

Peter W. Black's Notes on Browning's Notes

Notes on the South Sea Islands. R. L. Browning, Lt. on Board the Ship Vincennes, Circumnavigating in 1835-1836; J.H. Aulick Commanding.

Located in the Browning Family Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (Box 141, 405 A-012, 4, 224).

Lt. Browning's Notes may not be copied and Peter Black made these notes from it in 1979:

- Browning had access to Bernard but apparently not to Holden's book, which he does not cite.
- p. 209. Arrives Palau.
- p. 231. In retelling the story of the whale ship Mentor, he gives Tobi's population as about 300.
- p. 232. Says that each of the sailors left in Palau had his "friend," just as Holden and his mates did on Tobi.
- Pages 234-235. "In 22 days Captain Bernard arrived at Manilla, whence he sailed to Canton and thence to the States. To recover those unfortunate Americans we have come to the Palaus and will go to Toby Island and rescue those who have been more unfortunate than those who remained as hostages. One of the three left here [Palau-PB] made his escape in a vessel that touched here. Since then the Aracolonians have watched the other two much more closely."

The "Aracols" (captors of the two remaining Mentor hostages) refused to release them without the return of their own men. They made threats to the hostages' safety and would not pass the Captain's letter on to them.

- p. 237. Captain Aulick decided to go to Toby to get the Americans and Palauans there and then to return to Palau to exchange hostages with the Palauans. (Ibedul helped the Americans).
- p. 238. "Nor would any reasonable delay or trouble be ?? directed to save the lives of the hostages and return them to liberty and their friends."
- p. 238. Departed Palau on December 3, 1835. Fetched Merir [he calls Ramuer]. Eight people came out to the ship but were too shy to board. They traded one ship biscuit for an "entire wardrobe" a belt (stained with turmeric) and a pair of earrings.
- Arrived Tobi December 9, 1835.

- pp. 251-252. Says he saw only two small bunch of taro, “which has lately been introduced here” and Hoback told him it did not form any part of their diet yet.
- p. 261. The end of the Tobi encounter.