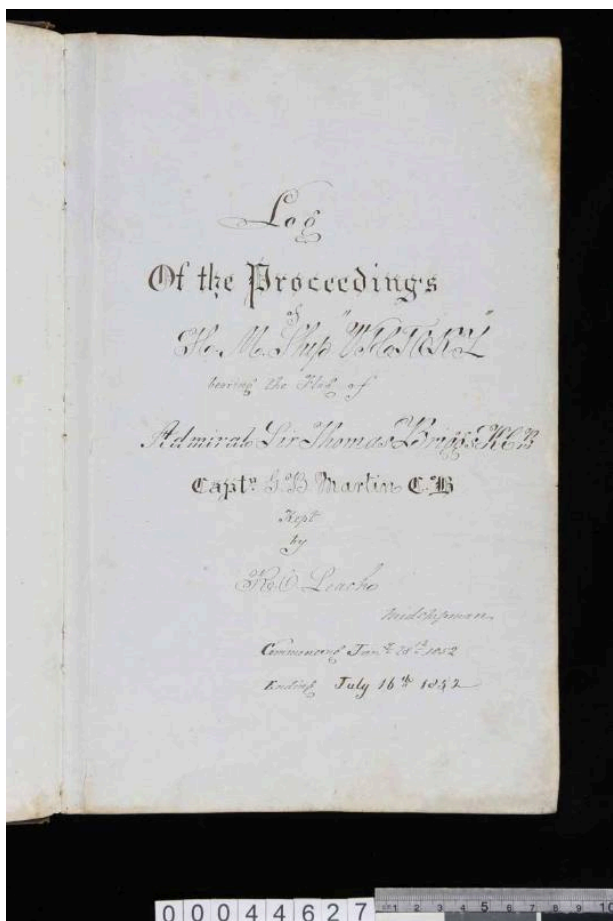


Basic Detail Report



00044627

Title

Manuscript journal logging proceedings aboard the HMS VICTORY and other vessels as recorded by Robert O Leach, 1852-1861

Date

1852-1861

Primary Maker

Robert Owen Leach

Medium

Paper, iron gall ink, leather, board

Dimensions

Overall: 325 x 223 x 34 mm, 1679 g

Name

Journal

History

Robert O Leach, a Cadet, Midshipman & Lieutenant in the British Royal Navy wrote three manuscript journals which contain a series of logs detailing his life at sea from 17 February 1846 to 31 March 186. Leach covered his career in the navy consecutively, in Log 1 chronicling his rise from Cadet aboard the large paddle wheel frigate HMS GLADIATOR, moored in or cruising off Oporto, Portugal between March and August 1846 during the Portuguese Wars. Leach's notes also include GLADIATOR's time in the Mediterranean visiting Malta, Leghorne, Genoa, Palermo and Messina. Log 2 continues the voyage of HMS GLADIATOR to Naples, Genoa and Tangier before returning to England and the dockyards at Woolwich where Leach is transferred to HMS GANGES a wooden, three-masted, 84 gun ship of the line built at Bombay, India. On board GANGES Leach sails back to the Mediterranean and cruises there between the 2 May 1849 and 27 January 1852 voyaging constantly between Malta and the Dardanelles. Leach returns to Sheerness, England in early 1852 and is transferred to HMS VICTORY in Portsmouth Harbour. Log 3 commences on the 28 January 1852 and details Leach's life and work onboard HMS VICTORY until 6 July 1852, where he passed for the rank of Lieutenant and was appointed to HMS PORCUPINE, a three gun, 140hp paddle gunboat on the 17 July 1852. He cruised extensively around Britain and Ireland before being sent on the 6 April 1854 to the Baltic, joining Admiral Napier's Squadron fighting the Russians in the Baltic part of the Crimean War. The PORCUPINE cruised extensively in Swedish and Finish waters and amongst the Aland Islands and took part in the landing of soldiers and bombardment of Bomarsund Fortress on 11 August 1854. On the 1 October 1854 Lt Leach

transferred to HMS CONFLICT, an 8 gun, 400 hp screw steam sloop patrolling off Gotland, taking prizes and going off on small boat expeditions until the vessel returned to England for a refit between 21 December 1854 and February 1855, after which it was ordered back to the Baltic to continue operations. On the 17 March 1856 Lt Leach was appointed to HMS CORMORANT, a six gun, 300hp paddle sloop fitting out at Chatham Dockyards and he stayed with the ship for sea trials until May 1857 when he was appointed to HMS CORDELIA, a new wooden, three-masted, 579 ton screw sloop armed with 11 x 32 pds. By August 1857 Leach and the CORDELIA were in Simonstown and until May 1858 patrolled and worked between Mozambique, the Arabian Peninsula and India. On 13 June 1858 Leach and the CORDELIA sailed for the Australian Colonies, reaching Sydney on 29 July 1858. On board CORDELIA were Sir George Bowan, First Governor of Queensland and his wife Contessa Diamantina Roma and their daughter Nina. The CORDELIA subsequently took the new Governor and his family to Moreton Bay. Lt Leach and HMS CORDELIA subsequently went on to visit Norfolk Island, The Fiji Islands, Samoa and New Caledonia, charted parts of the Great Barrier Reef and acted as a supply vessel for missionaries in the Pacific, notably Rev John Gibson Paton and John Coleridge Patteson. Between February 1860 and March 1861 Leach and the CORDELIA in company with HMS ELK, IRIS, NIGER and PELORUS were sent to New Zealand to assist European settlers during the Taranaki Wars against the Maoris. In December 1860 HMS CORDELIA and Lt Leach sailed for England where Leach's journal ended on the 31 March 1861.