

Extract from Captain Cook's voyage as edited by Sir Joseph D Hooker

Paras from the Preface indicating fate of Sir Joseph Bank's papers etc.

Typos are in the version available online

https://archive.org/stream/journalofrightho00bankuoft/journalofrightho00bankuoft_djvu.txt

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tion of our knowledge of that interesting people. And when it is considered that the information obtained was at comparatively few points, and those on the coast only, the fulness and accuracy of the description of the New Zealanders, even as viewed in the light of modern knowledge, are very remarkable. Nor should it be forgotten that it was to the drawings made by the artists whom Banks took in his suite that the public is indebted for the magnificent series of plates that adorn Hawkesworth's account of the voyage. Still another motive is, that Banks's Journal gives a life-like portrait of a naturalist's daily occupation at sea and ashore nearly one hundred and thirty years ago ; and thus supplements the history of a voyage which, for extent and importance of geographic and hydrographic results, was unique and " to the English nation the most momentous voyage of discovery that has ever taken place " (Wharton's Cook, Preface), and which has, moreover, directly led to the prosperity of the Empire ; for it was owing to the reports of Cook and Banks, and, it is believed, to the representations of the latter on the advantages of Botany Bay as a site for a settlement, that Australia was first colonised.

The following brief history of the Journal itself is interesting. On Sir J. Banks's death without issue in 1820, his property and effects passed to the Hugessen (his wife's) family, with the exception of the library, herbarium, and the lease of the house in Soho Square. These were left to his librarian, the late eminent botanist, Robert Brown, F.K.S., with the proviso that after that gentleman's death, the library and herbarium were to go to the British Museum. Banks's papers and correspondence, including the Journal of the voyage of the Endeavour, were then placed by the trustees in Mr. Brown's hands, with the object of his writing a Life of Banks, which he had agreed to do. Age and infirmities, however, interfered with his prosecution of this

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work, and at his suggestion the materials were transferred

with the same object to my maternal grandfather, Dawson Turner, F.R.S., an eminent botanist and antiquarian, who had been a friend of Banks. Mr. Turner at once had the whole faithfully transcribed, but for which precaution the Journal would as a whole have been irretrievably lost, as the sequel will show. Beyond having copies of the manuscript made, Mr. Turner seems to have done nothing towards the Life, and after a lapse of some years the originals were returned, together with the copies, to Mr. Knatchbull Hugessen, who placed them in the hands of the late Mr. Bell, Secretary of the Eoyal Society, in the hopes that he would undertake to write the Life. For their subsequent wanderings and the ultimate fate of many portions, I am indebted to Mr. Carruthers, F.R.S., late Keeper of the Botanical Collections at the British Museum, who has favoured me with the following interesting letter concerning them :

BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY),
CROMWELL ROAD, SOUTH KENSINGTON, S.W.,
Uth July 1893.

DEAR SIR JOSEPH Since I saw you about the Journal of Sir Joseph Banks in Captain Cook's Voyage, I have been making further inquiries regarding the original document.

The Banksian Journal and correspondence were sent to the Botanical Department, after correspondence with Mr. Knatchbull Hugessen, to remain in my keeping till the death of Lady Knatchbull, when it would become the property of the trustees. I was instructed to deposit it in the Manuscript Department. This was in October 1873. Some time thereafter I persuaded Mr. Daydon Jackson to look at the correspondence with the view of preparing a biography of Banks. This he agreed to do. I wrote to Mr. Bell, who informed me in a letter written 14th February 1876, that he had tried to get Lord

1 It was when on a visit to my grandfather in 1833 that I first saw the orife A Journal in Banks's handwriting. It was then being copied, and I was employed to verify the copies of the earlier part by comparison with the original. I well remember being as a boy fascinated with the Journal, and I never ceased to hope that it might one day be published.

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Stanhope to undertake the biography, when he found that he could not himself face it, and thereafter Mr. Colquhoun and then Mr. John Ball, F.R.S. I obtained from the box, by leave from Mr. Bond, then Keeper of MSS., in the beginning of 1876, the transcripts made for Mr. Dawson Turner by his two daughters, which have remained under my care in the Botanical Department.

The story of the originals after I parted with them is a distressing one. Some seven or eight years ago Lord Brabourne claimed the letters as his property. Mr. Maunde Thompson remonstrated, and

told him that they were to remain in the museum till the death of Lady Knatchbull, and then they were to become the property of the trustees. Lord Brabourne would not accept this view, but claimed them as his own, and carried off the box and its contents. They were afterwards offered to the museum for sale, but the price offered by the Keeper of the MSS. was not satisfactory, and the whole collection was broken up into lots, 207, and sold by auction at Sotheby's on 14th April 1886. The Journal of Cook's voyage was lot 176, and was described in the catalogue as " Banks's (Sir Joseph) Journal of a Voyage to the Sandwich Islands and New Zealand, from March 1769 1 to July 1771, in the autograph of Banks." It was purchased by an autograph dealer, John Waller, for 1 : 2 : 6. Mr. Britten has gone to Waller's to inquire after the Journal. Waller did not specially remember that purchase, and he does not believe he has got the manuscript. So where it is now no one knows. 2 As you will see, the earlier portion of the Journal was missing in the lot sold. Waller bought in all 57 lots. The letters were broken up and sold as autographs ; those that he purchased and did not know, like those of Brass, Nelson, Alex. Anderson, etc., and were of no money value, he would probably at once destroy, so he told Mr. Britten. So now all is gone for whether the letters are preserved by autograph collectors, or were at once thrown into the wastepaper basket, they are equally lost to science. The 207 lots realised in all 182 : 19s. !

The result is that the Journal and letters transcribed for Dawson Turner, and now here, are the only ones available. I am thankful they have been saved out of the catastrophe.

Your transcriber is diligently at work. I am, faithfully yours,

WM. CARRUTHERS.

1 That is some time after leaving Rio, and before arriving at Otahite.

2 I have since ascertained that the Journal came into the possession of J. Henniker Heaton, Esq., M.P., who informs me that he disposed of it to a gentleman in Sydney, N.S.W.