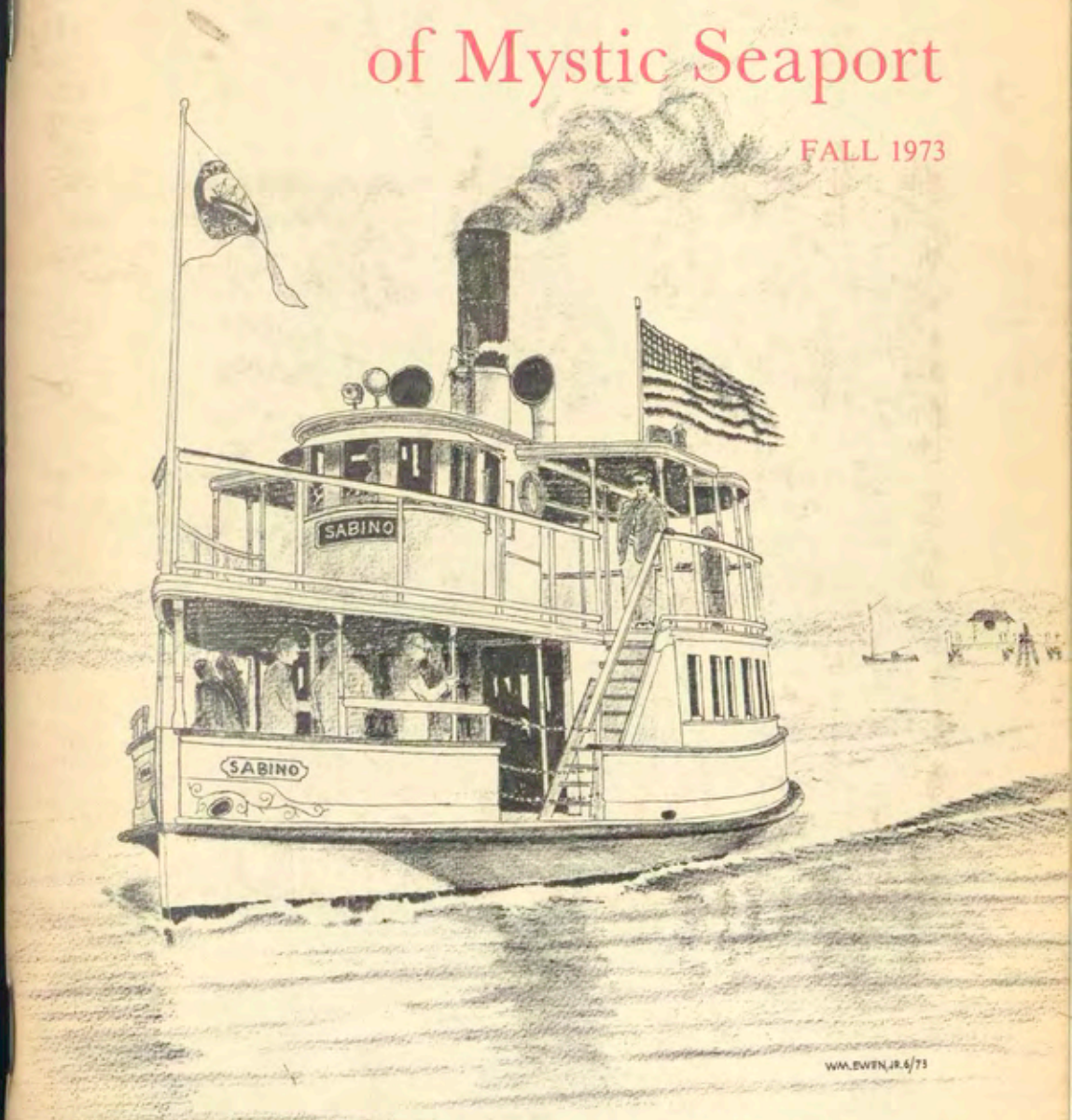
The LOG of Mystic Seaport

FALL 1973



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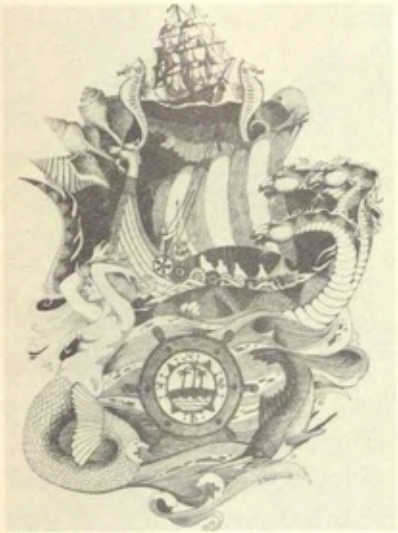
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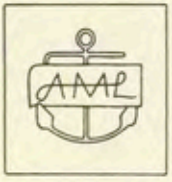
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COMMANDER SILAS DUNCAN AND THE FALKLAND ISLANDS AFFAIR

BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER
ALEXANDER G. MONROE, U.S. Naval Reserve

> The Brazilian station, notwithstanding the political commotions in its neighborhood, has presented little active employment for the squadron. The utmost security to our navigation in that quarter has existed, except a recent and it is believe, unprecedented claim, which has been made to disturb our vessels engaged in seal catching at the Falkland Islands. To guard against the ill consequences of this claim . . . prompt measures have been taken . . . [1]

When in December, 1831, Secretary Levi Woodbury reported to President Andrew Jackson on the state of the U.S. Navy, he had only partial information relating to the incursions made against American sealing interests in the South Atlantic. Earlier in that year, sealing ships had been seized and pillaged and their crews stranded. Unofficial reports of the incidents had reached Boston and subse-



Fur Seal (Callorhinus Ursinus) found in the Falkland Islands. Gray. 1, male; 2, female. From Charles Melville Scammon's Marine Mammals of the north-western coast of North America. *G.P. Putman's Sons, 1874.*

quently had been transmitted to Washington. In June, 1831, Woodbury ordered Master Commandant (Commander) Silas Duncan, USN, to the Brazilian station to relieve U.S.S. *Vandalia.* He was to command the sloop-of-war U.S.S. *Lexington* and his instructions read that:

> . . . it will be your duty to protect the commerce of citizens of the United States, and maintain the National Character by all lawful and honorable means in your power until the arrival of the Commander of the United States Squadron for that station (from whom you will receive more full and particular instructions) . . . [2]

The *Lexington*'s cruise has formed the basis for what has become known as "the Falkland Islands controversy," an imbroglio that in the view of the Argentine Government has never been satisfactorily resolved.

The Falkland Islands have been known by various names,

reflecting their changing status over the course of several hundred years. After their initial discovery by John Davis, the islands were observed or visited by the Dutch, the French and the Spanish, and were named successively the Sebaldines, the Maluoines and Las Malvinas. The sound separating the two main islands was named Falkland Sound, to honor a treasurer of the British Admiralty. These frequent changes in name resulted from the chronic controversy surrounding their ownership that went on in the 250 years prior to Commander Duncan's voyage. First the French, then the Spanish and finally the English made brief but abortive attempts at colonization. The upshot of these enterprises was that the British government, torn by controversy between Lord North and Lord Chatham, sent H.M.S. *Juno* to Port Egmont to take possession of the islands. From September, 1771, until it was withdrawn in May, 1774, a tiny garrison of English soldiers maintained a fort. When they left, a tablet stating that the islands and all the structures on them were "the sole right and property of His most Sacred Majesty, George the Third . . ." was erected. From 1774 to 1831, there was no discussion, let alone controversy, relating to their ownership, and it is said that the Spanish government used them as a place to which political outcasts and other undesirables might be deported. By all accounts it was not a very cheerful place.

Argentina as we know it today developed over the course of the sixty years between 1810 and 1870, and the 1820s was a period of particular anarchy with no effective national authority. During the first decade of the nineteenth century, Buenos Aires was opened as a port, and its inhabitants twice drove away English invaders. In 1810, Spanish regal authority was overthrown in Argentina, and the next nineteen years was spent in organizing the country withdrawn from Spanish hegemony. Now known as Argentina, it was a series of provinces each ruled by a benevolent despot who styled himself "caudillo," or strongman. It is sufficient to know that the provinces were loosely organized, that they were known as the United Provinces of the Rio de La Plata, and that Buenos Aires was the leading province. The United States recognized the government in 1820 and appointed John W. Forbes as its first chargé d'affaires. It is difficult to summarize the rapid and abrupt changes in the government of the times. During the events of the Falkland Islands controversy, the Governor and Captain-General of the province was Juan Manuel Ortiz, the owner of a meat packing plant who enjoyed the support of urban workers and gauchos. In June, 1829, Lewis

Vernet was granted the exclusive control over the fishing and sealing rights in the Falkland Islands and was appointed Governor.

