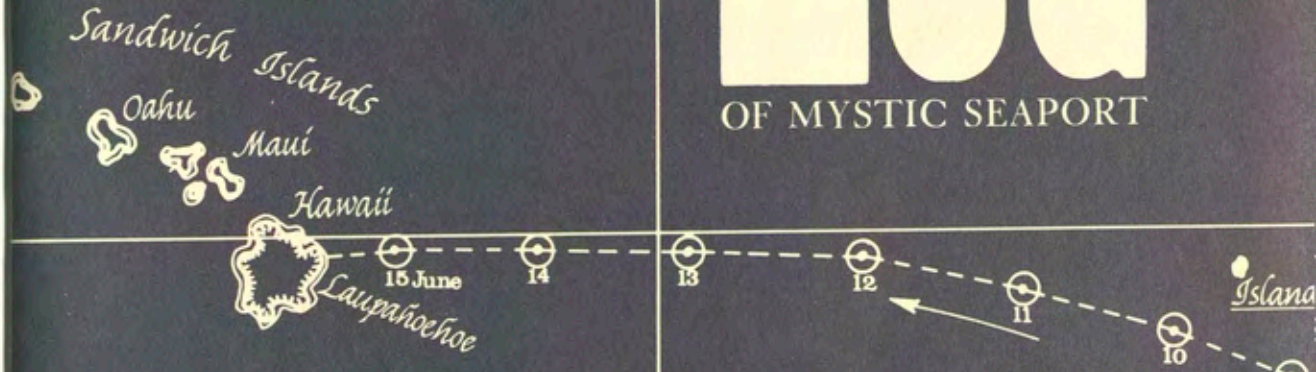
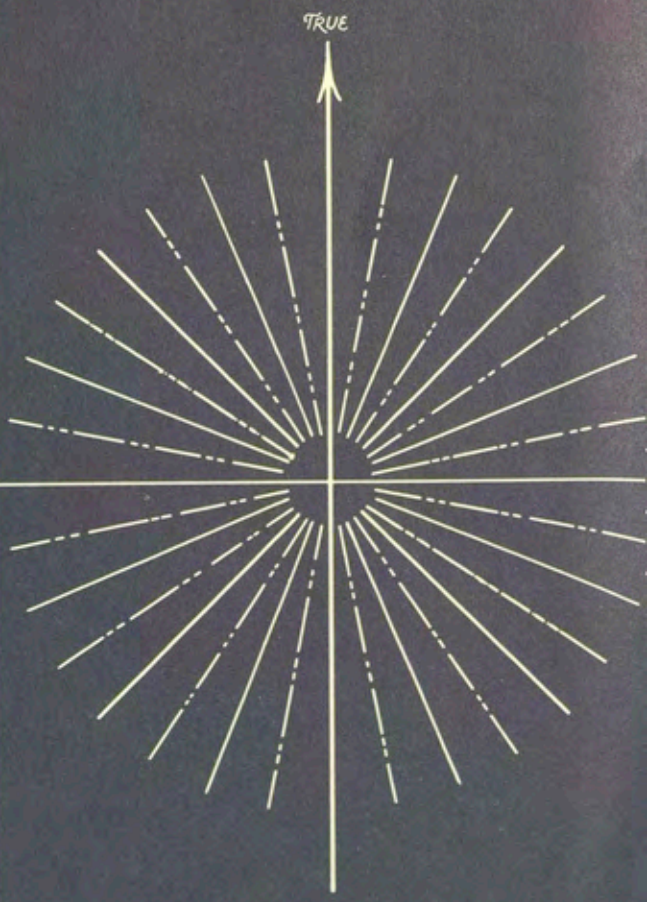
October 1976

THE LOG OF MYSTIC SEAPORT





Voyage of the HORNET Longboat

3 May – 15 June 1866

Traced from 1852 Imray Chart

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COVER: *The final week of a desperate voyage in an open boat made 110 years ago. The story of the* Hornet *survivors is told by Alexander Crosby Brown.*

FACING PAGE: *A coal barge and tug head down the Mystic River in this seventh of a series depicting early Mystic's maritime activities by the late John Faunce Leavitt.*

Volume 28, Number 3 / October 1976

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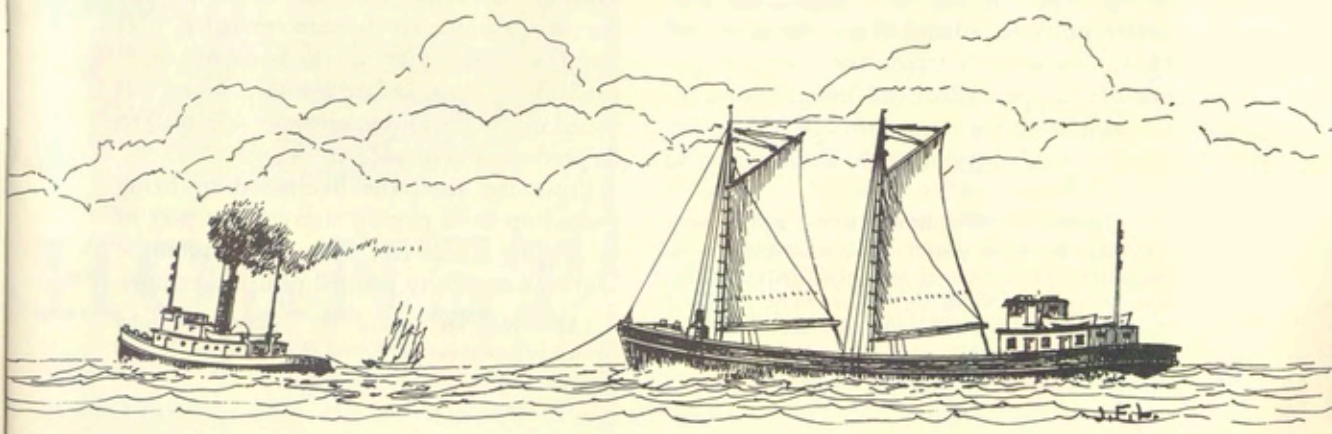
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Isles of Vain Hope

By ALEXANDER CROSBY BROWN*

On the morning of 3 May 1866, the California clipper ship *Hornet* was ghosting along through Pacific doldrums near the Equator. Behind her was the better part of a long trip out around Cape Horn from New York to San Francisco. On that fatal day the mate, carrying an open light, went below to draw some varnish from a cask. The varnish spilled and immediately ignited, flaring up through the open booby hatch. Within seconds the flames spread ravenously, alow and aloft, and the *Hornet*'s doom was sealed.

There were 32 persons on board the 15-year-old vessel commanded by Down East master mariner Josiah A. Mitchell. Two were passengers, the scholarly brothers Henry and Samuel Ferguson of Stamford, Connecticut, aged, respectively, 19 and 28. Hastily gathering whatever stores and gear they could assemble, the ship's company quickly embarked in the Hornet's three boats—a 21-foot longboat and two smaller quarter-boats. At best, they had garnered provisions for only ten days.

Nobody knew it, of course, but the longboat was actually setting forth on a 43-day voyage which would cover some 4,000 desperate miles to a landfall on the island of Hawaii—a world's record for the combination of time spent afloat and distance covered, eclipsing even the classic voyage of Captain Bligh in the *Bounty*'s launch. Unfortunately, the *Hornet*'s two quarter-boats, which separated from the longboat in mid-passage, were never heard from again and none of the 17 persons aboard them survived. But the captain, the two passengers and twelve crewmen in the longboat were saved.

In addition to their stores, the longboat's crew had with them the captain's and mate's sextants, two chronometers, two boat's compasses and a pocket compass, a copy of Bowditch's *The New American Practical Navigator* (very likely the 1860 edition), a chart, and three pocket-size journals[1] faithfully kept each day by Captain Mitchell and his two passengers. Although mention is made in the journals of "Sam's map," no word has come down concerning the general chart which was being used on board the *Hornet*. However, it might well have been similar to a mid-nineteenth-century edition of Captain James F. Imray's "Chart of the North Pacific Ocean Exhibiting the Western Shores of Asia and the Western Coast of North America," copies of which survive in the collections of the Mariners Museum at Newport News, Virginia, and at Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Connecticut. If not an Imray chart, at least we may assume that the ship carried a chart based on similar surveys, the latest of which available to them before the ship sailed was issued in 1864, and was virtually identical to its predecessors of 1852 and 1858.

From the first, the likelihood of being picked up by a passing ship in that part of the Pacific where fate chose to abandon the *Hornet*'s company seemed pitifully remote.

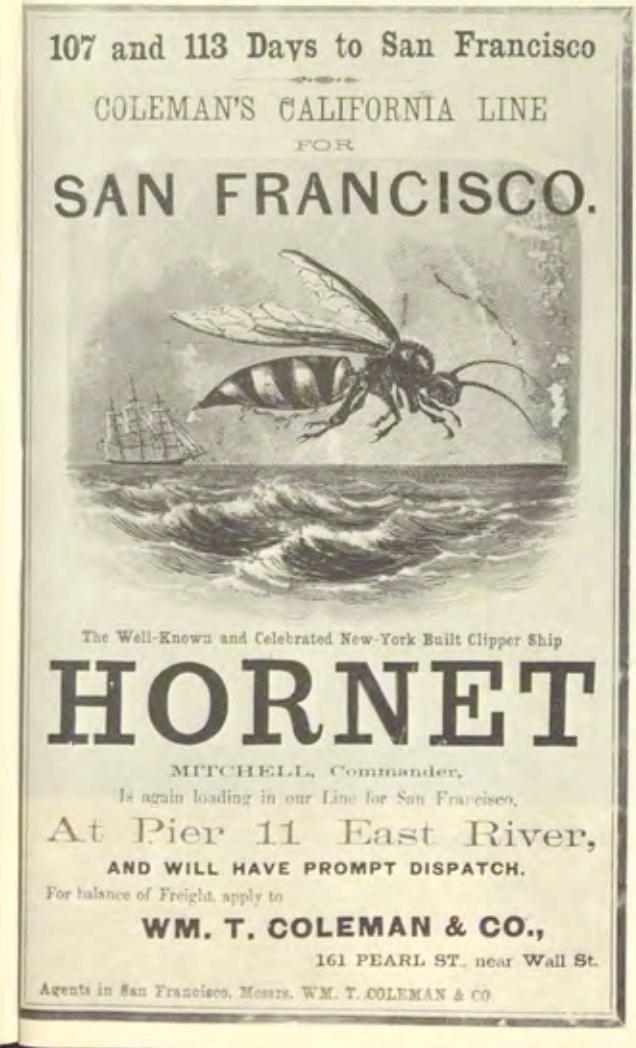
*Alexander Crosby Brown is the author of a number of books on maritime history and before his retirement was associated with the Mariner's Museum at Newport News, Va. A year ago he published "Longboat to Hawaii," the complete account of the *Hornet* longboat's epic voyage, together with Mark Twain's historic news report on the event.

