

Personal files

C. 23

17th July, 1952.

Dear Sir,

I am trying to trace the origin of the name "Kingsmill Group", which was applied to the southern Gilbert Islands early in the nineteenth century.

Dr. Bowden, author of a book on George Bass, about to be published by the Oxford University Press, has suggested that you may have some information.

I know that the name is not on the original chart in the Dalrymple collection: "Chart of Islands in the Pacific Ocean seen in the brig Nautilus Capt. Charles Bishop, 1799." Krusenstern, in his Recueil de memoires hydrographiques pour servir d'analyse et d'explication a l'atlas de l'Ocean Pacifique. (S. Petersburg, 1827, tom. 2, p. 378 -), is emphatic on this. Under the heading "Groupe des Isles Kingsmill", he writes: "Le nom Kingsmill ne se trouve point sur la carte de Dalrymple, et n'est apparemment que la denomination collective de deux sous-divisions de ce groupe, dont l'une se nomme Isles Bishop, et l'autre Sydenham Teast".

It would seem, therefore, that Dalrymple added the name "Kingsmill Group". There was an admiral, Sir Robert Brice Kingsmill (1730 - 1805). His career, as described in the Dictionary of National Biography, does not seem to have been very distinguished, but he may have been a friend of Dalrymple.

Please pardon me for worrying you with what must seem rather an unimportant matter, but I have been for months on a search which seems to get me nowhere and I should greatly appreciate any fresh clues.

Yours sincerely,

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