Though the first American chargé was John Forbes, the events of the controversy were handled by George W. Slacum, the American Consul. Slacum was a man of enormous ambition and slight discretion whose character is revealed in his relationships with his fellow citizens. Political liaison was Mr. Forbes's job. Commercial enterprises, the welfare of American merchant seamen, and the state of trade in general were Mr. Slacum's normal and proper area of

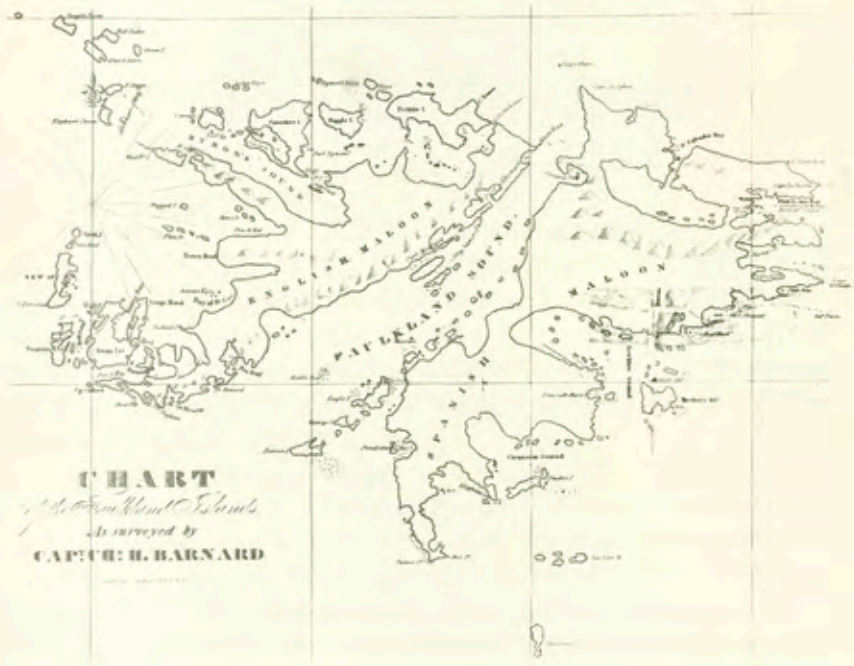


Chart of the Falkland Islands, from A Narrative of the Sufferings and Adventures of Capt. Charles H. Bernard, 1812-1816.

responsibility. In 1825, the American merchant schooner *La Meroupe* was stranded on the coast of Patagonia, and it was discovered that a part of its valuable cargo of wax was salvable. Slacum sent his trusted clerk and confidant John Duffy to take charge of the salvage and protect the owners' rights.

This Duffy proved unfaithful to the trust Slacum had placed in him and embezzled a part of the cargo. Slacum became suspicious of Duffy, ejected him from his home and denounced him to the police

as a scoundrel. This act, toward a person who had previously been the consul's most trusted servant, aroused Forbes's suspicions, and the chargé wrote to his subordinate, denouncing both the precise legal steps that Slacum had taken and the tone of moral indignation that he had displayed.

> . . . it make no part of my present purpose to consider . . . whether its recovery . . . was or was not the most probable result of the steps you took . . . the placing of Mr. Duffy's person at the disposition of the Police . . . was a precipitate assumption of authority not warranted by the nature and functions of your consular office . . .
>
> Duffy was the companion of your labors and your leisures . . . In a moment of doubt, you break to the bitterest enmity, and Mr. Duffy is cast to the fangs of the Police as a criminal. I thank God Sir, that my heart is not a moral kaleidoscope where the feelings . . . can be changed with the quickness of lightning . . .[3]

Slacum was not to be convinced that he had treated Duffy unjustly, and he went so far as to accuse Forbes of complicity in the embezzlement. This was the final insult for the chargé, who refused to accept any but official communications from the consul and urged that Slacum

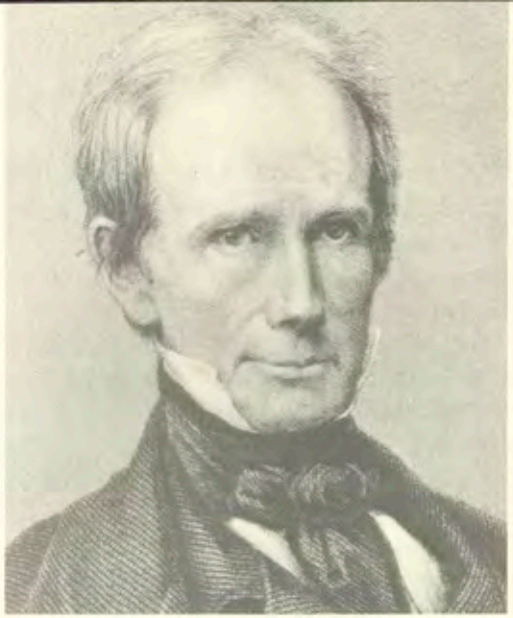
> . . . state your griefs (sic) and even to present yourself a reasonable latitude of personality that your rancour . . . may be presented to the judgement of our masters, the President and Secretary of State . . .[4]

Here the unhappy affair stood. In January, 1827, writing to Secretary of State Henry Clay from Annapolis, Slacum denounced the "continued oppression" of his superior, lamenting that he had been

> . . . the object of personal jealousy of Mr. Forbes and the victim of official and private slander . . .[5]

Both men had lost objectivity, though it appears clear from reading the consular letters that John Forbes had suffered the consul's rumormongering and talebearing with enormous patience. Years later, after the evacuation of the Falklands, American Consul Joshua Bond, who had been Slacum's physician, wrote to Secretary of State Edward Livingston, describing his ex-patient:

> . . . Slacum . . . is capable of making use of dishonorable means against an opponent and considers every man his



Henry Clay, secretary of state in 1826-1827. From Dictionary of American Portraits. *Dover Publications, New York, 1967.*

> enemy who does not think it proper to hold opinions similar to his own . . . you must know that he is an exceedingly vain person, loves his own person exceedingly well . . .[6]

In the same letter, Bond related that Slacum had spread gossip to the effect that John Forbes and the German consul had been engaged in commercial enterprises, an untruth.

It was thus unfortunate that on June 14, 1831, John Forbes died and Slacum was left in charge of the negotiation of American affairs at Buenos Aires. His letter to Secretary of State Van Buren is a curious mixture of bold self-assurance and humility:

> . . . from the good understanding subsisting between the governments of the United States and Buenos Ayres, as well as from my intimate . . . personal acquaintance, I shall find no difficulty in protecting the honor and interests of my country . . . until the Government shall be pleased to send some other representative more competant than myself . . .[7]

By this time, however, one sealing vessel had been stranded, another—the *Harriet* of Stonington, Connecticut—was soon to be captured, and Commander Duncan was on his way from Norfolk with orders to report to consuls and commercial agents for instructions, as well as to his naval superiors.[8]

Silas Duncan was appointed a Master Commandant in March, 1829, the culmination of a long and distinguished career. He was first

appointed a Midshipman in 1809 and first recognized for gallantry in the Battle of Lake Champlain, where he served as one of Commodore MacDonough's lieutenants. His major contribution to victory lay in transmitting orders to ships remotely located from the flagship.

> In the course of this action, LT Duncan behaved with great bravery intrepidly carrying the Commodores orders from vessel to vessel exposed to a raking fire . . . A cannon shot carried off the whole of his right shoulder, and the bone of his upper arm was shivered throughout. The artillery Company that fired the shot was heard to raise a great shout, thinking that they had killed the American Commodore . . . the surgeon reported him as mortally wounded.[9]

Lieutenant Duncan, though grievously hurt, recovered from his wounds and after an eighteen-month convalescence, returned to duty at sea. He made a short cruise under Stephen Decatur in the 1815 Algerian War and was placed in charge of a prize vessel, but was captured while returning to this country and interned in Nova Scotia.

There is evidence that Commander Duncan was a man of considerable dignity and port as well as an individual of immense personal courage. After the *Lexington*'s cruise, he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy explaining the breaking of the Master at Arms in that ship:

> I have the honor to acknowledge your of the 24th inst. in relation to my having disrated Edward Quinn who had been serving on board the LEXINGTON as Master at Arms, with the rank of ordinary seaman—this man had rendered himself so obnoxious to my crew from his ill nature and very disagreeable manner of performing the slightest duty that I verily beleive (sic) that many of them were ready to desert for no other reason whatever . . . It was proven to my satisfaction that he applied the words 'D----d Yankee son of a B---h' to one of my crew and that he had been in the habit of inflicting punishment in opposition to my positive orders—I was and am of the opinion that it is the business of the commander to direct the infliction of punishment and to have it done in the most solemn and impressive manner in the presence of all the officers and crew . . .[10]

The *Harriet*'s seizure, the plundering of her storerooms and the stranding of a number of other sealers became a matter of public record on November 23, 1831, when Gilbert R. Davison, her master,

appeared before George Slacum and gave a lengthy deposition. Over a year before he had left Stonington bound for the Falklands, where he arrived in November, 1830. There he met Lewis Vernet, who "pretended to act as Governor of the said islands," and warned him not to take any seals. Despite this formal warning, Davison did take a number of seals, informed Vernet of his success and was told that this was a matter of "no consequence" by the governor.

Reassured by the proprietor's apparent disinterest, Davison remained in the islands and continued to trap. On the 30th of July, 1831, however, he went ashore where "he was surrounded by Englishmen armed with muskets." This party, under the command of Mathew Brisbane, Vernet's assistant, apprehended the luckless captain and took him to Vernet who

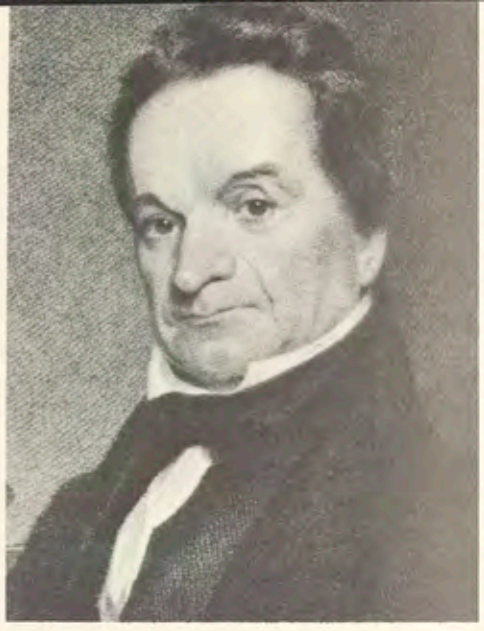
> . . . informed him that if he had been sealing, he should send his schooner to Buenos Ayres as a prize . . . that he was confined as a prisoner under lock and key with two armed sentries by the door . . .[11]

Davison was not the only ship's captain to be taken prisoner. Captain Carew was apprehended on the 17th of August, 1831, though his ship the *Breakwater* had been able to escape. Captain Conger of the schooner *Superior* was taken and his ship moved to Port Louis. Most unsettling to the Consul was the report that in the early spring, 1831, the schooner *Belville* had been seized and her crew stranded on Staten Island with a meager stock of provisions.

