

Basic Detail Report



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Title

Yacht WANDERER rounding Cape Horn

Date

1872

Primary Maker

Oswald Walter Brierly

Medium

Watercolour on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 640 × 1085 × 30 mm, 6200 g

Name

Painting

History

Scottish born British entrepreneur Benjamin Boyd (1801-1851) hoping to develop the resources of Australia, left Plymouth, England on 14 December 1841 aboard the yacht WANDERER of the Royal Yacht Squadron. Accompanying Boyd on the trip was the young maritime artist, Oswald Brierly, who later worked for Boyd as a manager at Twofold Bay. The WANDERER arrived in Port Jackson on 18 July 1842, and made many trips along the Australian coastline. Boyd established settlements and pastoral stations between Eden and Sydney, and by May 1844 he had become one of the largest landholders and graziers in the colony. The WANDERER was a regular sight in Sydney Harbour and was one of the best known vessels. It was renowned for its sleek lines, and its expensive interiors and opulence made it a popular attraction with fashionable society. An Australian newspaper at the time described his 'schooner of architectural proportions... her hull low and black, her taut and tapering masts, her choice of armaments, her luxurious accommodation and matchless sailing qualities'. Boyd established two settlements at Twofold Bay, New South Wales. The first a victualling port at Boyd Town for his fleet of whaling vessels, and the second a shore-based whaling station at East Boyd. In 1849, Boyd's investments had financially collapsed and he left Australia without his extensive plans for Twofold Bay reaching full fruition. Many operations at the settlement stopped but the whaling station continued and became the longest operating shore station in New South Wales, only closing in 1930. Boyd saw the Californian gold rushes as a solution to his financial problems, and in October 1849 left on the WANDERER bound for San Francisco. Unsuccessful at the diggings, Boyd decided to explore the Pacific Islands. In 1851, Boyd was presumed murdered by natives on the Solomon Islands and the WANDERER was later wrecked off Port Macquarie upon its return to Australia. Oswald Brierly was born in Chester, England in 1817 and after studying art and navigation he came to

Australia on Benjamin Boyd's yacht WANDERER. He belongs to the great tradition of British ship-board artists who sailed on voyages of exploration, extending European knowledge of Australia and the South Pacific. Brierly managed Boyd's whaling station at Twofold Bay from 1842 until 1848 when he made a two year voyage with Captain Owen Stanley on HMS RATTLESNAKE recording surveys of the Great Barrier Reef, Torres Strait, parts of New Guinea and the Louisiade Archipelago. Brierly returned to Sydney in 1848 and then sailed with Henry Keppel on HMS MEANDER to New Zealand, Tahiti, South America and Britain. Brierly visited Australia again in 1867-1868 when he accompanied the first Royal visit of HRH Prince Alfred Duke of Edinburgh on HMS GALATEA during its royal tour. Brierly exhibited with the Royal Academy between 1839 and 1872 when he was elected to the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours.