Captain James Cook was born in 1728 in Marton, England. His father was a Scottish migrant farmworker who allowed James to apprentice on coal-carrying boats at the age of eighteen. While working in the North Sea, Cook spent his free time learning math and navigation. This led to his appointment as mate. Portrait of Captain James Cook, by John Webber. Cook was an 18th century explorer and navigator whose achievements in mapping the Pacific, New Zealand and Australia radically changed western perceptions of world geography. As one of the very few men in the 18th century navy to rise through the ranks, Cook was particularly sympathetic to the needs of ordinary sailors. James Cook was born on 27 October 1728 in a small village near Middlesbrough in Yorkshire. His father was a farm worker. At the age of 17, Cook moved to the coast, settling in Whitby and finding work with a coal merchant. In 1755 In "Captain James Cook: A Biography," Hough portrays Banks as both a marvelous botanist and also an egotistical pain in the neck. When Banks, through no fault of his own, is unable to go on Captain Cook's Second Voyage, the reader will experience a sigh of relief. The Third Voyage is a bizarre tale. When he left England in July, 1776, Cook had recently completed the editing of his journals and had been awarded the Copley Prize by the Council of the Royal Society. The book is well footed-noted and the story is told using excerpts from many of the sailors' original journals and letters. When republished, readers need to have a bibliography and a colored map of the world as centerfold.