Vernet claimed to act under the authority of a decree of June 10, 1829, and he was entirely willing to let the seizure be reviewed by Argentine courts. Accordingly, he extracted a ransom of sealskins from the *Harriet* and permitted the other ships to continue trapping, their sealskins to be held in trust until the litigation in Buenos Aires was settled. Captain Davison made collateral claims in his affidavit, such as Vernet's enticing men in his crew to desert with the promise of $25/month salaries, but the basic contention was that American vessels had been captured "while engaged in lawful trade," their crews abused and their cargoes stolen. Consul Slacum

> could not bring himself to believe that the Government of Buenos Ayres will sanction an act which viewed under its present aspect must be calculated to disturb . . . good understanding . . . [12]

Quite to his astonishment, the consul found that the government took the stance that the seizure was a matter for private litigation. Slacum stated to Secretary of State Livingston in a letter of November



Edward Livingston, secretary of state under Jackson, 1831-1833. From Dictionary of American Portraits. *Dover Publications, New York, 1967.*

23, 1831, that he had been answered by the minister of finance that the matter would be the subject of a cabinet meeting that afternoon. However, in letters of November 26th and December 3rd, 1831, the minister of foreign affairs Thomas Manuel Anchorena held that the protest was

> . . . in the Department of War and Marine and the necessary forms being gone through with and it will be placed under the consideration of the Government . . . [13]

This was hardly the sort of response that Slacum had expected, and by this time Commander Duncan had reached Buenos Aires. As ordered, he wrote to the consul announcing that his ship was there for the "protection of the Citizens and Commerce of the United States . . ." Slacum responded to this letter saying that

> . . . a case has occured in which . . . in my opinion it is advisable to call that protection into requisition . . .[14]

He sent along a copy of Davison's affadavit, and Duncan responded not only to the Consul but to the foreign minister as well. He considered it his duty to proceed to the Falklands so that commerce could be protected, and he wished the government at Buenos Aires to know of the "open and candid Mode in which the affairs of the United States are conducted."

The period between the 1st and the 9th of December, 1831, was filled with correspondence and doubtless with meetings between the parties involved. The chain of correspondence is the result of the fact

that while Slacum considered the entire matter to be one of especial urgency relating to such topics as "free use of unappropriated fisheries," the local government considered it a minor problem to be settled easily in local admiralty courts. Moreover, the issue was complicated by injection of Slacum's vanity. The foreign minister questioned the consul's right to issue a protest. Slacum took the position that he had succeeded to the post of chargé, as the executive officer of a ship might be raised to temporary command after the captain's death. He dismissed the issue simply by saying that it had never been raised and that he had the power.

The result of the manoeuvering was Slacum's issuing an ultimatum: give us some assurance that your government will abandon its policy of harrassment or Commander Duncan will sail to the Falklands forthwith. The response to this badgering was an even more peremptory note from Anchorena which arrived on the morning of the 9th of December, as Duncan was about to sail. If Commander Duncan sailed and interfered with Vernet's rights, "which until this time nobody has questioned," the government would not only protest to the United States, it would take whatever steps were necessary to protect its rights in the matter. In a thrust at Slacum's vanity Anchorena said:

> . . . the Senor Consul labors under a very remarkable error in believing that this government has considered him the representative of the United States since the death of Senor Forbes . . . and he ought to consider that he could not be considered as otherwise than a consul . . . and the limits of consular functions among which the principal is to see that his fellow citizens respect the law and authority of the country in which he resides . . .[15]

This letter served only to enrage the consul who, in the company of his successor, insisted on his right to represent the United States and said that Duncan would now have to sail. He then wrote a letter to Secretary of State Livingston. The letter was hasty, since the ship that would carry it to the United States, the *St. Peter*, was about to leave. Among other things Slacum opined that . . . it is indeed time

> that this government should be made sensible to their obligations . . . to render justice to our citizens . . .[16]

In the *Lexington*'s forenoon watch log for December 9th, 1831, Lieutenant Stallings noted that

> . . . at 10 hoisted the launch out to assist in weighing the kedge of the St. Peter . . . Capt. Gilbert R. Davison and Mr.

> John Trumbull of the schooner Harriet came on board . . . at meridian got underway . . .[17]

Thus, the cruise of the U.S.S. *Lexington* began. There are three basic sources of information about that period: the ship's logbook, a report transmitted to Navy Secretary Woodbury, and various Buenos Aires newspapers. The log makes virtually no mention of the captain's actions, his account being confined to his report. The newspapers present the reactions of the civilians who were directly involved. Each source gives vital aspects of the situation.

According to log entries, the *Lexington* reached the islands on the 26th of December, 1831, and actually entered Berkely Sound on the forenoon watch of the 27th. Her officer of the deck hoisted a signal forward, though he made no mention of its content in the log. The entries until the 31st of December are routine, confined to matter of simple routine. On that day, however, Lt. Newman noted:

> . . . at 1145 sent the gig and the 4th cutter ashore—crews armed . . . at 1200 Mr. Brisbane and Mr. Metcalf were brought on board . . .[18]

There are no remarkable entries until the 10th of January, 1832, when Francis Reese and Henry Lee were sent on board the Schooner *Dash* to make the rescue trip to Staten Island. On the 21st of January, as the remains of William McIntyre were sent ashore for burial, thirty-two civilians were brought aboard with their foodstuffs for voyage to Argentina. This total of thirty-nine civilians together with the crew made a twelve-day cruise to Buenos Aires.

If Commander Duncan said nothing about his actions for the ship's log, he had a detailed report ready to send to Navy Secretary Woodbury when the *Lexington* arrived at Montevideo. In the report he cited earlier correspondence with Slacum, Captain Davison's affadavit, and his orders from Commander Benjamin Cooper, USN, in U.S.S. *Warren*. His chief complaint, like Slacum's, was that Vernet had been selective in his alleged piracy:

> . . . he did not consider himself authorized to molest English vessels! he could not capture them with the same propriety that he could American . . .[19]

He further reported that upon arrival he had found the schooner *Dash* to which he sent Davison so that the distressed sailors might be rescued. He found guns on the beach which had been destined in his opinion to be used to "put a stop to American fisheries in these seas."

Declaring that Vernet's activities were of "the most iniquitous and



The Harriet, *73 tons, built by Cristopher Leeds at the Head of the River (Old Mystic) as a sloop for Captain Peleg Denison. She was rebuilt, deepened and rerigged as a schooner in 1828, when only three years old. Drawing by John Leavitt, from records in the Blunt White Library.*

illegal character," and that the participants were "a band of pirates," many of whom were ex-convicts, Duncan concluded that the only way to remove the threat was to convince those who could be identified as wrongdoers and remove the rest, many of whom had been deceived by Vernet, according to Duncan, from the islands. Therefore,

> . . . about forty persons with the exception of some Gou Chers (sic) or horsemen who were camped in the interior and are employed in killing cattle . . .[20]

were evacuated. Commander Duncan sailed away, believing that

henceforth there would be no interference with American commerce and that he would receive considerable credit for his role.

The evacuees and prisoners were released in Montevideo on February 4, 1832, and about a week later the *British Packet and Argentine News* carried what it styled "a description of the proceedings of the United States Sloop of War LEXINGTON against the colony at the Falkland Islands." The paper went on to say that Brisbane and Metcalf went on board at the urging of the captain who promptly put them in irons. Captain Davison rifled the Vernet storehouse for his sealskins and personal effects and put them on board the *Dash*. In early January, he and Captain Oliver Keating of New London were to rescue the seamen stranded on Staten Island. Other boats from the *Lexington* brought marines who destroyed the powder magazine and spiked cannons. According to the *Packet*, Duncan circulated rumors to the effect that those who stayed on the island would not be safe from retaliation of the sealers and thereby induced them to leave. Thus each version of the cruise gives different details, which have led to the perpetuation of a complex, unresolved situation.

The news from the refugees created an immediate explosive situation. Earlier, after receiving Anchorena's letter, in which his role as acting chargé had been questioned, Slacum had written a stern rejoinder. He maintained that Duncan's date of departure had been fixed by humanitarian considerations and that as for his failure to keep Davison in Buenos Aires prior to the scheduled court hearing, the whole matter of fishing rights was crucially important, not a matter "to be settled by local tribunals." Finally he exclaimed:

> . . . have not American vessels while engaged in lawful trade been captured and their cargoes forcibly taken . . . have not their crews American citizens been violently arrested and imprisoned . . .[21]

The sole reply to this letter was a communication written by Anchorena, suspending Slacum's right to deal with the government in any capacity, and attributing this break to

> . . . prejudices his conduct has existed, especially since the aggressions perpetrated by the commander of the USS LEXINGTON . . .[22]

The period after the cruise was used to rehabilitate the relations between the two governments insofar as this could be done consistent with their claims in the matter. George Slacum was cashiered as a consular officer. Commander Silas Duncan was



Martin Van Buren, vice president under Jackson, 1832. From Dictionary of American Portraits. *Dover Publications, New York, 1967.*

commended for his performance of duty in protecting American fishing rights and in rescuing the crew of the *Belville*, whose members had remained alive by eating penguins! Secretary Woodbury was plain when on April 4, 1832, he held that:

> . . . The President of the United States approves of the course which you followed and is gratified by the firmness of your measures . . .[23]

However, this left a difficult situation to be dealt with by Commodore George Rodgers, USN. What should be done with the prisoners, identified by Davison and removed as pirates by Duncan? Joshua Bond, who served as consul following Slacum, wrote to Secretary Livingston of the matter later. The Commodore felt that inasmuch as the possession of the island by Vernet and his followers was notorious and recognized to be so by the majority of Americans residing at Buenos Aires, it would be very difficult for an American court to convict the prisoners taken by Duncan as pirates. The government would simply, in Rodgers' view, be put to the needless expense of returning innocent men to Argentina. Shortly after making this decision, Commodore Rodgers died, and all of the Americans in the city signed a letter of condolence to his widow, attesting to his "wise and politic conduct during a period of excitement."[24]

This did not solve the fisheries question. Commander Duncan was relieved by Commander Isaac McKeever, USN. Commander McKeever reported the further harassment of New London fisher-

men. Not even a year passed since the *Lexington*'s cruise. On December 7, 1873, Colonel José De Pinedo, commanding the *Sarandi*, stopped the American schooner *Sun* of New London, and in a burst of vulgar language directed that ship to "discontinue fishing for the Seal and return to her country." McKeever proceeded to the islands and for the future recommended patrols of U.S. naval vessels.[25] Thus the affair ended, except for the establishment by the British of a permanent colony. The Argentine government made a claim for indemnification by the United States that was rejected by President Cleveland in 1885. He held that Vernet's possession of the island was illegal, a significant misstatement.

