



The Inside of a Hippah, in New Zealand

Date
1784-1786

Primary Maker
Rennoldson

Medium
engraving

Description

Cook described his visit in February of 1777 to a hippah, a fortified village with dwellings constructed from reeds, on Motuara Island in Queen Charlotte Sound: “I made an excursion in my boat to look for grass, and visited the Hippah or fortified Village at the SW point of Motuara, and the places w[h]ere our Gardens were on that island. There were no people at the former but the houses and palisades were rebuilt and in good order and had been inhabited not long before....” John Webber produced a number of sketches of the area and of its huts while on-site and, upon returning to England, prepared a watercolor that was engraved by B. T. Pouncy (English, d. 1799) for Cook’s official account of his third voyage, published posthumously in 1784. Although Cook’s account reported that the hippah was not in use when they arrived, Webber has added two small groups of figures to the scene. These placid, huddling figures reinforced the concept of the unsophisticated but noble savages, omitting the realities of the complex and ferocious Maori society.

Dimensions

Sheet: 9 3/4 x 14 1/4 in. (24.8 x 36.2 cm)