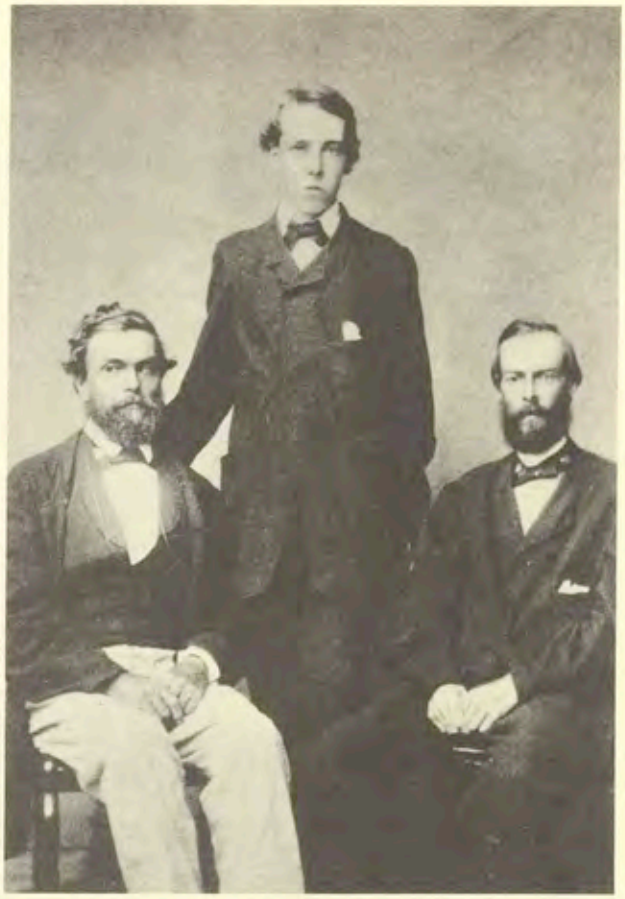
[1]Assembled and edited by Alexander Crosby Brown in *Longboat to Hawaii* (Cambridge: Cornell Maritime Press, 1974).

Captain Mitchell's immediate consideration, then, was to try to reach land—any land that might give them succor. In their position, land could only mean islands well off the mainland of Mexico or Central America, and the charts indicated that there were several small islands, lying not too distant from the place the *Hornet* sank, which were possibilities. The ship went down at 2° 04′ north latitude by 112° 00′ west longitude—about a thousand miles due west of the Galapagos Islands and approximately an equal distance from the coast of Mexico which lay to the north-eastward. However, both of these were to windward of the prevailing trade winds and hence virtually impossible to attain.

The *Hornet* burned furiously all day and night and then sank at dawn on 4 May. For a

The *Hornet*'s sailing card, posted in New York, was typical for the times, emphasizing her speed.



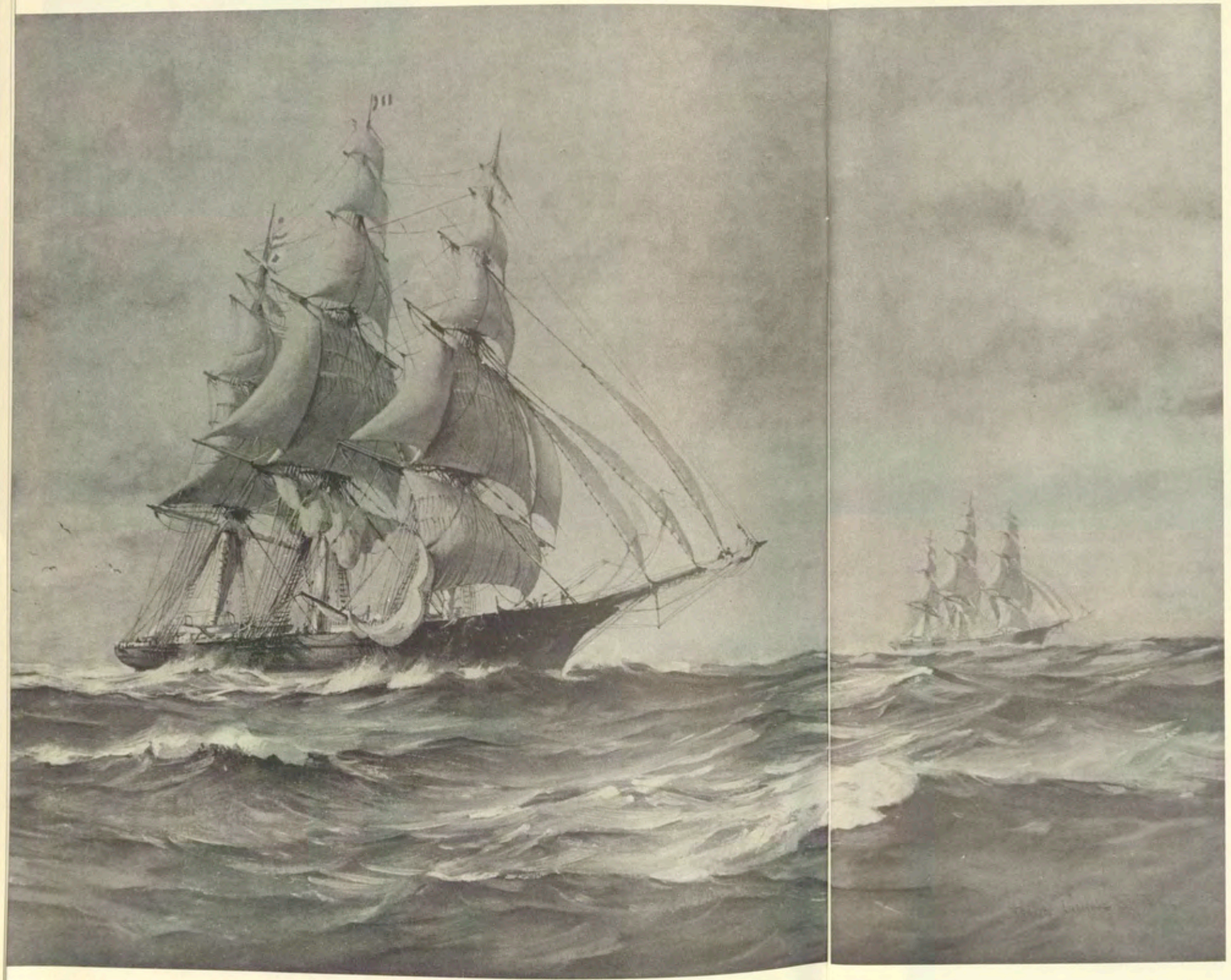


Captain Mitchell poses with Ferguson brothers Henry (*center*) and Samuel after their recovery in Hawaii.

while the men in the boats remained in the vicinity, vainly hoping that some vessel might have seen the spectacular glow in the sky and started to their aid. When nothing materialized, they raised their makeshift sails at 6:00 a.m. and headed northward, the longboat towing the quarter-boats in tandem.

The nearest actual land to where the ship sank was Clipperton Island (or Rock), a thoroughly inhospitable speck of terrain located in 10° 17′ north latitude by 109° 10′ west longitude. Clipperton was reported by W. H. Rosser[2] in 1870 as being "most dangerous," and being but little known "is thought by many not to exist." It is there, however, and Rosser further stated that from a distance "it

[2] W. H. Rosser, *The North Pacific Pilot, Part II* (London: James M. Imray, 1870), p. 289.



The *Hornet*, an extreme clipper, was a majestic sight under full sail on the high seas.



Albatross were frequently seen on the passage out. "[They] do everlastingly soar," wrote Henry Ferguson, "hardly ever moving their wings . . ."

appears not unlike a sail, but on nearer approach it presents the appearance of an immense castle."

At best, if they could have found it—and navigation in those tossing lifeboats was by no means accurate—Clipperton would have afforded the *Hornet*'s men but scant and temporary relief. Two weeks later, as they struggled north fighting gales, calms, torrential rain and searing sun, they did pass fairly close to the 62-foot high, rocky islet, as judged by numerous birds in sight. But the land itself eluded them, for they were headed off by contrary winds.

In any event Clipperton, while closest, was not their choice. Captain Mitchell initially announced their hoped-for destination as Clarion Island, lying about 800 miles north of their position. Clarion is described in the 1880 edition of the U.S. Hydrographic Office *West Coast of Mexico*[3] pilot book as a volcanic island, 1,282 feet high, five miles long

[3] *The West Coast of Mexico*. Washington: U.S. Hydrographic Office Publication No. 46, 1880, pp. 197–98.



The burning *Hornet* spread such a pall of smoke across the waters that the boats with their passengers at first hoped rescue vessels might be attracted to their aid.

and from a mile to two miles wide. It was in every way a considerable improvement over tiny Clipperton Rock since it carried vegetation, while doves, fish and sea turtles were also described as being numerous in the vicinity.

Actually Clarion, so named by Captain Clark of the American ship *Pearl* but originally known as Santa Rosa and sometimes also referred to as Cloud's Island, is the westernmost of a group of four small volcanic islands called the Revillagigedo, or Revilla Gigedo, Group. Located between 18° 20′ and 19° 20′ north latitude, and 110° 45′ and 114° 50′ west longitude, they were claimed to have been discovered by Spanish navigators in the sixteenth century and were given their name in 1793 for the Spanish Viceroy of Mexico. The easternmost, Socorro, is the largest, being roughly circular, ten miles in diameter and rising to an elevation of 3,707 feet. San Benedicto is a barren island, three miles long and 975 feet high, lying to the north of Socorro. According to Alexander George Findlay's *Directory of the North Pacific Ocean*[4] the fourth island of the group, Roca Partida, is merely a bare rock, 300 feet long and 110 feet in elevation, lying 50 miles or so westward of Socorro and looking "like a vessel under jury masts." Interestingly enough, a Roca Partida alone is indicated in this area on Ortelius' world map of 1571. Findlay further states that San Benedicto was

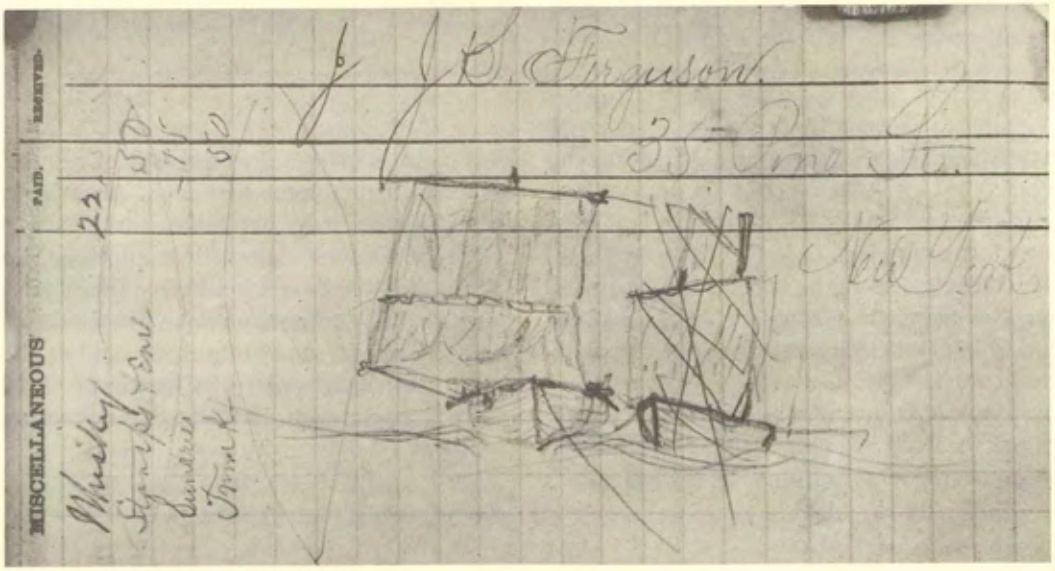
[4] Alexander George Findlay, *A Directory for the Navigation of the North Pacific Ocean*, third edition. (London, 1886), pp. 1030–33.

