The Manuscript of Philip Freneau's The British Prison-ship

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Abstract

This article contains a transcription of first, draft manuscript version of "The British Prison-Ship," written in Philip Freneau's handwriting in an old notebook owned by Rutgers Library which also contains "The Log of the Brig Rebecca," published in the Journal in the previous issue. Leary compares it with printed versions. NOTE: the last lines of this article appear at the top of the page of the beginning of the next article: "The Associated Friends."

doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.14713/jrul.v6i1.1202
Full Text: PDF

Philip Freneau (1752-1832). Biographical Information: Freneau is best known as a writer of the Founders' generation who lived into the Romantic era and whose later poems explored Romantic themes of a spiritual love for nature and nostalgic regard for American Indians. Born to a French Huguenot (Protestant) wine merchant and his Scottish wife in 1752 in New York City, Freneau graduated in 1771 from Princeton College where he wrote many poems and satires. Returning to the new USA in 1778, he joined a raiding ship but was captured and held on a British prison ship for about six weeks during which he nearly died. After being released, he wrote more anti-British pieces, gaining him the nickname "the Poet of the American Revolution." In 1790 Freneau married Eleanor Forman.