Some conclusions seem warranted from an examination of the reports and diplomatic correspondence in this situation. Commander Duncan acted in a way that was heavy handed, evidenced by the use of the French flag subterfuge and the massive destruction of Vernet's property. If this is the case, he acted on the instructions or under the strong influence of a consul who at the very least was hopelessly vain, if not outwardly corrupt. It is a matter of documented fact that Slacum felt that if the islands were to remain in Vernet's hands they would become "a cuba," a haven for "vagabonds" and other undesirables. Consul Bond tells us that Slacum, his courier Platt Crosby and Duncan met on at least one occasion, and that it was widely believed that the two men convinced the Captain to sail and uproot the colony.[26] Slacum could have stopped the cruise by seeing Duncan rather than delivering the letter to the *St. Peter* for mailing to Livingston. Had his dignity not suffered, he might have. There is little apparent reason for Duncan to have been suspicious of Slacum's motives. There was no reason to suspect that Duncan knew of Slacum's earlier clashes with authority, and if Slacum's later behavior, in trying to prevent Joshua Bond from conferring with Commodore Rodgers is any indication of his earlier actions with Duncan, he may have prevented the *Lexington*'s captain from seeing those with views different from his.

It may simply be that Silas Duncan was overawed by the strong positions that the Jackson administration had taken on the question of fishing rights, and that motivated in part by a spirit of national assertiveness, he was not about to let a challenge such as Vernet's go unanswered. Whatever the case, he was complimented by merchant captains such as Oliver Keating of New London, who wrote him

> . . . hoping that your promptness and alacrity in protecting

> our commerce will be duly appreciated and rewarded . . .[27]

Though Rodgers did release the prisoners taken at Port Louis, Duncan's position—that Vernet's possession of the islands was illegal and that his acts were piracy—had never been explicitly repudiated by the United States government.

Commander Silas Duncan retired from active service shortly after his cruise and returned to the village of Aylett, Virginia, twenty-five miles east of Richmond. There in February, 1831, he married Miss Martha Dandridge Aylett, a cousin of Patrick Henry. The tax records of King William County, Virginia, show that the couple owned two plots of land, about a dozen slaves and two carriages. The charming houses in which they were married and in which they lived until her death in November, 1833, still stand, though Aylett is no longer a thriving port town. The Richmond *Enquirer*, of September 20, 1834, reports his death:

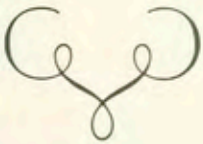
> . . . in the 42nd year of his life of an affection of the liver . . . He was manly, frank, brave and open-hearted . . . to sum up his character in one word it was that of a gentleman . . .[28]

In his letter to Secretary Livingston, earlier cited, George Slacum complained that the Argentine government wanted to have control over the Falkland Islands, but that resources and domestic politics were so scarce and unstable that it could not afford to supervise Vernet's exercise of power.[29] Now, according to a December 10, 1972, issue of the Washington *Post*, Britain is faced with a shrinking of its resources that will result in its powers being placed in more strategically useful locations.[30] This may soon result in the return of the islands to Argentine control, the goal of every Argentine political party since 1840. The same arguments used by Dr. Johnson in 1771 to prevent the settlement of a "cheerless and desolate place," are now being used to justify withdrawal or, in the Argentine patois, "repatriation."

The *Post* goes on to attribute Argentina's loss of the islands solely to the "intervention of a marauding U.S. warship." It would be just to say that Duncan's actions were ill-advised and perhaps sterner than required. It may be, though there is no positive evidence to prove it, that there was collusion between the consul and the captain. However, to equate his actions with those of a plunderer, given the circumstances of the 1830s in Argentina, seems gratuitous. In

August, 1833, the British *Packet* predicted that "the matter is not likely to be soon set at rest."

It will be fascinating indeed to see how the diplomats settle the affairs set in motion by the cruise of U.S.S. *Lexington*, under the Command of Commander Silas Duncan, USN.



NOTES

1. Report of the Secretary of the Navy, Levi Woodbury, 9 December 1831.

2. Record Group 45, National Archives, Secretary of the Navy orders to Master Commandant Silas Duncan, USN, 10 June 1834.

3. Richmond, Virginia, *Enquirer*, 20 September 1834.

4. Record Group 45, National Archives, letter from Master Commandant Duncan to Secretary of the Navy Mahlon Dickerson, 28 May 1834.

5. Consular Despatches, Argentina, Volume IV, letters from Chargé d'affaires John W. Forbes to Consul George W. Slacum 17 August 1826 and 3 September 1826.

6. *Idem.*

7. Letter from George W. Slacum to Secretary of State Henry Clay, 29 January 1827.

8. Letter from Consul Joshua Bond to Secretary of State Edward Livingston, 6 October 1832.

9. Letter from George Slacum to Secretary of State Martin Van Buren, 14 June 1831.

10. On 13 June 1831, Duncan's orders were supplemented by the instructions to report to consular officers on his cruise southward.

11. Deposition of Captain Gilbert R. Davison of Stonington, Connecticut, Master of the *Harriet.*

12. *Idem.*

13. Letter of Thomas Manuel Anchorena, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

14. Letter of Consul George Slacum to Silas Duncan, 30 November 1831.

15. Letter of Thomas Manuel Anchorena to Consul Slacum.

16. Letter of George Slacum to Secretary of State Edward Livingston, 9 December 1831.

17. Logbook, U.S.S. *Lexington*, 9 December 1831.

18. This log entry is the only one in which there is any indication of force used against the population of the Falkland Islands.

19. Record Group 45, National Archives, Letter report of Cdr. Duncan to Levi Woodbury, 7 December 1831.

20. Record Group 45, National Archives, Letter report of Cdr. Duncan to Levi Woodbury, 3 February 1832.

21. Letter of 15 December 1831 from George W. Slacum to Thomas Manuel Anchorena.

22. Letter from Anchorena to Slacum, 4 March 1832.

23. Record Group 45, National Archives, Secretary of the Navy letter to Master Commandant Silas Duncan, 4 April 1832.

24. Letter of Joshua Bond to Secretary of State Edward Livingston, 6 October 1832.

25. Letter of Master Commandant Isaac McKeever, USN, to Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury, 16 January 1833.

26. Letter of Joshua Bond to Secretary of State Edward Livingston, 6 October 1832.

27. Letter of Captain Oliver Keating to Silas Duncan, 1 June 1832.

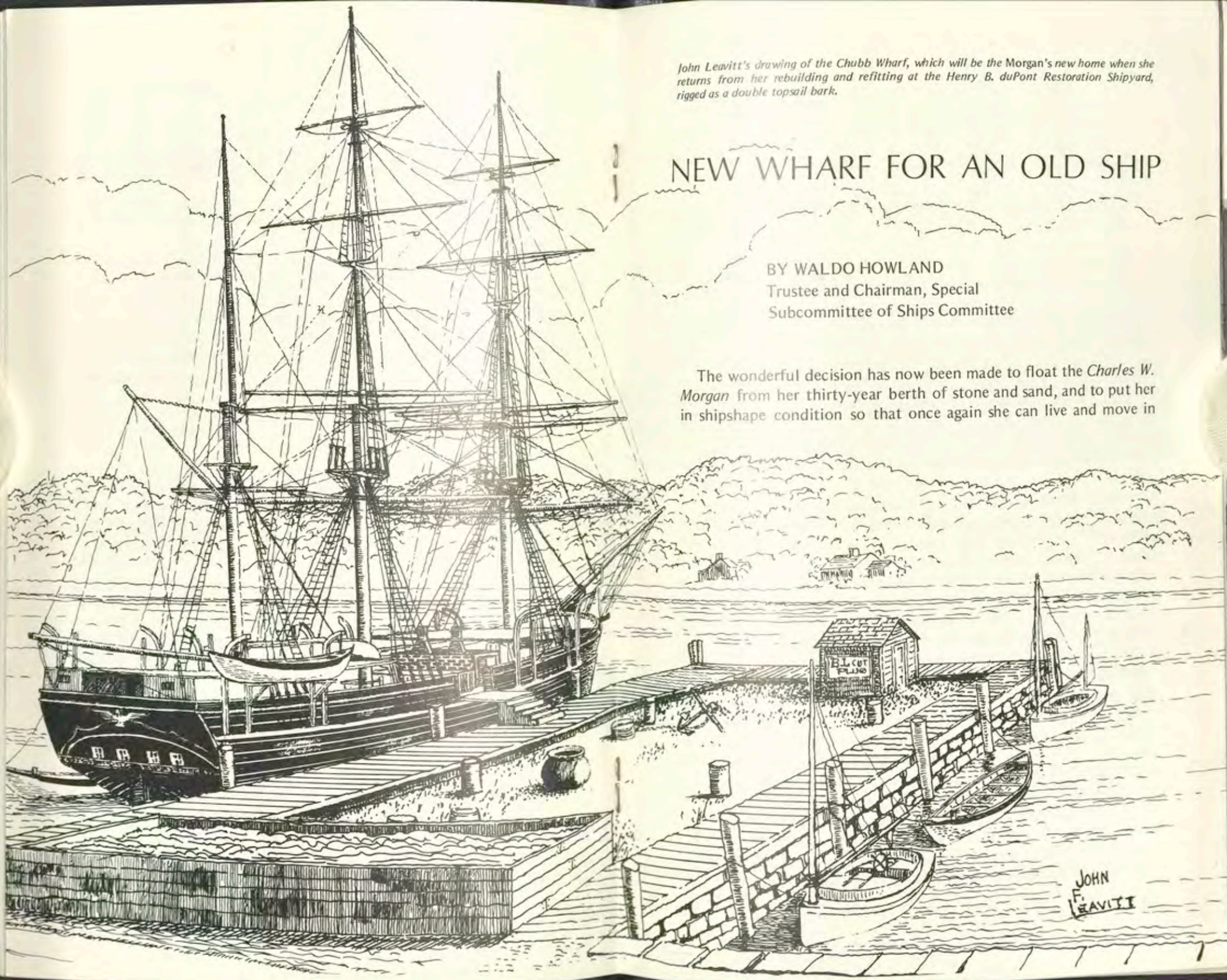
28. Richmond, Virginia, *Enquirer*, 20 September 1834.