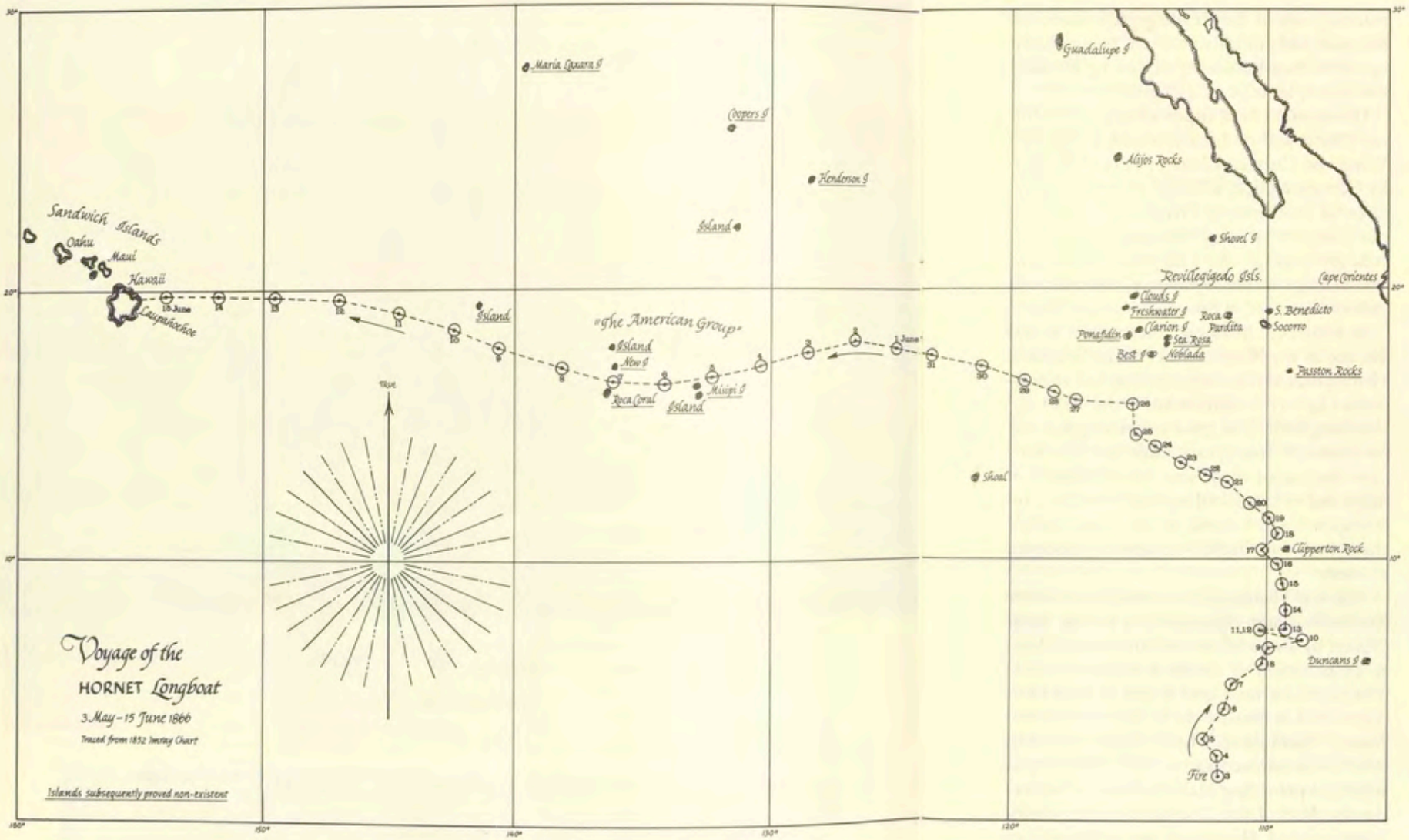
108.
MAY
3 Thursday

7 a.m. Fire broke out down Booby Hatch. All boats got off safe & all hands Compute our Lat 2° 20' N & Long 112.10°
Ship burned very rapidly Saved nothing but what we got on except our coat got in as much Provisions & Water as time would allow Very thankful that all boats were got off safe. Stand by the burning Ship all day & Night
Divided from 13 in long boat 9 in each of the others. Rations ½ Biscuit for breakfast & 1 & some Canned meat for dinner & ½ for tea with a few Swallows of water at each meal Good Lord deliver us all & relieve our anxiety at home & not leave from us for so long

Right:
Samuel Ferguson's journal entry for 3 May records in sparse but dramatic prose the disaster that befell the ship that morning. Some 24 hours after passengers left, the *Hornet* sank.

Below:
James Ferguson sketched this picture of the two quarterboats being towed by the longboat. These smaller craft later went their own way and were never heard from again.





named Nublada (cloudy) by Villalobos in 1542.[5]

Clarion, which the *Hornet* people hoped to attain, is 214 miles due west of Socorro and well detached from the other three islands of the Revillagigedo Group. Socorro, in turn, lies about 500 miles west of the Mexican mainland at Cape Corrientes. Modern Hydrographic Office charts locate the entire group as lying 50 miles farther west than shown in the nineteenth-century surveys.

[5] Findlay, *op. cit.*, p. 1031.

This now brings us to the subject of non-existent islands, some of which, assumed to be real, were to occupy the thoughts and plans of Captain Mitchell in plotting the course the longboat would take. On the Imray charts, in addition to two mythical islands named Gallego[6] and Duncan, located to the south and slightly east of Clipperton, there were some ten islands indicated as belonging to the Revillagigedo Group rather than the actual four—a mistake compounded in part by Bowditch's 1860 *Navigator* which also lists other non-existent islands in the vicinity. Expectedly, the presence of many islands in the then available records which were presumed to be real was to afford the *Hornet*'s company vain hopes of making land, then grim despair when they never materialized.

[6] Rosser, *op. cit.*, p. 300: "Gallego Island, a whaler's report in lat. 1° 48′ N, long. 140° 8′ W, is otherwise unknown."

Apparently copying the entries directly from Bowditch's Table LIV,[7] Samuel Ferguson recorded the names and positions of seven islands on a blank page in the back of his journal. Unbeknownst to him, four of these were mythical. In addition to Clipperton, Clarion and Roca Partida, which actually existed, Ferguson listed New Blade (now a separate island, but cited by Findlay by the original name of San Benedicto) in 18° 12′ north latitude by 114° 85′ west longitude; Cloud Island (also a separate island, but given as an alternate name for Clarion) in 19° 43′ by 114° 57′; Freshwater Island in 19° 22′ by 115° 08′; and Cooper Island in 20° 06′ by 131° 43′. All of these except for distant Cooper Island appear on the Imray charts as belonging to the Revillagigedo Group. Imray also charted non-existent Ponafidin Island, Best Island, Sta. Rosa Island, and a Passton Rock to the south of them, identified by Bowditch as Passion Rock in 16° 54′ by 190° 9′. The first three of these islands—New Blada, Cloud and Freshwater—undoubtedly represented separate sightings of the same island, resulting in erroneous positions for the real Clarion Island which were given by navigators whose reckoning, particularly with respect to longitude, was faulty. Incidentally, Ponafidin Island (actually Clarion) was said to have been seen[8] in 1815 by Lieutenant Ponafidin of the Russian Company ship *Souvoroff*.

The subject of mythical islands is an intriguing one. It is presented most entertainingly in Raymond H. Ramsay's book, *No Longer On The Map: Discovering Places That Never Were*.[9] Ramsay details, among others, such storied spots as the Kingdom of El Dorado, Norumbega, Atlantis, and the Isle of Satanxio, a so-called Devil's Island in mid-North Atlantic. Most of these fanciful places were of fifteenth, sixteenth or seventeenth century origins, and were deleted by map makers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when more scientific means of navigation became available. But the author makes

[7] Bowditch, 1860, p. 375. (29th edition published by L. and G. W. Blunt, New York).

[8] Findlay, *op. cit.*, p. 1032.

[9] New York: Viking, 1972.

an astute observation, stating that the "conservatism of cartographers is commendable—they would rather commit the scientific error of perpetuating a non-existent island than the practical error of allowing a shipwreck to occur on an island that might be there after all."

Captain Sir Edward Belcher in H.M.S. *Sulphur*, with her escort H.M.S. *Starling*, reportedly made a determined but unsuccessful effort in 1839 to locate Freshwater, Cloud, New Blada and Best Islands, as his *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World*[10] records. But they still appeared on the Imray charts, and they were also listed in the 1860 edition of *Bowditch*.

Fluky winds of the doldrums prevented the *Hornet*'s boats—clumsy sailers at best and unable to fetch within eight points of the wind—from getting closer than a hundred miles to any of the Revillagigedo Islands. After fighting northward for almost three weeks, and still with hopes of reaching them, they had to bear off to the westward, spurred on at length by the hoped-for northeast trades which released them from the doldrums. However, the presence of so many islands on the chart in the neighborhood of actual Clarion most certainly contributed to giving them encouragement that a landfall might be in store. But now that they had the trades, they were forced to give them up and bear more to the westward. Since it had long been obvious that each boat would stand a better chance on its own, the three boats separated for good on 22 May. As stated, only the longboat made port.

As they now headed westward, another mythical isle which they thought was real spurred the hopes of the *Hornet*'s men. This one was called Henderson Island, and Henry Ferguson recorded in his Journal for 27 May: "If our chronometer sights are to be depended on in the least, it is hopeless to think of reaching any of the Revillagigedo Islands or the coast and our only chance is being picked up, or the bare possibility of making Henderson Island, latitude 24°, longitude 128°."

