairman of its Library Committee (1950-56) and deputy chairman of the Council (1953-56). He was awarded the OBE in 1956.

Wilmoth had a long interest in the early history of Victoria and Australia generally. He wrote an unpublished work, 'John Gardiner, pioneer and overlander' (1937), a copy of which is in the City of Boroondara Library in Melbourne. Another copy, held in the Royal Commonwealth Society Library, was filmed by the AJCP on reel M1695. A manuscript entitled 'The Gardiners of Gardiner's Creek' (1959) and related research notes are held in the Mitchell Library. They were filmed by the Australian Joint Copying Project on reels M395-96. A manuscript written by Wilmoth, together with correspondence, on the history of early wharves in Victoria is held in the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. In 1961 Wilmoth gave a talk at the Royal Commonwealth Library on the discovery of Australia and copies of the text are in several libraries. (The Royal Empire Society changed its name to the Royal Commonwealth Society in 1958.)

## LESLIE J. WILMOTH

### Reel M399

Leslie J. Wilmoth. Manuscript entitled 'The Finding of Australia', n.d. (120pp)

The manuscript is arranged in two parts. The first surveys the maritime exploration of the Pacific and ends with the first voyage of Captain Cook. The second and shorter part deals with the decision to form a penal colony at New South Wales and the voyage of the First Fleet in 1787-88.

Although it is not dated, it appears that Wilmoth wrote the work in the 1950s, when he was living in London. There is no bibliography or list of sources, but occasional footnotes refer to books and maps held in the library of the Royal Commonwealth Society. Wilmoth appears to have based the first part on published works, such as the writings of George Collingridge and R.H. Major and publications of the Hakluyt Society. In the second part he quoted from some original documents, which suggests that he may have done some research in the Public Record Office in London.

Chapter headings:

1	Introduction
7	The Pacific Ocean
14	Early rumours
20	The dawn
31	The North West Passage
37	The curtain rises
44	Coming of the Dutch
50	A Spanish expedition
61	The English reach the East
70	Later Dutch voyages
72	British interest in Australia
76	Captain James Cook

Part 2

85	The occupation
86	Transportation
93	Preparations for colonisation
101	The voyage
106	Note: The name 'New South Wales'

Rough copies of maps (6), including those of J. Rotz (1542) and R. de Vaugondy (1752)

Note: The pages were filmed from right to left on the reel.