29. Letter of George Slacum to Secretary Livingston, 9 December 1831.

30. The Washington *Post*, 10 December 1972.



Editor's Note: *Alexander Monroe was graduated from the University of Virginia in 1964, with the degree of B.A., with Distinction. He attended graduate school at the College of William and Mary, was awarded the M.A. in Government in August 1969, and is now Assistant to the President of The University Center in Virginia, an academic consortium.*



John Leavitt's drawing of the Chubb Wharf, which will be the Morgan's *new home when she returns from her rebuilding and refitting at the Henry B. duPont Restoration Shipyard, rigged as a double topsail bark.*

NEW WHARF FOR AN OLD SHIP

BY WALDO HOWLAND
Trustee and Chairman, Special
Subcommittee of Ships Committee

The wonderful decision has now been made to float the *Charles W. Morgan* from her thirty-year berth of stone and sand, and to put her in shipshape condition so that once again she can live and move in

her natural intended element. Much has already been done to implement this decision. Our Henry B. duPont Restoration Shipyard has been created and is in operation. An impressive amount of first-class rebuilding and repair work has been done and is being done on the *Morgan,* so that each day she becomes stronger and more ready for her new life afloat. The shipyard lift dock is substantially completed, so that when the time is right and when other pressing priorities have been accomplished, the *Morgan* can be hauled and her bottom recaulked and repaired as needed.

The next major step in the overall project is to plan and then build a fitting and suitable wharf for the *Morgan*. Only then can she be safe, and only in this way can she really look her part and do her job in forming a tangible link between us and the old whaling days. To build this wharf at this time is most exciting, as well as essential. How best to do it, however, does require a bit of thought and a bit of money – quite a bit!

First for the thought. It is strange that very little seems to be generally known or recorded about wharves, docks, piers, etc. In fact, the terms themselves are a bit hazy, at least in my mind. The structure which I bought in Padanaram Harbor from Colonel Green, a former owner of the *Morgan*, has been known for many years as Old South *Wharf*. Originally it consisted of a stone pier built on a ledge out toward the channel and connected to the shore by wooden piles and wooden decking. Later this wooden connection was replaced by stone walls with earth fill. Just to the south is what we call the Yacht Club *Dock* which consists of a wooden walkway on oak piles, with *finger piers* extending out on each side. Years ago when we could go to Europe by ship we used to board a liner at *pier* so-and-so, where she was *docked.*

Just to try to clarify at least some of the terms, I searched through an old encyclopedia only to find that *wharf* was not even indexed. *Pier* was a name given to a solid support of masonry or brick, which carries an arch or other similar structure, or the mole or jetty used to shelter a harbor. *Pier* also applied to a structure built out into the water with piles for use as a landing place. *Dock* was a term commonly used as synonymous with *wharves* or *piers* for the loading or discharging of vessels, cargoes or passengers, and in a more restricted sense applied to floating or stationery constructions for the building or repair of ships. *Dock* is also, and perhaps more correctly the slip or waterway extending between two piers for the reception of ships. Hence developed the verb to *dock* a vessel.



Niger *at a New Bedford wharf. William H. Tripp Collection, Mystic Seaport.*

Regardless of the original or accurate meanings of the terms mentioned above, the structures that were used by the whaleships in New Bedford were known as *wharves*. So a wharf it is that will be built for the *Morgan*. Although I have not as yet been able to uncover much helpful literature about local wharves, my friend John Leavitt did locate for me a most interesting book in the Blunt White Library. It is a general dock engineering book and in many places well over my head, but it does make me more aware than ever of the many factors that have to be considered in planning a wharf, and also of the great amount of work that has to go into the construction of a useful and permanent one.

Wharves have a charm for almost everybody. We have all gone down to the wharf to see our ship off or wait for her arrival. We instinctively know of their importance and the fact that they form the main link between sea and land. Why then have they received so little attention in written or pictorial records, and why have ships received so much? I suppose that ships are more romantic and



Merrill's wharf, New Bedford, with, left to right, Platina, C.M. Morris, Eliza Adams.

impressive in their motion and their beauty. Like the foundations of our houses, and perhaps of our own lives, we seem to take wharves for granted.

All over the world, harbors have unquestionably been an important factor in the growth of the surrounding countryside. It is not always the best natural harbors, however, that have become the most important shipping centers, but more generally the ports with the best wharves and docking facilities. To be sure, many factors are involved, but it is interesting to consider a few well-known harbors. For instance, Newport, Rhode Island, is one of the great natural harbors, but it has never become a big shipping port. Boston has never developed its dock facilities to their possible potential. New York has a big natural harbor and has also developed its facilities to accommodate a huge fleet. Baltimore would not seem to have a great natural harbor, but it is a big shipping center. I guess the point I am trying to make is that our Mystic waterfront, as well as our ships, must continue to receive thoughtful consideration if our whole image is to have true meaning.

All this brings me to wondering just why New Bedford should have become the great whaling port it did. Unquestionably there was a good deapwater harbor, well located for small sailing ships. And certainly it either had, or developed, suitable wharves from which to carry on the whaling industry. This would seem to make a knowledge of the old wharves in New Bedford of some importance before starting to plan the wharf for the *Morgan*. So as a starter I went down to the New Bedford waterfront and there I found, as I had

expected, that many of the old whaling wharves, in whole or in part, are still in existence. Although modified for new industries, a few continue in active use. This to me is a great tribute to the men who planned and built them 150 years ago. So how did they do it?

The old wharves are all basically stone. The walls for the most part are rough stone with two or three good faces, carefully fitted and placed to form an even, strong, outer surface. The upper areas, especially the caps, are often hand-split and of a more rectangular shape. The stone itself is granite and unquestionably acquired locally. Present wooden extensions and fender piles are obviously new, and surfaces of the wharf fill must have changed from time to time to suit the current need. This is about all that I could see with my own eyes. So, not finding any detailed literature on the subject and not being able to locate any living 150-year-old men, I have had to piece together a few comments. These are based on bits of conversation and a few general articles as well as some firsthand experience.

Certainly it must have been desirable to locate a wharf where it was near deep water and where the land approach was practical for traffic on wheels. Protection in bad weather most surely was a factor. And in those days of sailing ships without power, the direction and force of the tidal current must have been considered. Prevailing winds could make a real difference in planning the angles and location of a wharf. The length and depth of the vessel to be berthed must have helped to determine the size of the wharf. Likewise the cargo to be unloaded and perhaps temporarily stored must have affected its area. Routine maintenance of the vessels as well as extensive overhauls had to be accomplished at the wharves. Building materials must have depended on availability and cost as well as an assessment of the need for permanency.

With wood very available and cheap, the earliest wharves used this material in many forms. For some, piles were driven close together to form a retaining wall or three-sided bin, the shore side of which was filled with small stones or gravel. Such wharves were subject to the washing action of waves and tide. The pilings were subject to worms and rot. Another form of wood structure was a crib arrangement where logs were built up horizontally, much like a log cabin but with more open seams. These were floated into place and filled with beach or field stones and rocks to sink and hold them in place. Wharves built in this manner were quite durable and not so much subject to wave action, but the wood was still vulnerable to worms, and above



New Bedford wharf scene. William H. Tripp Collection, Mystic Seaport.

water, to rot. Such wharves or piers can still be seen in Maine, along the St. Lawrence River and in other areas where wood and stone are plentiful.

A more expensive but usually more permanent type of wharf was one made of stone walls with earth fill. The walls were made in different ways. Some were just laid-up rocks with a wide base, especially on the inside, and a narrow top. Others had more elaborate fitted stone walls made of split stone with two or more flat faces. When tools were developed for shaping stone more economically, more regular blocks were used, especially for the upper cap stones.

I am told that many of the big stone wharves in New Bedford (and elsewhere) were built on huge mats of timber shaped to the size of the wharf wanted, then floated into place and held in position with wooden piles. The stone walls were built on top of these mats and this weight plus the fill gradually sank the mat as construction progressed. The fact that it took considerable time to build the walls allowed the mat to become well settled in the mud before the wharf was completed and leveled at the top. This type of wharf building is to me a fascinating project, and one that I would very much liked to have seen in progress. I know there must have been all sorts of factors and special situations involved in designing and fastening

together the great mat. And many a time the mat must have slipped out of position, resulting in a permanent modification of the original design. Apparently when completely covered with mud the timber foundation for a wharf will last indefinitely. During recent changes in the Nantucket waterfront a number of huge pine logs were brought to the surface in good condition, after being buried for 100 years or more.

My friend Mr. Linberg at Fairhaven Marine has had many years of experience in wharf and bridge work and he told me of the removal of one of the railroad bridge piers, I think in New London, which supplied several surprises. At some stage, when enough of the stone had been removed, a huge wooden structure came to the surface. It was some 30' x 80' x 20' high of solid wood — 12" x 12" timbers drifted together. The wood was all in good condition and turned out to be a real extra dividend for the contractor. It is important to realize, however, that once old submerged timber gets back in the air again it is more subject to deterioration than new seasoned wood. This is just what happens to an old wood skiff if left in the water. It will stand many kinds of abuse for a long time, but if hauled out and left to the mercy of quick temperature changes, air, sun and fresh water, it will not last long.