Henderson Island appears both on the Imray Charts and on Lieutenant M. F. Maury's Wind and Current Chart of 1852,[11] "as seen by Captain Aulick, USN, of *Mermaid*." Bowditch in 1860 locates Henderson at 24° 12′ north by 128° 6′ west with an alternate latitude given as 24° 26′. This puts it in the general vicinity of the mythical Coopers Island previously noted in Samuel Ferguson's log.

In actuality, however, Henderson Island lies not in the Northern but in the Southern Hemisphere and in virtually identical coordinates—24° 25′ south latitude and 128° 19′ west longitude. The error was at length noted by Rosser[12] four years after the *Hornet*'s crew had sailed those seas. How Henderson happened to be picked up bodily by the cartographers and located in the North rather than the South Pacific remains an unsolved mystery.

The *real* Henderson is a coral island about five miles long described as having been "raised by some subterraneous convolution" to an elevation of almost a hundred feet.[13] The shrub-covered land is said to have been discovered in 1820 by the boats' crews of the famous Nantucket whaler *Essex*, the ship which was rammed and sunk by an enraged whale, so providing Melville with his inspiration for *Moby Dick*. The *Essex*'s three whaleboats reached Henderson on 20 December 1820, after sailing some 1,500 miles from the point where the whaler had gone down a

[10] Belcher, *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World . . . in H.M.S.* Sulphur . . . *in 1836–1842*. 2 vols. London, 1843, pp. 48–49, Vol. 1.

[11] Washington: North Pacific No. 10, Series A. Captain Aulick is not further identified. According to the *List of Officers of the Navy of the United States, 1775–1900*, 1901, p. 31, two men named Aulick might qualify: John H. and Richmond Aulick. The *Mermaid* might possibly be the 1851-built clipper bark of 533 tons constructed at East Boston by Samuel Hall.

[12] Rosser, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

[13] *Sailing Directions for the Pacific Islands (Eastern Groups)*. Washington: H.O. No. 166, Vol. II, 4th edition, 1933, p. 126.

month earlier. The unfortunate men remained on Henderson vainly searching for food and water before heading off again a few days later, hoping to make Easter Island. Three men elected to remain behind. Providentially, they survived and were ultimately rescued.

According to Mate Owen Chase's classic account, *The Shipwreck of the Whaleship Essex*,[14] the men found a ship's name, "The *Elizabeth*," cut in the bark of a tree, and the alternate name Elizabeth Island is given both for the actual island and its mythical northern hemisphere counterpart. Since this part of the North Pacific is completely devoid of islands, one wonders just what Captain Aulick of the *Mermaid* actually did see. The real Henderson Island, along with Dulcie Island, is considered a dependency of Pitcairn Island of *Bounty* fame.

In any event, the 1880 *Pilot Book for the West Coast of Mexico* reported[15] that during the years 1873–75, the United States ships *Portsmouth* and *Narragansett* made a concerted search for a number of alleged islands in the eastern part of the North Pacific without finding any of them. This prompted the *Pilot Book* to comment: "Numerous shoals and islands have been reported to exist off the coast of Lower California as far as 140° west. Among them are New Island, Maria Laxara Island [the farthest north and west], Gaspar Rock, Paxaros, Passion, Cooper, and Henderson Islands, with some others."

Mr. Ramsay's previously noted "commendable conservatism" on the part of cartographers at length seemed no longer justified in this instance and, with the exception of a speck identified as Ville de Toulouse Rock and noted E.D. (Existence Doubtful) which shows up about a hundred miles west of Clipperton Island, this part of the Pacific on modern charts is as bare as the proverbial baby's bottom.

After Henderson, still another group of nonexistent islands was to rise and confound the *Hornet*'s men, providing first hope and then desperation for the near-starved crew. We first learn of this when Captain Mitchell records in his Journal on 31 May: "American Group, gave up Henderson. At 1 P.M. this day kept off west for the American Group, cluster of islands, 16° to 17° north, in 133° to 136° west."

On that day the longboat's position was 17° 45′ north by 123° 00′ west. Mythical Henderson at 24° north now lay considerably out of the way, but the American Group was charted as being directly downwind, although still some 600 miles distant. In the same Journal entry, Captain Mitchell mentioned that his crew was now down to "two meals a day, 14 raisins and a piece of bread the size of a cent for tea. Morning, a piece of ham and bread the size of a cent each and a gill of water." Obviously, they could not expect to survive much longer, and they clung to the islands of the American Group as their only hope of salvation.

But this, too, was a vain hope. Though Henry Ferguson noted that islands "styled in Sam's map the American Group" were also listed in Bowditch's Table LIV as a "Cluster of Islands," the American Group does not exist at all. Captain Mitchell took their position cited in his log directly from the Bowditch table. The Imray charts said the same thing, the 1852 edition citing "a cluster of Islands hereabouts" and locating five—New Island, Misipi Island, Roca Coral and two unnamed islets. The 1864 edition warned, however: "Group of islands said to be hereabout, but not seen by Sir E. Belcher, RN."[16] Sam Ferguson's map, mentioned in the Journals but not otherwise identified as to title, date, or publisher, is the only source to name the cluster the American Group—a name which has defied explanation. Reporting them as nonexistent in 1886, Findlay's *Directory*[17] assigns

[14] Many times reprinted and presently available in a paperback, New York: Corinth Books, 1963.

[15] *West Coast of Mexico*, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[16] See also Belcher's *Narrative*, *op. cit.*

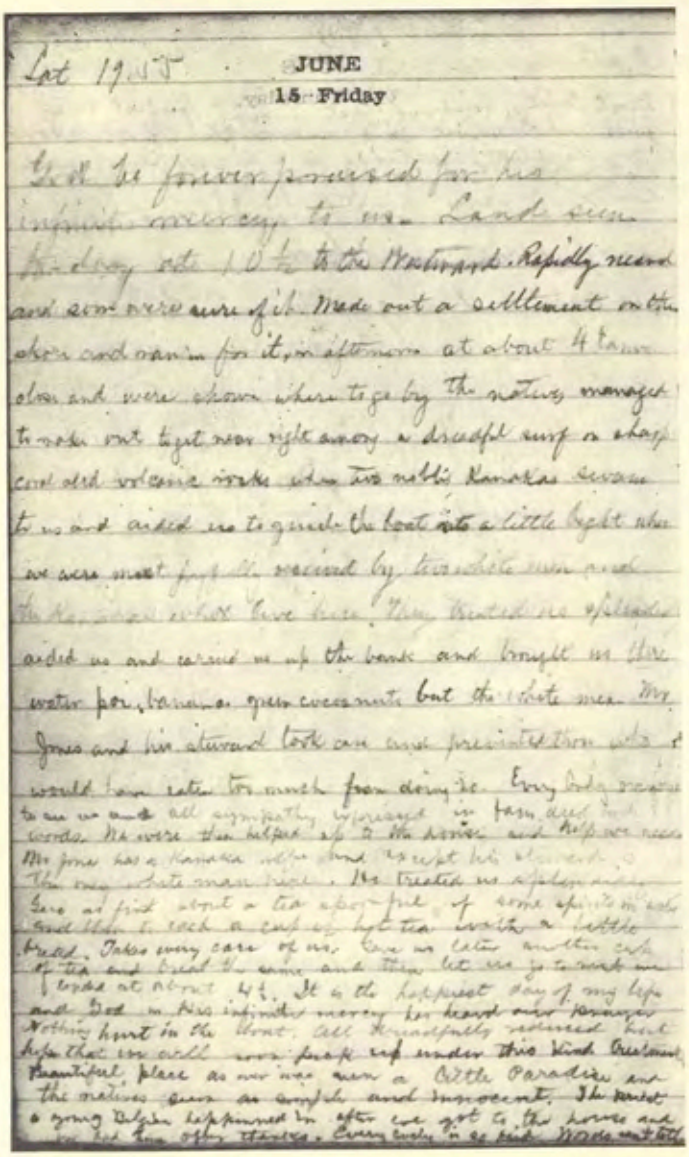
[17] Findlay, *op. cit.*, p. 1033.

names for all five: Roca Coral, Roca Pardero, New Island, Misipi Island and New Baldayo Island. The last named had been stated by Rosser in 1870[18] to be "a whaler's report in lat. 18° 15′ north, long. 143° 48′ west."

The only possible clue to the group name which we have been able to turn up leads to the Central Pacific island of Fanning, discovered in 1798 by Captain Edmund Fanning of Stonington, Connecticut, in the sealer *Betsey*. Findlay's *Directory*[19] states, "It is not improbable that this [Fanning Island] may be the American Isles stated by Kotzebue to have been discovered by Captain Mather of the *American* in 1814." Possibly the same ship *American* had encountered what were thought to be islands farther eastward, so bestowing its name on the mythical American Group.

In any event, from 31 May to 6 June the *Hornet*'s men were sustained by the hope of finding a mid-ocean haven. But on the latter day, the longboat sailed right over the islands' assigned positions, where in actuality the smooth ocean bed lay 2,500 fathoms below. With a heavy heart Captain Mitchell recorded on 6 June: "American Group not there.

[18] Rosser, *op. cit.*, p. 296.
[19] Findlay, *op. cit.*, p. 928.


Lat 19.5 · JUNE
15 Friday
God be forever praised for his
infinite mercy to us. Land ahead
Friday ate 10 to the Westward. Rapidly neared
and soon were sure of it. Made out a settlement on the
shore and ran in for it, in afternoon at about 4 came
close and were shown where to go by the natives managed
to make out light soon right away a dreadful surf & sharp
coral reef welcome indeed when two noble Kanakas swam
to us and aided us to guide the boat into a little bight where
we were most joyfully received by two white men and
the Kanakas which I love dearly. They treated us splendidly
aided us and carried us up the bank and brought us fine
water pot, bananas, green cocoanuts but the latter made Mr
Jones and his steward sick and prevented them who I
would have eaten too much from doing so. Every body seemed
to run up and all sympathy expressed in fashion and
words. We were then helped up to the house and kept we were
Mr Jones has a Kanaka wife and 2 sweet little children.
The only white man here. He treated us splendidly
Gave at first about a tea cupful of some spirits mixed
and then to each a cup of hot tea with a little
bread. Takes very care of us. Gave us later another cup
of tea and bread the same and then let us go to rest we
broke at about 4½. It is the happiest day of my life
and God in His infinite mercy be heard our prayers
Nothing hurt in the boat. All thankfully received kind
hope that we will soon pass up under this kind Protestant
Beautiful place as we have seen a little Paradise and
the natives seem as simple and innocent. The last
a young Belgian happened in after we got to the house and
[illegible] Every body is so kind. Mr Jones [illegible]

"God be forever praised for his infinite mercy," wrote Henry Ferguson on 15 June. The survivors had sighted land in the Hawaiian islands and later that day they were brought safely ashore after 43 days in the lifeboat.



