

European travellers to the region who were not beguiled by such simplistic notions. James Cook, for example, realised that Pacific islanders did not live in a state of nature: their societies engaged in trade; people sailed in great ocean-going canoes from island to island; and there were pre-existing, intra-island patterns of allegiance and subordination.

Thomas foregrounds the rich tapestry of people who criss-crossed the myriad routes of this oceanic highway, focusing on the lives and experiences of 19th-century Pacific islanders. In doing so, he achieves a notable success in shifting the spotlight of Pacific history away from those who migrated eastwards several thousand years ago, and towards those who travelled across and beyond the ocean in more recent times. Here, he has undoubtedly been inspired by thinkers such as Epeli Hau'ofa whose influential essay, *Our Sea of Islands*, argued that Pacific islanders were connected rather than separated by the sea. Far from being sea-locked peoples marooned on coral or volcanic tips of land waiting to be discovered by Europeans, islanders formed an oceanic community based on voyaging, movement and exchange. Thomas makes the very powerful case for considering the history of the Pacific as being fundamentally shaped by the islanders themselves, who voyaged, ventured and encountered each other, travelling as far as America, Asia, Australia and even Europe. European voyagers, traders, missionaries, and colonisers—so often the driving force in historical narratives of the region—are given their due but have no special precedence in Thomas's account. As he remarks, the colonial rule of the 19th century generally expanded the 'gift giving, diplomacy, commerce and contest' that thrived between islands and tribes prior to the arrival of European sailing ships: the 'local' lives of islanders had 'involved the extra-local for a long time' (p.296).

But *Islanders* succeeds in moving the discussion beyond establishing the mere reciprocity and mutual impact of cultural contact. Thomas illustrates how Pacific people were connected to broader currents in world history. For example, when Pomare, king of Tahiti, tried to safeguard his authority in 1808 he understood the danger to monarchs posed by new-fangled republican ideas being incubated and promulgated half the world away: Pomare feared 'the people would cut off his head as the people of France had done with their king' (p.99). The book emphasises the cosmopolitanism of the Pacific in the 19th century. Even in the 1790s, Hawaiians, Maori, Tahitians and others mixed and exchanged ideas. Experiences of travel led to new contacts among islanders and between them and others: not just Europeans but East Asians, African Americans and Aboriginal Australians too. By the 1850s, a second and third generation of islanders had witnessed and participated in voyaging, trade and evangelisation.

The book is full of vivid stories about the lives of real islanders, and their presence aboard European ships is central to Thomas's theme. Cook carried two islanders as co-navigators. One, Mahine from Raietea,

traversed the Pacific with Cook, met him on a subsequent voyage, dined with Captain Bligh (before the mutiny), and finally joined the mission to hunt down Fletcher Christian and his collaborators. And this pattern continued into the 19th century: in 1815, T. T. Tucker, commander of HMS *Cherub*, reported to the Admiralty that he was given great assistance by the local Hawaiians in tracking down an American ship preying on British vessels in the Pacific.

Far from being the vestige of a lost paradise, the Pacific offered an ocean of commercial possibilities. These opportunities were considered by Joseph Banks, who, from the comfort of his drawing room in Soho, was a strong advocate of global strategic thinking. As the breadfruit experiment that caused so much trouble for William Bligh amply demonstrates, Banks readily and repeatedly put his plans for the redistribution of resources from one ocean to another into action. But it was not just Europeans who were engaged in moving goods, commodities and specimens around: Pacific islanders also engaged in such exchanges. By the 1790s, East-West contact was frequent, as whalers and traders dropped anchor off islands to barter for goods and to acquire provisions. Ships brought goods prized among islanders: ironwork, firearms, whales' teeth. This led, inevitably, to changes in local societies, their consumption patterns and their material cultures. By the 1820s, for example, Hawaiians were dressing in European-style clothes, living in European-style houses and sailing in European-style ships.

Thomas's narrative challenges the notion that the only role fulfilled by Pacific islanders was that of victims. In contrast, *Islanders* emphasises that the indigenous people of the Pacific were actors and agents, playing a central role in the 19th-century history of the region. Moreover, he reminds us that the Pacific islands were linked as much as they were separated by the ocean. This inherently maritime perspective is one that historians would do well to remember when attempting to write the history of European exploration of the Pacific.