The whaleship *Charles W. Morgan* is not a skiff, but she is a wood vessel, and it is a happy fact that her bottom, which has always been under water, even though in sand, still appears to be in sound condition. Now that she is to be floated again, and is also to receive a daily wetting down with salt water, deck and topsides, she will be much less subject to opening seams and rot. Daily care is better and cheaper than expensive repair.

I have been rambling on about wharves in general, but the important point is that the *Morgan* is now to have a new and traditional stone wharf of her own, one that is to be similar in concept to the old wharves of New Bedford, but which is being worked out specifically to fit into our seaport of Mystic. Plans are not as yet complete but considerable preliminary work has been done. The location is to be approximately where the *Morgan* now is, so that at her new wharf she will continue to be the focus, center and heart of the Seaport fleet. The length of the wharf is to be such that the vessel can lie to either side and face shore or channel, with the width of sufficient dimension so that she can lie across the end. Thus she can be berthed to take advantage of prevailing summer winds or gain protection from winter gales. In case of a hurricane she will be

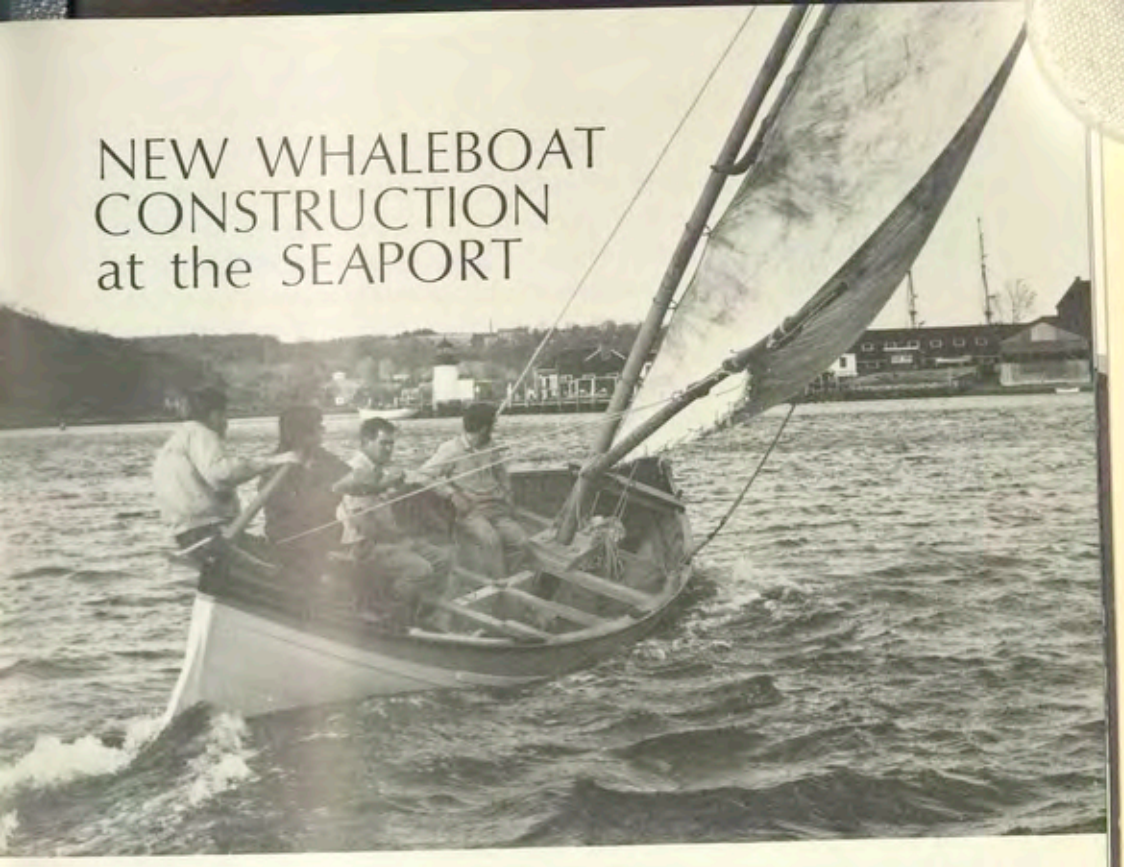
grateful that she can heel a bit and move slightly with the gusts, thus reducing sudden extra strains to her rigging and hull. She can also look forward to presenting her port side to the sun once in a while and this will be good for her.

The new wharf is not to be exactly rectangular, but rather the end will in general run parallel to the channel. The planned dimensions are approximately 150′ long x 100′ wide. There is only a two-and-one-half-foot rise and fall of tide at Mystic, so a high wall would not be practical for loading or off-loading cargo. The cap will be about seven feet above mean low water. The construction will be of rough stone, and similar in appearance to many of the old whaleship wharves. This means that the stones will vary in size and shape. They usually have several good faces so that they can be fitted in a locked position and also present a somewhat even wall on the outside. There will be oak fender piles on the two sides and, as often was the case in New Bedford, a wooden brow on the offshore end to form an extension. The center will be earth filled and the surface will vary in different areas to fit the need: some wood, some paving block, some bare or with grass or gravel. Correctly designed and placed bollards, a "dead man" for heaving down, a small utility shed, pens for oil casks, and other essentials will all tend to make the *Morgan* feel more at home and will give her admirers a more realistic impression of whaling days.

So much for the general thinking and planning. The new *Morgan* wharf might, for lack of funds, have had to stop or wait right here for many years to come except for the generosity and thoughtfulness of the Chubb family. Thomas Caldecot Chubb was born in London at about the same time the *Morgan* was built in New Bedford. He and his son, Percy I, were the original founders of the well-known and respected insurance managing firm of Chubb & Son of New York. Hendon Chubb, often called the "dean of American insurance," was Percy's younger brother and a man of outstanding ability and charm. It is in memory of this great man that the surviving members of the family wish to donate a wharf for the *Morgan*. Hendon's wife, now some ninety–six years young, his son Percy II and his wife and six children, and the wife and children of Thomas Caldecot, his other son (now deceased), have all joined together to make this a family memorial.

To have the *Charles W. Morgan* in shipshape condition, tied up as a living vessel to Chubb Wharf, will be an inspiration for all of us now and for others in years to come.

NEW WHALEBOAT CONSTRUCTION at the SEAPORT



Whaleboat #1 with reefed main and no jib sailing on the Mystic River. Photograph: Maynard Bray.

BY WILLITS D. ANSEL,
Boat Carpenter

During the past year two new whaleboats have been built at the Henry B. duPont Restoration Shipyard, a third is near completion and a half-dozen more are planned. To be used by the Youth Training Program, the demonstration interpreters, and for exhibit on the *Morgan*, these are perhaps the first whaleboats to be built in the United States since the early 1930s when the Beetle Company made their last whaleboats. In the Seaport boats, methods, design and materials follow as closely as possible those used in the stock models in the whale fishery. Though there were variations among builders, by the 1880s the whaleboat had evolved to a point where little further improvement seemed necessary, and the boats thereafter were of the same basic design.

In preparing for building the Seaport boats, a number of plans and

boats were examined: the whaleboats on hand at the Seaport, those at the Kendall Whaling Museum in Sharon, Massachusetts, and at the Whaling Museum in New Bedford. Scantlings were measured and sketches made. Plans for Beetle boats, two sets, and Leonard boats were compared for lines and construction details. First-hand information came from Leo Telesmanick, foreman of the Beetle Wooden Boat Company, an apprentice at the Beetle Shop when it was still making whaleboats.

Considerable minor variation was found in scantlings and some in materials and design. The Delano-built boats, for example, had stems with greater curve, and the Beetle boat plan, in one case, had less sheer. For the first boats, it was decided to follow the plan of a Leonard boat drawn by Davis and checked by William Hand, because its plans appeared the most detailed. The boat was just under 30'. Work by two men began in mid-July, and the first was completed by the end of October.

Whaleboats were cheaply but ruggedly built. Planking combines both lapstrake and batten seam construction. The oak frames are closely spaced and notched over laps and battens. The inside is ceiled and heavy wales and seat knees strengthen the sheer. The result is a light but very strong boat. They were built quickly, and there were patterns for planks and other parts of the stock models. The boats were considered expendable, and were not built for longevity; therefore, some of the materials, such as the spruce risers and thwarts, were selected for their lightness and strength rather than rot resistance. The same materials went into the Seaport boats, and it is expected that they will be used and in time replaced.

Whaleboats are built right side up on bearers. Generally five, though sometimes seven, molds were placed on the keel. Boats were planked around the molds and frames, then fitted. Ceiling, seats, seat knees and fore and after decks followed. The keel, a single piece of oak about 8' shorter than the boat, has tapered ends, and the underside is rabbeted to receive the garboards. The seaport boats have a keel 1-3/4" x 7-1/2". A 1" slot is sawn for the centerboard. The keel is fastened to the bearer, which is cut to give a very slight rocker to the boat. Molds are set up on the keel and held by shores to the overhead.

Stem and stern posts are steam bent. After two hours in the steam box, the posts were bent to the same curvature over a form and staid with a steel band to prevent straightening. Bands remain on during most of the construction. Stem and stern posts were riveted to the

keel with two fastenings. Rabbets, cut before bending, were faired-up.