Laupahoehoe, the little village on the island of Hawaii where the survivors landed, looked like this at about the time when they came ashore.

Must run for Sandwich Islands [Hawaii] and trust in God's goodness for food."

Such as it was, the *Hornet*'s company was now down to but one meal a day and their total stores would be consumed in only three more days. Three days—and the Hawaiian Islands were 1,500 miles away! That all fifteen men survived those final nine days, feasting—if one may ironically use the term—on boot leather, wood chips scraped from the bottom of the butter churn, and a ham bone, was according to the good captain, through "nothing but God's grace."

Although no mention is made of it in their Journals, the 1852 Imray chart could have lured them with still another mythical island indicated as lying some five degrees westward of the American Group, not far north of the longboat's course for Hawaii. In approximately 19° north by 141° west, the chart indicated a nonexistent "island, 40 ft. high, 4 miles long. Very barren. Seen Dec. 28, 1848."

But the longboat now headed due west for Hawaii in a race against time and starvation. When, at 10:30 A.M. on Friday, 15 June, the captain reports that he "saw indications of land but dare not say it for fear of disappointment," the reader's heart is in his mouth. Through that long day the land, now far from mythical, slowly materialized. At 4 P.M. they were close to shore, Fortunately, some Hawaiian boys, recognizing the longboat's obvious distress, swam out to it and guided it in through a pass in the reefs to a safe haven at Laupahoehoe on the island of Hawaii's rock-bound windward coast.

So it was that one of the most remarkable voyages of all time was finally over. Fifteen men had survived to prove that, although several islands they desperately hoped to attain were merely figments of some unnamed navigator's imagination, faith in the Lord's mercy was their greatest strength and alone sustained them to the very end. Hope lured them; faith was their salvation.

Boatbuilding in Stonington

By HENRY R. PALMER*

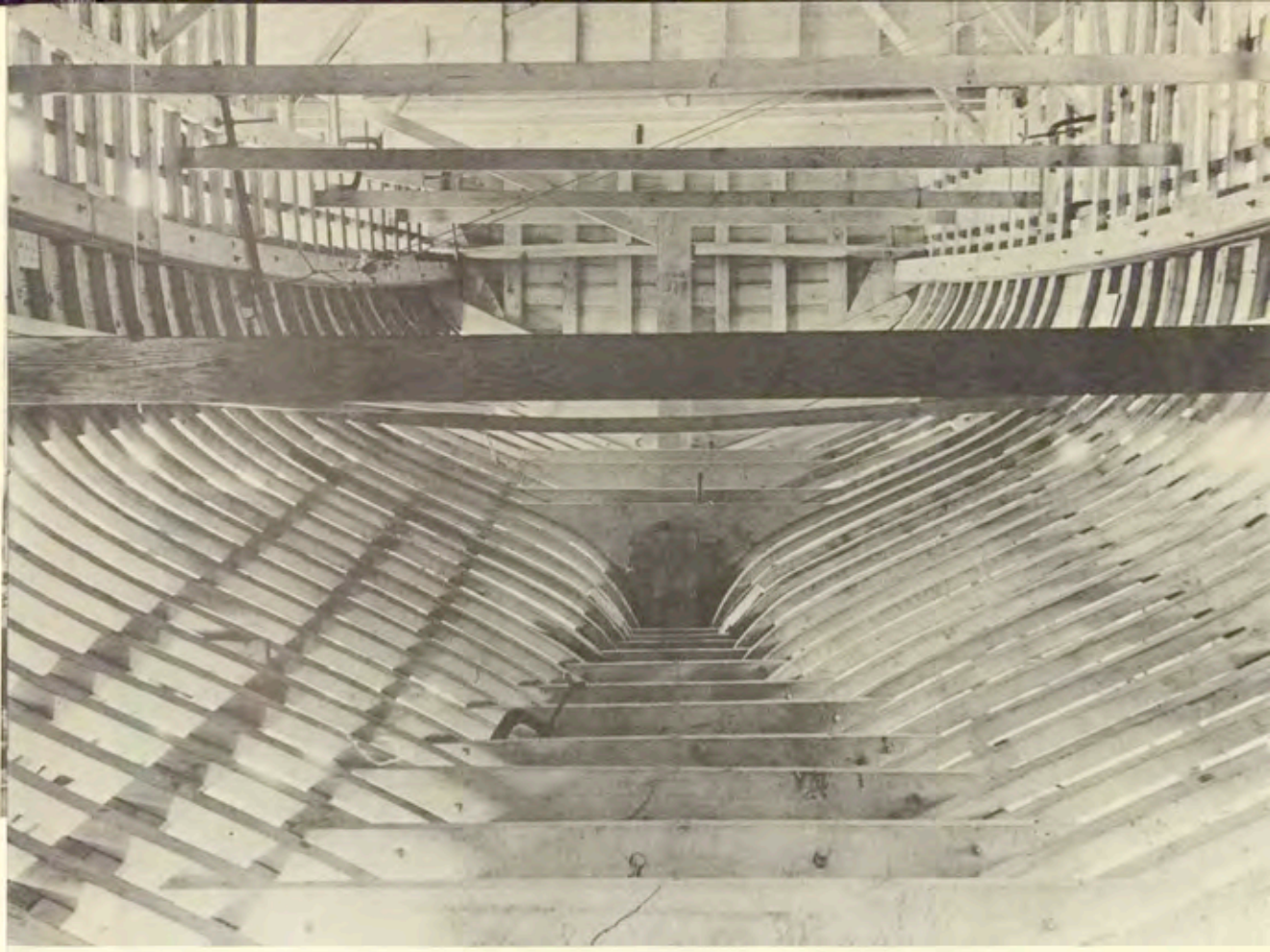
The wooden boatbuilding industry that had been a part of Stonington Borough's heritage since pre-Revolutionary-War days ended in 1965 with the closing of the Stonington Boat Works. I had started the business in March of 1938 in an abandoned boat repair yard that had once catered to Coast Guard cutters, rumrunners, and occasional fishing vessels. Six months later the place lay in ruins, annihilated by the first hurricane to strike Stonington in 123 years.

The demand for new boats created by this storm launched me on my building career. During the next twelve months we completed three 28′ lobster boats, constructed in temporary quarters in an empty barn on Water Street. A year later, in response to interest shown by a group of local fishermen, I prepared plans and specifications of a 55′ drag-

* Henry R. Palmer Jr. is a member of one of Stonington's founding families. A shipbuilder and aeronautical buff who once flew his own airplane, he has a notable collection of books on aeronautical history and is himself the author of several books on the same subject.

First of the draggers to be built by the Stonington Boat Works was the *Carl J.* Her sturdy construction (*opposite*) kept her intact when she spent four weeks on a Block Island beach: she also survived a fire, only to be sunk by a dockside explosion in 1967. But even that did not stop her: she was raised, repaired and is today still in service at Point Judith.





ger, quoted $4500 for a hull-only, engaged Winthrop L. Warner to draw its lines, and almost immediately received an order for one. Before she was completed, we had orders for three more, and from then on one order succeeded another throughout the war years. These were the "Stonington Draggers," the high liners, known up and down the coast for their large carrying capacity, their ability in rough water, their ruggedness, and their economy of operation.

These were "western-rigged" boats or stern trawlers, their pilothouses set well forward to provide a clean sweep for the drag wires stretching out behind them across their sterns. "Eastern rigged" boats towed from their beams, hence the name "beam trawlers." Their pilothouses were placed far aft. The advantages of the western rig over the eastern rig were numerous, better visibility being one. Perched up near the highest part of the vessel, the helmsman commanded an unobstructed view around the compass, a particularly important feature for local fishermen who relied heavily on visual "ranges" and markers while dragging in rock- and wreck-infested waters. With the main-deck working area behind the pilothouse, the helmsman was not blinded at night by the glare of deck lights.

Another advantage of the western rig was its maneuverability. With its drag wire leading back like the towrope on a tug, unencumbered by anything on board, the boat could quickly make near-180 degree turns to either port or starboard. A beam trawler, on the other hand, towing from the side, could turn sharply only in that one direction.

There were other advantages. The pilothouse formed a protective barrier for the men



Six months after the Stonington Boat Works opened for business in March 1938, it was devastated by the 1938 hurricane. Amidst a tangle of lumber, splintered boats and a marine railway, the office rested incongruously on its roof. But the storm created such a demand for boats that the new yard prospered from the start.

In the late 1940s the Stonington fishing fleet numbered a round couple of dozen vessels and most of them are shown in this aerial view of Bindloss' Dock (*opposite*). Today the fleet has dwindled to about a half dozen draggers: Bindloss' Dock is falling apart but for Sandy MacKay's seafood restaurant and fish store at the far end.

working on deck, shielding them from wind and spray. Also, the house led directly to the engine and living quarters below. Whenever he chose, the helmsman could nip down for a cup of coffee or a quick check of the engine and back to the wheel in a trice. Not so on the beam trawlers, where helm and quarters lay a deck space apart.

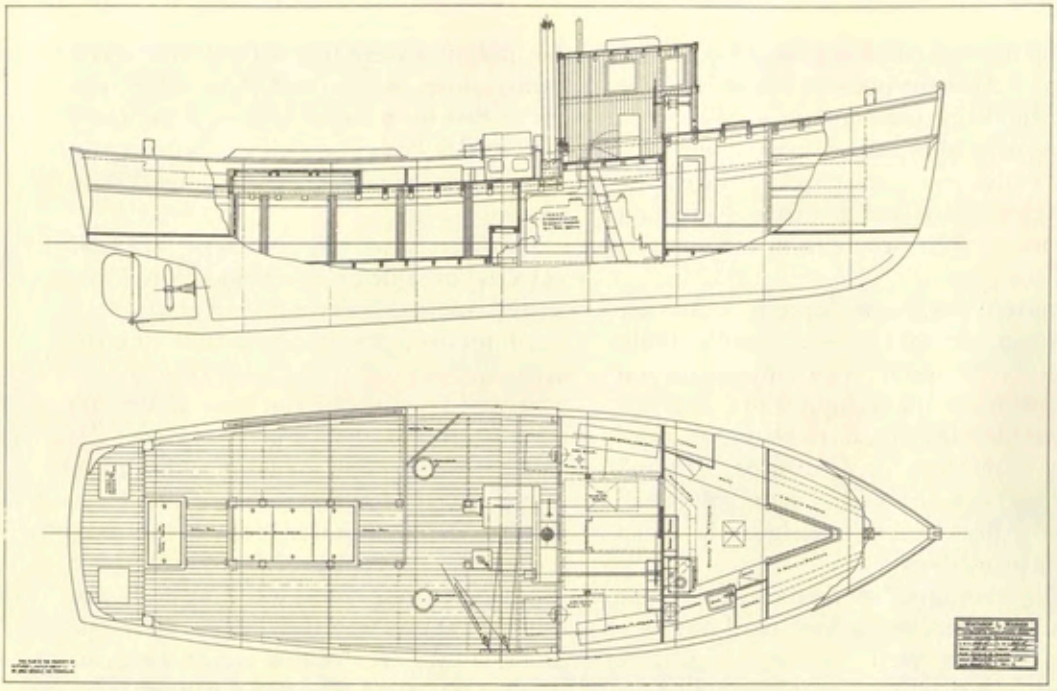
Compared with most "eastern" boats, the Stonington draggers were lightly built. Frames were smaller – two-by-threes on eleven-inch centers steam-bent to shape; yellow pine planking dressed to 1 ½ inches, thinner by as much as a half than on "eastern" boats and fastened with simple galvanized iron boat nails; ceiling measuring less than half the plank thickness.

