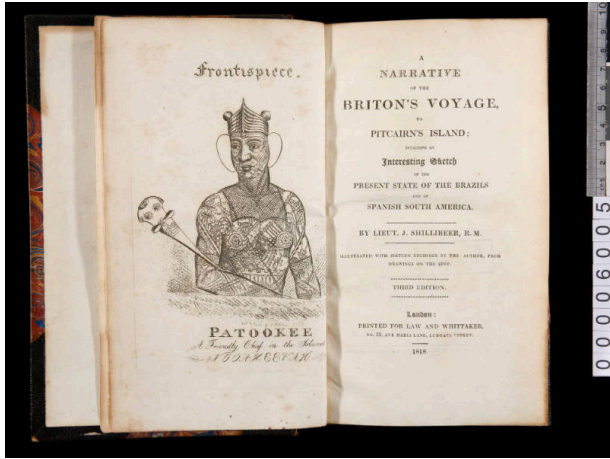


Basic Detail Report



00006005

Title

A Narrative of the BRITON's Voyage to Pitcairn's Island

Date

1818

Primary Maker

Lieutenant John Shillibeer

Medium

Leather bound boards, Ink on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 219 x 142 x 21 mm

Name

Book

History

HMS BRITON left England on 31 December 1813 as escort to a convoy of British merchant ships to protect them from French and American privateers, Britain being at war with both nations. On arrival in Brazil in March 1814 it was reassigned to the Pacific Ocean along with HMS TAGUS to help track down the American frigate ESSEX which was attacking British whalers. The BRITON and TAGUS then patrolled the coast of South America and the Pacific Islands making numerous stops including the Galápagos Islands. In September of 1814, HMS BRITON and HMS TAGUS, came across an island that was not on their maps. After both anchoring they realized that the island was Pitcairn. This was confirmed when Lieutenant Shillibeer writes that Fletcher Christensen's first born son, Friday Fletcher October Christensen came aboard and later confirmed that John Adams, a crew mate of Fletcher's, was still alive and living on the island. Although Shillibeer himself did not go ashore, "a source of lasting regret to me", he does recount in detail a description by a crew member who did. By this time Adams was approaching 60 years for age and "we conversed with him a long time, relative to the mutiny of the BOUNTY, and the ultimate fate of Christian. He denied being accessory to, or having the least knowledge of the conspiracy, but he expressed great horror at the conduct of Captain Bligh, not only towards his men, but officers also. I asked him if he had a desire to return to England, and I must confess his replying in the affirmative, caused me great surprize. "He told me he was perfectly aware how deeply he was involved; that by following the fortune of Christian, he had not only sacrificed every claim to his country, but that his life, was the necessary forfeiture for such an act, and he supposed would be exacted from him was he ever to return: notwithstanding all these circumstances, nothing would be able to occasion him so much gratification as that of seeing once more, prior to his death, that country which gave him birth, and from which he had been so long estranged".

Adams, nor any other inhabitant, joined the BRITON on its return to England. It arrived there on 8 July 1815. The BRITON was later used as a convict transport and was broken up in 1860.