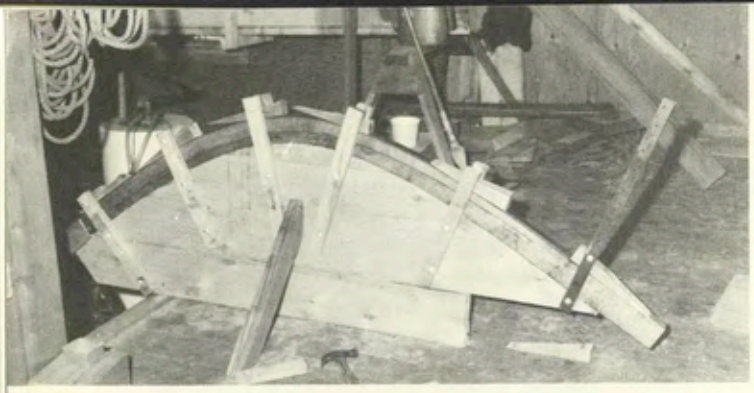
The method of planking with batten seams between the lapped strakes is time-consuming but makes for a quieter boat when approaching whales. The second plank laps the garboard and the carvel batten seams extend up to the top two strakes, which lap. Normally there were eight planks to a side. Plank lines tend to be straight and planking is fast. The planks at the turn of the bilge are not hollowed or backed out, as in most boat construction, but are warped. They are steamed and placed in a form with wedges, or warped by clamping convex and concave blocks across them at intervals. Left to cool, they acquire a hollow matching the curve of the side. The planks that lap are beveled for a dory lap at the ends. Clench nails spaced 4" apart fasten the laps. Battens are 1/2" cedar, as is the planking itself, and are fastened to the planking with galvanized clench nails.

There were variations in the design of wales. Some boats had a single wale and others an outer and inner wale with filler pieces between the seat knees. The latter seems to have been a later variant. The wales are white oak, and are steamed and bent into the boats before framing. After seat knees are installed, wales are fastened to them and to the rubbing strips with rivets. Framing follows. They are bent to the same curve over a trap, eighteen being steamed and bent at one time in the case of the Seaport boats. Frames may be straightened if necessary when fitted. They are notched over the laps and battens and fastened with 2 1/4" boat nails clenched on the inside of the frame.

Seat risers are Eastern white spruce running the full length of the boat and nailed to the frames. The boats are ceiled from the risers down to the centerline. Ceiling planks immediately below the risers are of uniform width their entire length. The pieces below were made up of scraps left from planking, short pieces and stealers scribed and fitted in place. Head and stern sheets, where harpooner and helmsman stand, are flat platforms at the ends. Their planking is laid herringbone fashion, the edges beveled to fit against the ceiling.

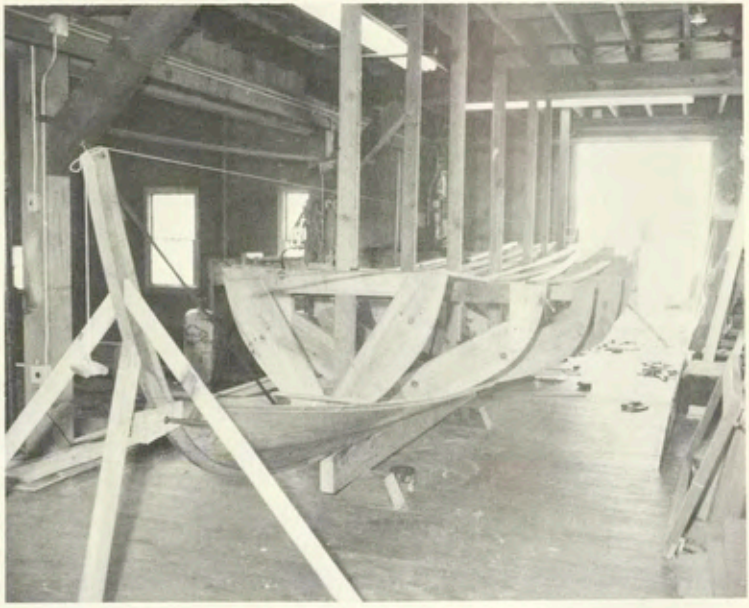
There are five thwarts of spruce. These are braced with steam-bent knees riveted to the wales and through the sides and guards under the first lap. The knees have a hard bend and were cut with a kerf before bending. As with the frames, soaking in the river resulted in fewer failures while bending.

Fore and aft decks are cross planked. The foredeck has the



Bending form for the stem.

7 Steps in Building a Whaleboat



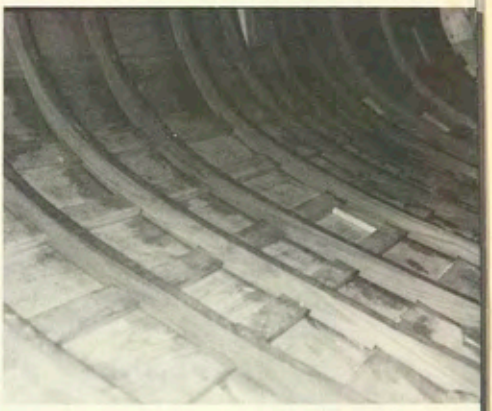
Planking up. The batten is in place for the 3rd strake.



Method of warping planks.



Form for bending frames.



Frames notched over
laps and batten.



The boat has been planked
and framed.



Hinged tabernacle and mast step.
All photographs: Mary Anne Stets

recessed warp box for the first few yards of line attached to the harpoon and the clumsy cleat, the thick plank with its notch for the harpooner to brace his leg. The afterdeck has the lion's tongue, a curved piece of oak for strengthening, and the loggerhead, a post for snubbing the line to the harpoon. The afterdeck also has an outrigger for the steering oar and a cleat.

Mast step and partners vary in design: the more expensive had a hinged tabernacle that allowed quick unshipping of the mast. This is supported across the first and second thwarts. The step is an oak block riveted through the keel. The centerboard, 5 1/2' long, weighted with lead and raised with a lever, is made of two oak planks drifted together. The top of the case is flush with the seats and covered.

Whaleboats are made strong at the bows, which take the strain of the line while being towed by the whale, with oak cheek pieces sawn to shape and riveted to each side of the stem. The sheer strake is cut short and is fastened in a rabbet in the after end of the cheek. On top are nailed the roller chocks, also massively made of oak.

There were many sailing rigs in whaleboats. Gaff, sprit, sliding gunter, leg-of-mutton, and lug sails were used, with and without jibs. The Seaport boats have a very highly peaked gaff and jib. The mast is 23'6" high and supported by Manila shrouds; the gaff is raised with a single haulyard. There is no forestay; the tack of the jib has an eye that hooks over a shoulder cleat on one side of the roller chock. The rig in general is very simple: there are no blocks; the main sheet is spliced onto a thimble on a bridle on the boom, and the jib haulyard through another thimble attached by a strap to the masthead. Lanyards through thimbles take up the shrouds. There is but one shiv at the top of the mast—for the main haulyard. Sailing, the boat showed a rig that was rugged and effective with minimum opportunity for foul-ups.

The first two boats have been sailed and rowed on the Mystic River, and one was sailed twice around Fishers Island in a test of performance. Under sail they are very fast off the wind and reasonably weatherly close-hauled. At first they were sailed without ballast and proved very tender; then twelve hundred pounds of lead was added, which brought them down and stiffened them considerably. Under oars the boats are maneuverable and fast. It is planned to equip at least three boats with sails.

Director's Message

During recent years Mystic Seaport has undergone change—change that has been reflected not only in the operation of this institution but, even more dramatically, in the affairs of this nation and the world. All of us here have been part of this change—change which has increased in tempo since World War II and has not only affected the lives of each of us but, in most cases, has passed us by, leaving us confused and concerned.

We can truthfully say that in the velocity of history, tomorrow very rapidly becomes today's history before we even are aware today has passed. At Mystic Seaport what we are seeking to do is slow down change. We seek to provide a permanence to history, a tie with our past that is changeless. But this is paradoxical—because to maintain and to administer a changeless cultural environment here, we, ourselves, fall victims to the general cultural unease that pervades this country, and struggle to make changes in order to remain changeless.

In this cultural unease, all of the familiar buoys that once marked our course seem to have broken from their moorings or been towed away. What are these buoys for which we grope? They are familiar to all of us—marker buoys of inspiration, reassurance, religious convictions, faith in our fellow man, in government, belief in self discipline, personal integrity.

Thus, if we are to keep Mystic Seaport changeless, we must be forever changing in our presentations, our teaching, our administration, our museum programs. In other words, we must find a fully responsible role and we must be a crusading force that constantly improves and widens the bridge that connects today with the yesterdays that with each passing year and each succeeding generation grow more remote.

I daresay that during the past eight years this museum has changed more than at any other comparable period in its history. Some of these changes were long overdue, some were thrust upon us in keeping with external change around us, and some were inspired by our own initiative. To survive, we have become a large museum, and we have undertaken projects that a few years ago seemed impossible. We have saved our ships—but more than that, we have built a shipyard, a truly remarkable and efficient facility unequalled in the world of maritime museums; and we have built a staff capable of performing any function of ships geriatrics or ships pediatrics, and we have assembled a fleet of over 200 historic craft.

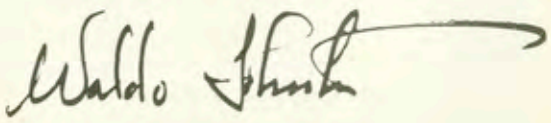
As a result of this, Mystic Seaport has achieved world recognition primarily—but not solely—for this feat alone, and has been asked to take the leadership in forming the International Congress of Maritime Museums and the Council of American Maritime Museums.

These accomplishments have extracted a price—a price we have recognized and been willing to pay as a necessary cost toward attainment of goals. We cannot ignore the fact that we have grown bigger, and in so doing the museum has lost something of its former informality and personal touches.

To survive in a world of change we have had to become a large, complex business with a permanent staff of over two hundred souls and an annual operating budget that has tripled in eight years. We have built a fine group of professional museologists and assumed a leading role as a fully recognized American Museum, as evidenced by accreditation by the American Association of Museums accorded us last fall.

To accomplish these aims and to remain a vibrant, dynamic institution require ever-increasing amounts of money—lots of it. There is no alternative if this place is to continue to be an ongoing institution, and thus we are engaged in a continuing development program of considerable dimension. In contemplation of this program, I hope we have come to view ourselves not as *recipients* of philanthropy but as *participants* in a philanthropic activity essential to the national well-being and the local economy. We deal in intangibles that bring pleasure, knowledge and spiritual regeneration to countless people, and we preserve crafts, skills and examples of individual accomplishment far removed from a society that measures progress in terms of mechanization and assembly line productivity.