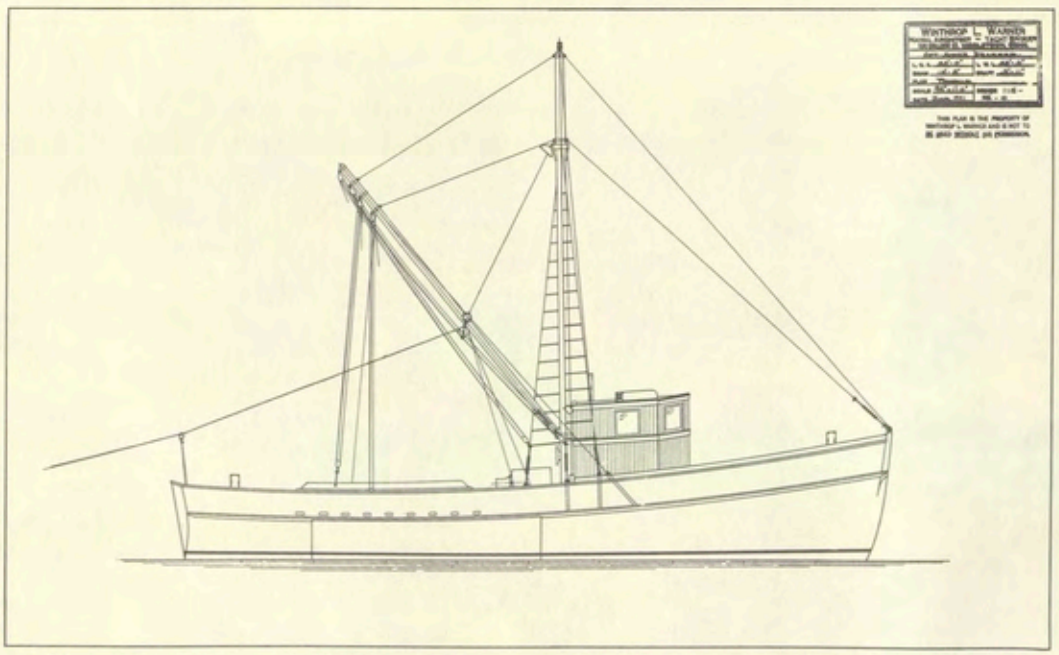
"Light scantlings" some remarked, while others suggested that a boat need not be a floating lumber yard – so long as it were properly put together, it would last. And the Stonington draggers *were* put together, and they *did* last. Except for the *Capt. Mel*, which burned at sea, the *Fan and Mary*, which was cut in two by a larger boat, and the *Capt. Nathaniel B. Palmer*, which was blown up by a navy mine, all remain in year-round use to this day.

These craft were built during the war years, when skilled workers and critical materials were nearly impossible to obtain. As a result, production never exceeded four boats per year.

Seasoned lumber did not exist. Having no other choice, we used it green, some of the native oak going into the boats within a day or two of being felled in the woods. Remarkably, rot seldom appeared in any of the boats, a phenomenon explained by the fact that they were in year-round use, their decks and fish holds always wet, their cabins and engine rooms always dry. Within certain temperature ranges, wood does not rot under these conditions.







Inboard and outboard profile plans for the Stonington dragger show her to be a "western type," with the pilot house forward. Besides her spacious hold, she also had comfortable quarters forward for the crew, who might be on the fishing grounds for a week or more.

The *Captain Nathaniel B. Palmer* (*left*) came to a tragic end in April 1945. Trawling off Block Island, she picked up a 500-pound mine in her net, and despite efforts to lower it gently to the deck, it exploded and blew her to bits. Only one man survived, clinging to the top of the pilot house, the only remaining piece of wreckage.

The *Pvt. Frank T. Kessler*, photographed off Stonington Boat Works dock, shows typical arrangements of the type: dory atop the pilot house, derrick and winch for trawling the net and a wide, uncluttered deck space aft.



The Noman's Land Boat

By JOHN M. LEAVENS*

"There's a hell of a lot more we ought to know about the Noman's Land boat," Joseph Chase Allen remarked after speaking about it for over an hour. Joe Allen is 85. He fished out of Menemsha on Martha's Vineyard around 1905 in Everett Poole's catboat *Goldenrod*, and he saw the last of the Noman's Land boats, converted to power but still in use.

Much has been written about the Noman's Land boat. Some chroniclers have collected the yarns of old-time fishermen. Others have taken the lines off derelicts cast up on the beach. All have hazarded estimates of the type's employment. But, as Joe says, there still is a lot we don't know about it.

There probably hasn't been a Noman's Land boat built in the twentieth century. Little was written about the type in the days when it was actively in use, and no photographs have come to light which were actually taken in those times. Much of the lore of the Noman's Land boat has been transmitted by word of mouth. The way Joe Allen learned is typical: "David Butler told me that he knew – or maybe someone told him – about the Noman's Land boat." Memories of few living men reach back as much as 75 years. All of which indicates that we aren't likely to find out much more about her in a hurry.

When people talk about the Noman's Land boat they have in mind a saucy, lapstrake, double-ended open boat 16 to 18 feet long, rigged as a cat ketch with spritsails fore and aft. They see her on a cold fall day heeling before a stiff Nor'west wind through rough, current-beset seas as she rounds a rocky headland. "One man to sail and one to bail" is the catchy phrase that matches this picture.

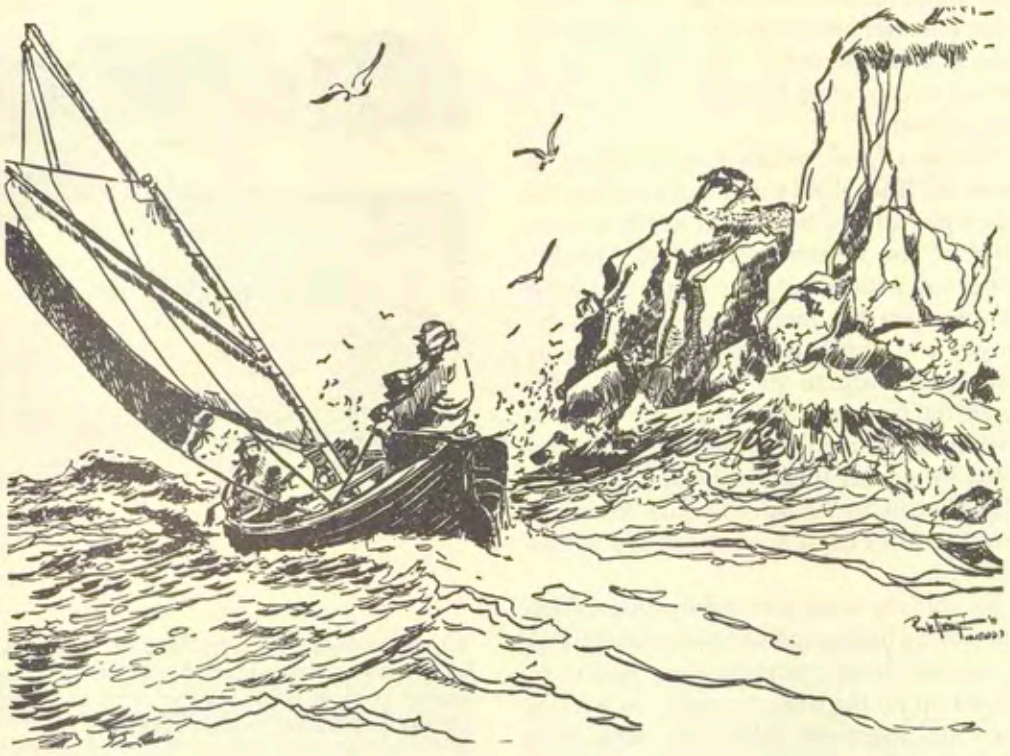
Well, that style of Noman's Land boat existed long, long ago; so long ago in fact that it disappeared entirely between 1880 and 1890. First the rig gave way to a single-masted, gaff-headed cat. Then the hull was lengthened and made heavier. That type was still called a Noman's Land boat, and perhaps it was more practical in every day use, but it was definitely a herald of the decline and disappearance of the small cat-ketch type which was the traditional Noman's Land boat.

The reasons for the change in rig were simplification and avoidance of hazards. With the cat-ketch one had to roll up a sprit to shorten sail, and unless this tricky maneuver was done just right the wind could tear the sail right out of your hands. If a sea was running, you could be thrown overboard. The

* John Leavens, a retired New York lawyer, was a co-founder of the Catboat Association and is at present its active co-secretary. A lifelong interest in the Noman's Land boat was the inspiration for this article.

A Noman's Land boat at work, fishing with Rod Cleveland in Martha's Vineyard waters.





"One Man to Sail and One Man to Bail"

The spirit of this expression, often applied to the ingenious small, open-cockpit, two-masted spritsail rigged workboat developed in the nineteenth century for the cod and lobster fisheries of Noman's Land, is caught in Paule Loring's cartoon showing one of the boats close-hauled, beating in rough seas around a rocky headland.

Excerpts from J. B. LaFarge's first-hand account of his August 1895 run from New Bedford to Noman's Land in one of these boats attest to its seaworthiness:

"The breeze freshening below the fort we took in a reef and got into our oilskins. . . . Soon we were absorbed in the run. . . . The little boat threw water, so I had to set to with the bailer.

"Under the lee of Nashawena we had a chance to dry out again after our soaking in the bay.

". . . the wind suddenly dropping to a light breeze, we took out our reef and headed for Gay Head.

". . . the wind on top of the big western roll made a rough sea on the Bridge (Devil's Bridge off Gay Head).

". . . The great swell flattened out by the tide slid abeam of us toward the beach . . . continually dropping us out of sight, occasionally throwing aboard a wetting sea until we were headed South to Noman's with the current on our quarter."

after sprit had a short club gaff at the clew. One island fisherman had his main (that's what the after sprit was called regardless of size) jibe unexpectedly. The club hit him as the sail swept across. Luckily, he was able to stay on board.

