

Basic Detail Report



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Title
A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean

Date
1799

Primary Maker
Thomas Haweis

Medium
Leather, gilt, paper, ink

Dimensions
Overall: 309 x 250 x 47 mm, 2.56 kg

Name
Book

History

The origins of the London Missionary Society (LMS) lie in the late 18th century revival of Protestant Evangelism and the development of the Congregationalist movement in England and the United States. The Missionary Society was formally established in September 1795 and although broadly interdenominational in scope, the Society was very much Congregationalist in both outlook and membership. The Missionary Society was renamed the London Missionary Society in 1818. Heavily influenced by the voyages of James Cook and with the patronage of Joseph Banks, missionary activity commenced in the South Seas with the first overseas mission to Tahiti in 1796. Missionary work expanded into North America, South Africa, eastern and southern Europe including Russia, Greece and Malta. However, during the 19th century, the main fields of mission activity for the LMS were China, South-East Asia, India, the Pacific, Madagascar, Central Africa, Southern Africa, Australia and the Caribbean (including British Guiana, now Guyana). Following the formation of the London Missionary Society, Thomas Haweis and his supporters combined resources to prepare the 267-ton, wooden ship DUFF, owned by James Cox and Co, London (Lloyds, 1798) for the LMS's first missionary voyage into the Pacific. Haweis was one of the founders of the London Missionary Society and was very active in the promotion of overseas missions. An ex-East India Company captain retired to Portsmouth, James Wilson, heard of Haweis's zeal and approached him offering his services. With Captain James Wilson, Haweis had on his hands a zealous convert, who had converted to Christianity in India following a series of 'trials'. Whilst the DUFF was being prepared for the voyage, two supporters of the LMS, Joseph Hardcastle of London and James Duncan of Blackheath, proposed a scheme to fund the voyage. They approached the British East India Company, which held a crown monopoly of all trade in the Pacific and, aided by Joseph Banks, obtained permission

from the Company to backload tea from China to England. (Aulie, 1999: Brynes, 2002) The vessel sailed from Portsmouth on 10 August 1796 for the South Seas, the Society Islands and China. The voyage took seven months, taking the longer eastern route south of Cape Town, Tasmania and New Zealand, after an unsuccessful attempt to round Cape Horn. The LMS arrived on board the DUFF in March 1797. Although the first contacts were hopeful, the Tahitians quickly disregarded these new arrivals whose behaviour was so different from that of the Europeans they had met before. The DUFF missionaries, although equipped with a Tahitian - English dictionary, were very ill-prepared and failed in their attempt to evangelize the Tahitians. In 1798 11 of the 18 missionaries left the island for New South Wales on board the brig NAUTILUS. The Christian influence in Tahiti remained low even after the arrival of 12 new missionaries in 1801 and tribal wars incited the LMS to abandon its mission in 1808, with Henry Nott being the only missionary to follow King Pomare II to Moorea. A series of inter-island and inter-tribal wars between Christian and non-Christian Tahitians followed culminating in a Christian victory at the Battle of Feipi in 1815. Following Feipi the LMS activities were revived, a school and church were established, new missionaries settled, books were translated, Pomare II was baptised and the High Priest Patii was converted. A Royal Chapel was built at Papare in 1818 and Pomare II was christened in 1819. From that time the influence of the Anglican Church in Tahiti grew; displacing the indigenous culture and religion and replacing it with Christian morality. (Moorhead, 1966, pp. 107 - 112)