



STORIES FROM THE SEA

EXPLORATION OBJECTS



GUANO BOTTLES

Date made

1881

Object ref.

GRYEH : 1971.125.1 &
GRYEH : 1971.125.2

Credit

Great Yarmouth
Museums

Description

Guano is another name for seabird poo. It is very good for fertilising fields and helping crops grow. It can be found on coasts all around the world, but the biggest amounts are found in Peru on the Pacific coast. Some mounds of guano were over 50m tall!

In the 1800s people began to mine the guano and send it to farms across Europe and North America. Captain W. F. Bunn was the master of a ship called the Huron. His ship would sail from England to Peru, collect tons of guano and sail back again. The whole round trip was around 20,000 miles, and took several months.

These bottles of guano are actually works of art! Captain Bunn used the guano to make a landscape scene. When you look at the

bottles side on, the bottom a picture of the islands where the guano was collected; Lobos de Afuera. Above that are stripes of different coloured poo. Some of it has even been used to write his name, the name of the islands and the date!

Questions

1. Because Captain Dunn wanted to remember the guano islands, he made his souvenir out of guano. What else could you use to make the same kind of pictures?
2. To get to Peru, sailors had to sail around Cape Horn at the bottom of South America. This was very dangerous, because the weather was very bad and there were lots of sharp rocks. Write a poem or short story about being on a ship going around the Horn. How do you feel? What do you think might happen?



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