Noman's Land, which gave the boat its name, is a little island a mile and a half by one mile square, lying three miles south and seaward of the westernmost end of Martha's Vineyard, with nothing between it and Spain but the open Atlantic. The stories of its discovery and how it got its name are totally disproportionate to its size. One favorite about the name says that when the Duke of York took jurisdiction in 1666 the island was ruled by a local Indian chieftain named Te Que Noman, so the place became known as Tequenoman's Land, soon shortened to Noman's Land.

Because the island is 20 miles or more from a protected harbor and had no natural shelter of its own, boats operating there had to be hauled up on the beach at night. A team of oxen and ingenious ladder-like skids were kept at hand to help. This beaching dictated a lapstrake hull because, as Rod Cleveland once put it, "Lapstrake would outlast carvel three to one when the boats had to be hauled ashore each night."

The Noman's Land boats had to be light for ease of handling, but at the same time sturdily built to stand the gaff when hauled regularly, often with a heavy catch of fish. Rod Cleveland's old boat, now on display at Mystic Seaport, was built like an English beach boat, double-kneed to brace against the shocks of grounding and dragging across the beach. The Noman's Land craft were small boats 16 to 18 feet long, although toward the end, in nearby Martha's Vineyard localities, they were built longer and heavier and of carvel construction. Those vessels weren't intended for use as beach boats but were meant to be kept at a mooring or a dock.

Everyone agrees that the Noman's Land boat was a product of evolution. The fact is borne out by the many names associated with the type: Chilmark boat, Gay Head boat,



An 1882 drawing of West Bend on Noman's Land shows a single-masted boat being hauled ashore by oxen, while another with two-masted rig and spritsail lies moored offshore.

Vineyard boat, Vineyard Sound boat, as well as Noman's Land boat—all names identifying the boat with a geographical location where it was used. George Brown Goode, who made an official U.S. government survey of the lobster industry on Noman's Land in 1880 and 1882, refers to them as "Vineyard fishing boats." He also calls them "small smacks." A smack boat, in local terms, is a very early fishing boat, not necessarily cat-rigged or double-ended, used along the Southern New England sea coast for shore-based fishing. Smack also connotes a boat fitted with a live well where fish, once caught, can be kept alive in circulating fresh sea water for delivery to market.

In the latter years of the nineteenth century Noman's Land boats were turned out by known builders like William H. and Josiah Cleveland at Vineyard Haven, James Beetle at New Bedford, and Joshua Delano of Fairhaven. However, many of the boats, and particularly the early ones, were designed with a half model and built by the same men who used them. It was natural that those builders should draw on past developments for their designs and equally natural that they should introduce innovative qualifications of their own.

Among the modifications devised to cope with conditions of Noman's Land sailing were: a high curbing set behind narrow side decks and large fore and aft decks to help keep sea slop out of the open cockpit; a curved sternpost to permit the boats to be launched stern first from the beach; and a centerboard, offset in some models for better results when working to windward.

The craft that evolved in this evolutionary process for use specifically at Noman's Land won its name early, and one has to admit that "Noman's Land boat" has a very fine ring to it.

The chief interest of the colonists on Noman's Land was cod. From earliest known times these valuable food fish have swarmed there in great shoals, arriving in early fall and leaving in the spring. The Indians fished for them at Noman's Land before Goswold, or whoever else it was, first discovered the island. From 1666 on continued efforts were made to establish a cod fishery there. The results must have shown promise by the early 1700s, for in 1714 the Town of Chilmark succeeded in annexing the island. The first "permanent American" settler arrived that same year, and by 1745 the permanent colony on the island was reported to number some 20 settlers engaged in farming and fishing. Just when the first settlements of seasonal fishermen were established is not recorded, but by the late 1800s they were coming over from Martha's Vineyard in the fall and spring to catch cod, and living in shacks on the beach at West Bend. As one of them said, they were "working like the devil when the weather was fit and raising Cain when 'twasn't."

Lobster fishing developed later, possibly as late as the 1880s. The season began in the spring and ended in early fall. There was good reason for the islanders to go in for lobstering: the lobster and cod seasons complemented one another, and the Noman's Land boats were just as well adapted to lobster as they were to cod.

Just when the Noman's Land boat first appeared as a definite type is uncertain. Howard

I. Chapelle, who knew more about American small craft than anyone before or since, was of the opinion that the type existed as far back as 1856. Marion and Dorothy Brewington, who did a thorough study of these boats in 1931, reported hearing about one that had just been condemned and was known then to be 140 years old. That would indicate the 1790s as the time when she was built. Given the protracted efforts made from 1666 on to develop a cod fishery and settle the island, it is likely that the origins of the Noman's Land boat go back much farther than is now believed. Too bad some of the real early birds aren't around to tell us more about it.

For all practical purposes, there were just two kinds of fishing carried on with Noman's Land boats: handlining for cod or bottom fish, and lobstering. Some claim the Noman's Land boat was also used in line trawling for cod, and some dramatic writing has been used to describe this method of fishing with these boats. But the odds are against it. The method was hazardous compared to handlining, with no obvious gain in production potential for the effort involved. Men living now who knew how the boats were actually used have never heard of it being employed in line trawling for cod. Moreover, piling 3600 fathoms, or three and a half nautical miles, of trawl line, bait and gear into one little 16 to 18 foot Noman's Land boat, as one writer implied, would defy Houdini.

Cod tend to "keep," as the island expression ran, on the rock ledges surrounding the place to the East and West. Handlining was never done drifting and dragging a line over the bottom, but only with the boat anchored at one spot. What's more, the Indians did it the same way, perhaps making use of the killick, as some would have it (although they were more apt to use huge stone sinkers with holes drilled in them). But the Noman's Land boat fishermen of the 1890s used regular iron anchors complete with flukes, shank and stock.

From the beginning and until the close of the nineteenth century, cod was salted down ashore, except for a few live cod brought to market in the live wells. Tautog and sea bass caught by handlining and kept alive were sold to the market smacks. Occasional catches of large halibut were also known. Bluefish and striped bass were naturally plentiful in the island's waters, but they were never fished for commercially with Noman's Land boats.

Swordfish frequent the area in late July and August, and there are instances on record of taking this fish from Noman's Land boats. This feat called for considerable skill because the boat had to be sailed or rowed alongside a fish basking on the surface before the harpoon could be driven home. Once caught, the swordfish had to be towed ashore, since there was no gear to haul them aboard.

Lobstering was a big business in the 1880s. Goode reports that in 1882 each of 15 to 20 men set an average of 60 traps, "the greater part arranged in trawls of eight to 20 pots." Such multi-pot trawls were a labor-saving device in the days of lobstering with sails and oars, because they kept the fisherman from being swept off his range of pots by wind and currents while he was hauling.

The Noman's Land catch in 1882 was 100,000 lobsters. Market smacks, fitted with huge live wells, made weekly trips between Noman's Land and New York, one such smack alone carrying 6,000 lobsters each week. The island fisherman received eight cents for each lobster.

One important use of the Noman's Land boat was packeting goods and ferrying people. There were no stores or chandleries on the island. Salt for salting down cod and whatever else the fishermen or their families needed had to be brought there. Visitors who came to enjoy surf casting for bluefish and striped bass all came by boat. This packeting and ferrying was done on the return trip after deliveries of salt cod had been taken to the New Bedford market.

Along in the early 1890s the Noman's Land fisheries began to play out. There were many reasons, mostly economic. Modern refrigeration by then had made it possible to bring iced fresh fish to market, where people found

it a welcome change from salt cod. The effect on the price of salt cod was disastrous. Annie N. Wood, the historian of Noman's Land, reveals that from a high point of eight cents a pound, the price for salt cod dropped to "three and a half to four cents . . . and the last fishermen sold their catch as low as a half cent a pound." To compound the problems of the Noman's Land fishermen, the spring run of herring caught in floating nets off East Point gave out as a source of bait. Ten miles away, trap fishing was expanding by leaps and bounds in Menemsha Bight, assuring the fishermen there bait in abundance.

Perhaps, too, there were fluctuations in the lobster run about this time. Goode noted that the lobster catch at Noman's Land in 1880 was only 15,000 pounds—equivalent to 600 lobster of 2½ pounds each—but in 1882 the catch, as noted, had soared to 100,000 lobsters. A catch that could rise so dramatically could also crash with disastrous effect.

Lobsterville, a Vineyard fishing colony competitive with Noman's Land, had existed on the shores of Menemsha Bight as early as 1880. It was closer to the New Bedford market, Dogfish Bar offshore offered some protection for small craft that could be moored off the beach, and it was closer to the social amenities, which made it attractive to members of the fishermen's families who had to endure the hard life on Noman's Land.

The Butler and Tilton families were leaders among the permanent settlers of Noman's Land for decades. Some of them began to give up and go back to Martha's Vineyard in the early 1890s. "Old George"—George H. Butler, who came there in 1860 and was known far and wide as the "Monarch of Noman's Land"—was forced to give up and leave his beloved realm in 1898. With him the island lost the last of its Noman's Land boat fishermen.

The Noman's Land boat, altered in rig and converted to power, continued to be used at Lobsterville and Menemsha for many years, but the catboat had already gained a foothold there and was much preferred for lobstering and fishing. Nevertheless, the Brewingtons were able to report that there were still five Noman's Land boats around Menemsha in 1931. Today, only three are left and Mystic Seaport has two of them. Carefully restored, they remind us of the days when men matched the elements with wit and skill to produce a boat of singular beauty of line and form which helped them gain a livelihood from the sea.

The Survivors

Two of three surviving Noman's Land boats are at Mystic Seaport: the boat built by Josiah Cleveland, and *Orca*, built by Joshua Delano. Both have been painstakingly restored. The Dukes County Historical Society in Edgartown, Massachusetts, has Albert Reed's old boat in somewhat of a state of decrepitude.

The *Josiah Cleveland Boat* (Mystic Seaport accession number 52.115) is clinker (lapstrake) built,[1] 19 feet 9 inches x 6 feet 2 inches and all copper fastened. Crossed by three thwarts, she has an offset centerboard, a live fish well and an iron shoe on her keel. Although she was cat-rigged for many years, she is said to have been built for two masts, fore and main. In keeping with the tradition that applied singularly to Noman's Land boats, she never had a name.

She was built at Vineyard Haven in the 1870s or 1880s for Edward Cleveland, a cousin of Josiah's son Charles B. Cleveland. Rod Cleveland, Charlie B's son, fell heir to her between 1925 and 1930 and used her commercially for handlining under power until 1952, when he turned her over to Mystic Seaport.