JOHN McALEER

National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia: fieldwork report 2010

(*Esbjerg Maritime Archaeology Reports* no. 3)

JENS AUER with 13 Contributors

97 pp., 4 appendices, 5 fold-out plans, 55 figs including colour, 5 tables

Maritime Archaeology Programme, University of Southern Denmark, Niels Böhrs vej 9, Esbjerg 6700, Denmark, 2011, npg (sbk), ISBN 978-8799221455, or downloadable from <http://www.maritimearchaeology.dk/downloads/Hedvig%20Sophia%20Reportmail.pdf>

During the past decade, the careers of British shipwrights who served the various Scandinavian kingdoms

during the 17th century have begun to attract considerably more attention. The Scots Robert Peterson, David Balfour and Daniel Sinclair made substantial contributions to the expansion of the Danish Navy during the first half of the century and have been the subject of detailed study by Martin Bellamy, while James Murray played an equally important part in the development of the Polish Navy during the same period. Arguably the best known of these expatriate shipwrights were Francis Sheldon senior and junior, who served the Swedish crown during the second half of the century; in all, no fewer than six generations of Sheldons would serve the country. In recent years there have been valuable studies of their careers in English by Dan Harris and in Swedish by Jan Glete and Kurt Lundgren, but all of these predated the discovery of the wreck described in this report.

Francis Sheldon senior, along with his fellow shipwrights Thomas Day and Robert Turner, entered Swedish service in 1659 at a time when relations between England and Sweden were particularly close. A number of senior officers, notably George and Owen Cox, made the same move, while several Swedish officers served in the English fleet during the Anglo Dutch wars. Sheldon, described by Jan Glete as ‘an educated man and a strong personality’, initially served as master shipwright at Gothenburg, moving to Stockholm in 1666 where he built his most famous ship, the huge *Kronan*, sunk during the Battle of Öland in 1676; the finds from the wreck, displayed in the Länsmuseum in Kalmar, constitute one of the most impressive repositories of evidence about 17th-century naval warfare, as I learned at first hand during a fascinating visit to the museum in February 2011. Although he returned to England in the 1670s and also served briefly in Denmark, Sheldon senior eventually settled back in Sweden. His son succeeded him, becoming master shipwright at the new dockyard of Karlskrona in succession to Turner in 1686. It was there, shortly before his death in 1692, that Francis junior built the *Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia*, the subject of this study.

The *Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia*, of 75 guns, sank in the Bay of Kiel during the relatively little-known Battle of Femern on 24 April 1715. This was a Danish victory during the great Northern War which lasted from 1700 to 1721: five Swedish warships, including the *Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia*, were deliberately run aground, and the Swedes suffered some 350 casualties with another 1600 taken prisoner. Four of the Swedish ships were subsequently refloated by the Danes, but the *Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia* could not be salvaged and was burnt. Although iron guns from the wreck-site were brought up at intervals from 1970 onwards, the wreck itself was not discovered until 2008. This fieldwork report describes the third season of work on the site; this was carried out as a field course for Masters students on the maritime archaeology post-graduate course at the University of Southern

Denmark. The report provides a detailed examination of both the extant remains of the ship and the various artefacts recovered from it. Relatively little of the hull is exposed, which has made it difficult for the project team to draw conclusions about the ship’s construction. It is not even clear whether the ship was a two- or three-decker. However, the limited evidence suggests some similarities with other English-built warships of the period, such as Sheldon senior’s *Kronan* and the *Lenox*, recently examined in great detail by Richard Endor. It is somewhat frustrating that on this site, as on those of other British and European warships of the period, clear evidence of ship-construction techniques has proved elusive to locate.

Nevertheless, much of interest has already been discovered in the wreck of the *Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia*, and one hopes that further discoveries will emerge during ongoing investigation of the site. For instance, trails of shot leading from the wreck-site suggest that the Swedes attempted to lighten the ship before running her aground. Among the most impressive artefacts recovered from the wreck are two sword-hilts, one of them gold-plated, and an unexpected find in such a location, a piece of Staffordshire pottery. The record itemises, and provides colour photographs of, the finds to date. The *Prinsessen Hedwig Sophia* is clearly an important wreck-site, and this report strongly suggests that further work on it, especially in comparison with further work on the *Kronan*, ought to reveal valuable information about the shipbuilding techniques employed by the Sheldon family.

J. D. DAVIES

Naval Dockyards Society, Portsmouth, England

The Sea their Graves: an archaeology of death and remembrance in maritime culture

DAVID J. STEWART

256 pp., 50 b&w illustrations

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This is an important book, despite its apparently narrow focus on gravestones and their inscriptions. Reading it (and to some extent its predecessors) made the reviewer immediately revise his preconceived notions about what could be made of such material, what archaeology is about, and how wider applications could be made of historical and maritime archaeology, even of maritime culture and of the maritime cultural landscape. Thus I would like to emphasize precisely the many-sidedness of the book. To me the contents also touched a surprising number of related questions and problems occupying my mind—burials of unknown corpses on islands and churchyards, beliefs in ghosts