Finding Aid for the John Edward Davis's Log of H.M.S. Samarang, 1831-1834

Cataloged by Jonathan Naito, with assistance from Jain Fletcher and Laurel McPhee, August 2004; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

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Descriptive Summary
Title: John Edward Davis's Log of H.M.S. Samarang
Date (inclusive): 1831-1834
Collection number: 170/336
Creator: Davis, John Edward, 1816-1877
Extent: 201 leaves : paper, ill., 5 maps ; 308 x 190 mm. bound to 320 x 205 mm.
Abstract: This illustrated log records the travels of H.M.S. Samarang, a ship of the British Royal Navy that was engaged in surveying coastal areas of Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Panama, and Mexico from 1831-1834.
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Provenance/Source of Acquisition
Ex libris John Edwards Davis, his bookplate on upper pastedown.
Processing Note
Cataloged by Jonathan Naito, with assistance from Jain Fletcher and Laurel McPhee, August 2004, in the Center For Primary Research and Training (CFPRT).
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], John Edward Davis's Log of H.M.S. Samarang (Collection 170/336). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.
UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 4230403
Biography
Little is known about John Edward Davis (1816-1877). His bookplate states "Master Royal Navy". The manuscript suggests that from 1831-1834, H.M.S. Samarang was engaged in surveying in Central and South America. From 1843-1846, Sir Edward Belcher (1799-1877) captained H.M.S. Samarang during his travels along the Pacific Coast of North America and throughout Oceania and Southeast Asia. As with his other voyages, these expeditions made contributions to the fields of natural history and ethnography; Belcher published a narrative of his time aboard H.M.S. Samarang in 1848.
Scope and Content
The H.M.S. Samarang traveled from Prawl Point in Devon to Rio De Janeiro in the summer of 1831; it then spent the next three years traveling from Brazil to Uruguay, Peru, Chile, Panama, and Mexico. The journal ends abruptly on September 28, 1831 with the ship in Chile. The log employs a standard, basic format with notes on wind, weather, activities onboard, and the ship's coordinates, course, and distance from its destination recorded four times daily: AM, PM, sunset, and midnight. The manuscript is supplemented with 32 illustrations. These include schematic drawings of the ship's ballast and tanks, as well as watercolour and pen-and-ink illustrations of small islands or coastal areas in the Americas and five maps of prominent ports, all of which apparently done by the log's author. The most ambitious of these illustrations is a large, detailed map of the Bahia coast; there are also smaller maps of Maceio, Panama Bay, Acapulco, and Guayama. The watercolour and pen-and-ink illustrations generally depict small islands or coastal areas from the perspective of the ship; all are labeled with a location and approximate distance from the ship.
Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Genres and Forms of Material
Manuscripts.

Related Material

Bound Manuscripts Collection (Collection 170) . Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

ff. 3r-8r: England (Prawl Point, Lizard Point, St. Michael)
ff. 21v-65r: Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Maceio, Pernambuco, Bahia)
ff. 70r-92v: Uruguay and Chile (Montevideo, Valparaiso, Coquimbo)
ff. 105v-124r: Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco, Bahia)
    Physical Description: (290 x 510 mm. insert between 113v-114r)
    Scope and Content Note
    includes a large, detailed chart of the Bahia coast from a survey by the officers of H.M.S.
    Samarang

ff. 133v-143r: Chile, Peru, Panama (Valparaiso, Callao Bay, Panama Bay)
ff. 162v-168v: Mexico (Gulf of California)
ff. 181v-198v: Chile (Valaparaiso, Coquimbo).