This society—if it is to relieve its cultural uneasiness and develop long-term dimensions—must look to its Mystic Seaports to restore its faith in individual enterprise and rekindle the dignity of man. To accomplish this, I believe American industry and business must join with our cultural institutions in a far closer partnership than now exists. For until close rapport is established and mutual benefits flow, American museums will wither and America, by losing contact with her past, will jeopardize her ability to face the future.



Annual Meeting
July 20, 1973

NEW EXHIBITS





One of the most important exhibits, in its beginning stages now and which will take several years to complete, is the reconstruction of the *Benj. F. Packard* cabin. This 244-foot sailing ship was built in Maine in 1883 and was typical of the large ships succeeding the clippers as cargo and passenger carriers around Cape Horn. Before it was destroyed in the 1930s, some of the paneling and furniture was removed and brought to the Seaport, where it has been stored ever since.

The *Packard's* anchor is outside the entrance. The two photographs here show the anteroom, dominated by the great wheel. Other memorabilia include her cat hook, a ship's model, photographs of her captains, crew and cabins, and sketches of one of her crews. Next to be worked on will be the cabin, but since this exhibit is a building within a building, and since an original building may not be changed in any way, planning environmental controls to ensure the longevity of the paneling requires extraordinary engineering know-how, and takes time. Photographs: Mary Anne Stets.

ACQUISITIONS

Two unusual flat-bottom boats have been added to our collection. The one being bulldozed out of the Maine wilderness, below, is a standard lumberman's bateau which was used for log driving operations by the Great Northern Paper Company on Moose Head Lake, Maine. A traditional nineteenth-century type, it was developed by Maine lumbermen on the Penobscot, St. John and Kennebec Rivers, and fits into our series of flat-bottom boats going back to the Colonial bateaux used in the French and Indian Wars. Photograph: John Gardner. Our other new boat is a Piscataqua River wherry, shown here in the small boat lab where a replica is being built for its donor, David Wherren, of Elliot, Maine. The wherry itself was built between 1850-1870 to contend with the tidal currents of the Piscataqua, which often run as high as nine knots. This handsome, flat-bottom boat bears a striking resemblance in some of its construction details to the Somersetshire (England) flatners, and is a subtype of the New England dory family now extinct. Photograph: Mary Anne Stets.





BOOK REVIEWS

THE SAILOR'S WORLD by Arthur Beiser. *Random House Publishing Company, New York, 1972.* $15.

The way to a sailor's heart is via a picture of his vessel, be it a leaky, slow, disreputable "crab-crusher," or a $?00,000 extension of a successful businessman's desire to "be the best" in all fields of personal endeavor.

Stanley Rosenfeld has recorded a fine cross section of the yachting world, more often than not in flawless color. No less than eight photographers' work is included, including Beken, Bill Robinson and the author, Arthur Beiser. Those of us who have tried to pick up a distant buoy with a pair of 7 x 50's can appreciate the skill and judgment required to capture a yacht on film from a yawing, pitching, heaving platform.

Even in a slow passage through the book, one must pause, after looking carefully at how a sail is trimmed, or *Zephyros*'s rudder angle during a spinnaker knockdown off Block Island, or admiring *Rogue*'s magnificent lines developed by N.G. Herreshoff, to absorb the artistry contained within these covers. It can only be appreciated by going back to the book again and again. One must not forget to make a careful study of the sailors recorded, for postures, countenances and clothing reveal the well-known fact that sailors are more interesting than people. Regardless of where one sails or would like to sail in the world, the reader finds a taste of *The Sailor's World* —whether on the Baltic or Lake Dillon.

The author of a book of this sort has a far more difficult task than the photographer, not only because, as any race committee member knows, "Sailors can't read," but primarily because a survey book cannot be everything to everyone.

The breadth of coverage by the author is much too ambitious. A sampling from the contents page (which is quite different graphically) includes Racing, Cruising, Storms, Night Sailing, Seamanship, as well as two chapters specifically relating to the author's cruises. Beiser is a scientist as well as a sailor and consequently we read of worldwide wind patterns and ocean current studies; there is even a table of downwind tacking angles.

There are so many facets of sailing that no single person's words can carry authority in all areas—the preordained fate of any author of a book of this type. One should read the preface carefully before being overly critical, because Beiser's stated purpose is to share his pleasures with the reader and entice him to proceed to the next step of sailing experience—be it racing or cruising. To further entice the reader to enjoy sailing, via the written word, he has included a bibliography guaranteed to totally absorb your winter, unless you live on the North Cape. The book is indexed also, but a bit abbreviated. The saving grace which offsets the attempted breadth of coverage is the inclusion of the author's personal experiences, related in a most readable manner. The reliving in words of his nights at sea and cruises to new harbours rival the quality of the photographs—and one can store away many helpful tips for future use.

Perhaps we should draw the same conclusion of the book that we do of the real "sailor's world." It is best enjoyed and most rewarding when we participate in a very personal way.

DONALD P. ROBINSON
Associate Director
for Administration

C.A. THAYER & THE PACIFIC LUMBER SCHOONERS by Roger Olmsted. *Department of Parks and Recreation, San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park, San Francisco, California, 1972.* 36 pages, 44 photographs. $1.50.

Twenty years ago, I recall seeing an old sailing ship with a green painted hull laying alongside an ancient codfishing wharf at Poulsbo, Washington, about eighteen miles from my home. She was the *C.A. Thayer,* a three-masted, bald-headed schooner built back in 1895, a relic of the past with a very uncertain future at that particular time.

However, by means of this splendidly written booklet, Roger Olmsted has shown by story and picture that the *Thayer* is a living ship today through the efforts of countless dedicated individuals as well as the California State Park system. Moreover, the booklet illustrates by select photographs that the efforts to keep a wooden ship in repair can be very rewarding as well as very disheartening when dry rot is discovered unexpectedly.

I may be a bit partial to the *Thayer* since I worked on her ten years ago when she was being restored for eventual exhibit at the San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park at the foot of Hyde Street near Fisherman's Wharf. In fact, Roger Olmsted likewise worked on the restoration project some months before I did. However, one of his chief functions was to catalogue much historical data in reference to the State Historic ship fleet which consists of the *Thayer,* the walking beam ferry *Eureka,* steam schooner *Wapama* and the little scow schooner *Alma.*

The selection of photographs is unusually excellent and briefly follows the career of the *Thayer* and the people of her time. Not content with staid harbor scenes, the author has selected an array of photographs which give the person who has been aboard the ship some of the feeling of the hard work involved in sailing ships like the *Thayer.* Probably the most stirring scene is the one on the cover—taken at sea in 1957 by Karl Kortum, director of the San Francisco Maritime Museum—when the *Thayer* made her final voyage down the coast from Seattle to San Francisco.

This is not meant to be a complete history of the ship. The text is only about ten pages. However, Olmsted has done well not to write just a brief history of the *Thayer,* but to give some of the background as to why the Pacific lumber schooners were built, the type of people who sailed them, as well as how the *Thayer* has been restored to her present state.

MICHAEL JAY MJELDE
Author of *Glory of the Seas,*
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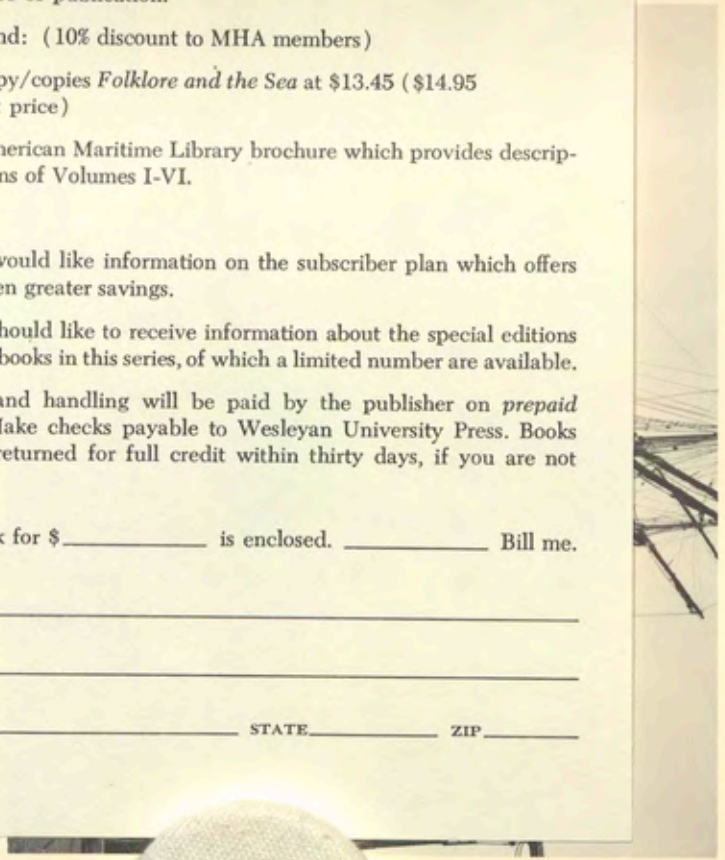
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April 15, 1921. From the Curtis Collection at Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma. Front cover, Steamboat Sabino, built at East Boothbay, Maine, in 1908, has joined the Seaport maritime fleet as a fully interpreted exhibit. Drawing by William H. Ewen, Jr. Back cover, striped reception tents and dressed ships await the Seaport's forty-fourth Annual Meeting crowd on July 20. Photograph: Les Olin.

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Above, The Benj. F. Packard *on the Todd Shipyard floating dock at Seattle on April 15, 1921. From the Curtis Collection at Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma. Front cover, Steamboat* Sabino, *built at East Boothbay, Maine, in 1908, has joined the Seaport maritime fleet as a fully interpreted exhibit. Drawing by William H. Ewen, Jr. Back cover, striped reception tents and dressed ships await the Seaport's forty-fourth Annual Meeting crowd on July 20. Photograph: Les Olin.*



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