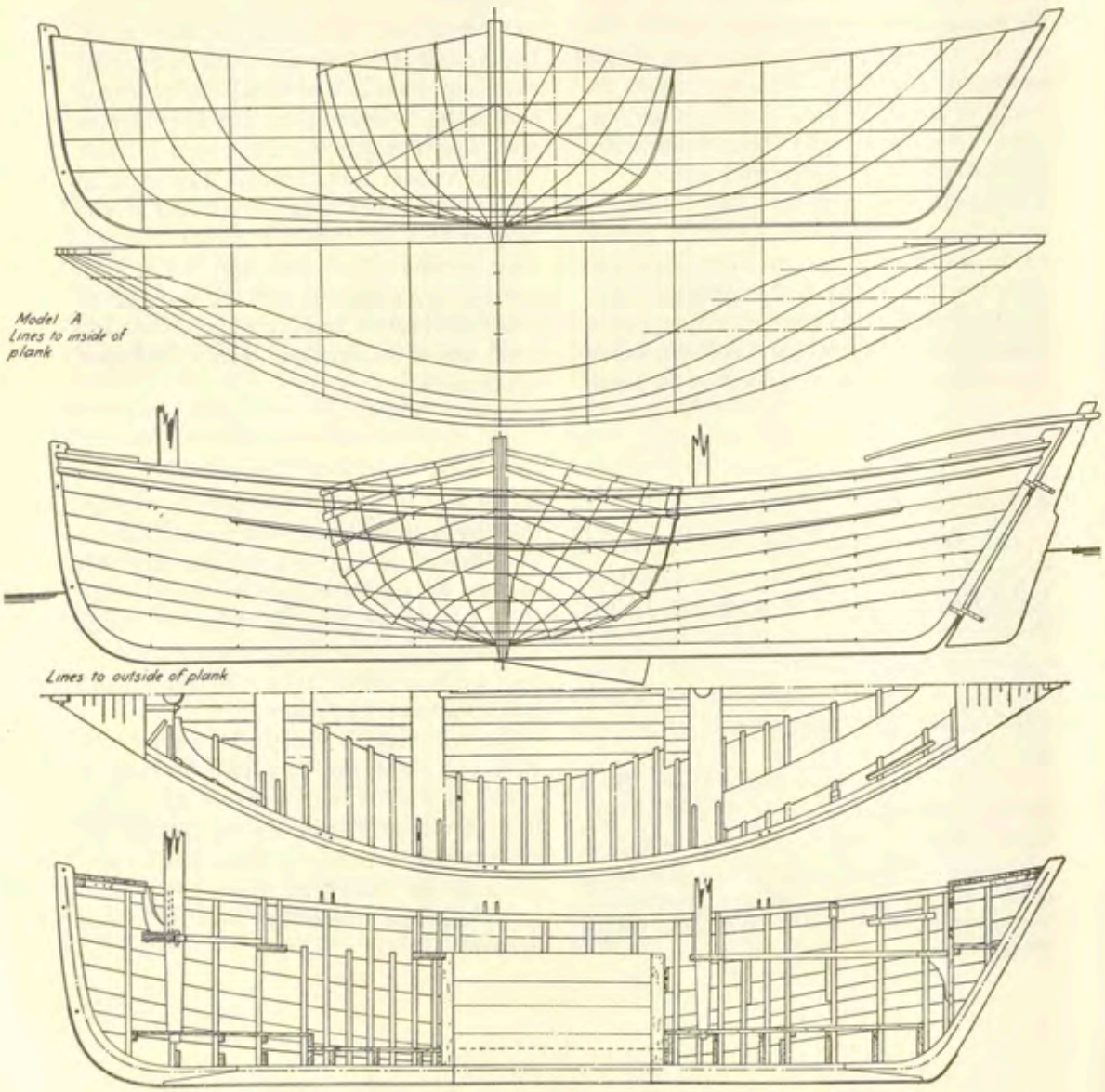
[1] Rodney V. Cleveland (last of three generations of Clevelands to own this boat) in a tape-recorded interview made shortly before his death in 1966 at the age of 72.

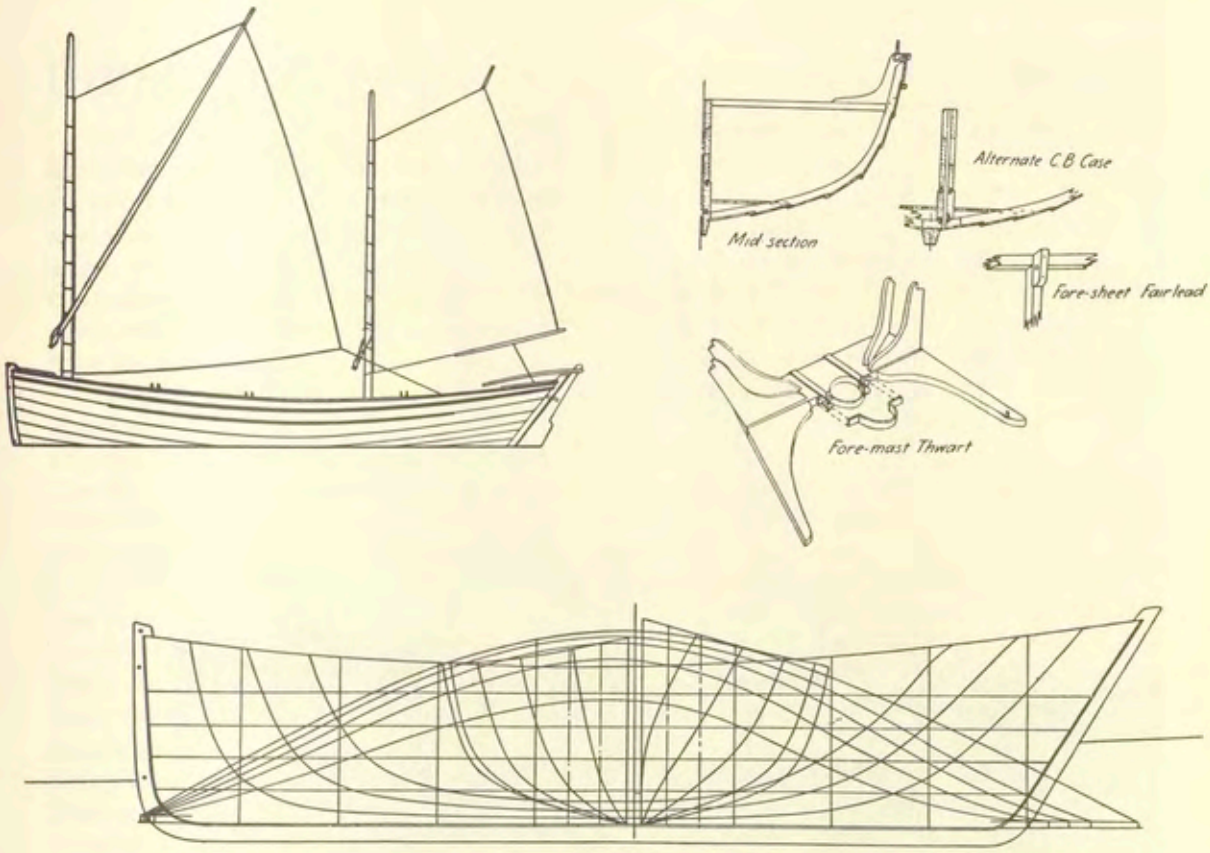
Josiah Cleveland was an amalgam of Yankee ingenuity, manual skills, shrewd ability to turn a penny and willingness to work hard. Zeb Tilton,[2] who sailed aboard Cleveland's two-masted freight schooner *Eliza Jane* in the 1880s and 1890s, said of him: "I have never seen nor known a man what planned so carefully and perfectly as Josiah. If the wind and tide favored, 'twas never a motion lost . . . No man who ever sailed with Josiah could help but learn the rewards of hard work and tending to business."

Deep in the southeasterly corner of Vineyard Haven Harbor, Josiah had a work shop. Like similar shops of its day, it smelled of shavings, oakum and tarred marline. When

[2]"Zeb – A Celebrated Schooner Life," by Polly Burroughs. The Chatham Press, Riverside, CT 1972.

Construction details of the Noman's Land boat show her lapstrake planking and sturdy framing to forestall damage when hauling up on the beach. The cat-ketch rig was typical of many of these craft.





The lines plan of the Noman's Land boat shows a sturdy double-ender, in this case fitted with two masts for a cat-ketch rig. A beamy boat, she had good carrying capacity and was very seaworthy.

Josiah laid up *Eliza Jane* for the winter months he did such odd jobs as building dories and Noman's Land boats here "because he likes to do it."[3] He built Noman's Land boats as early as 1870.[4]

The lines of this boat, her sail plan and construction plans are available at Mystic Seaport.

Orca (Mystic Seaport accession number 63.592) is 19 feet 9 inches x 6 feet 5 inches. She was built in the 1880s by Joshua Delano at Fairhaven, Massachusetts, possibly in 1887 for Onslow Stuart (1841–1920) when he retired from whaling at the age of 46. Onslow Stuart finished the seats, deck, washboards and interior fittings in his Chilmark barn.

[3] Joseph Chase Allen.
[4] Rodney V. Cleveland.

Orca is of batten seam construction, a method found often in whaleboats. She has a centerboard slot in the port garboard and she, too, has a keel shod with iron.

After Onslow Stuart's death in 1920—he fished in the boat off Lobsterville in the twentieth century—she belonged to his nephew Captain George D. Robinson (1871–1949). He named her *Orca* after a catboat he had skippered in Wood's Hole. Later *Orca* was fished at Menemsha by Stanley and Christopher Murphy.

George Robinson rebuilt *Orca* when he first got her, and in 1952 Robert H. Baker, then of Westport, Massachusetts, bought her. He, too, rebuilt her, fitted her with a cat-ketch spritsail rig and sailed her for pleasure. Two pictures of *Orca* under her new spritsail



The Seaport's restored *Orca* under her new two-mast spritsail rig. *Orca* is one of only three Noman's Land boats still surviving.

rig (she had had a single masted cat rig before) are included with the description of Noman's Land boats in *The National Watercraft Collection.*

Baker also took off *Orca*'s lines and prepared several perspectives of her underbody before turning *Orca* over to Mystic Seaport in 1963.

Her lines, sail plan, offsets and construction notes are available at Mystic Seaport.

The Albert Reed Boat. Little is known about the history of this 22-foot Noman's Land boat. She now lies unrestored and in poor condition at the Dukes County Historical Society. She is large for a Noman's Land boat. She still has her live fish well amidship along the center line of the boat, with passageways in the bilges on each side. Her centerboard and thwarts were removed to make way for a make-and-break engine which has since been taken out.

The maker of this boat is not known. She was owned at Menemsha by Albert Reed and later by Captain George D. Robinson, who also owned *Orca* at one time.

Her large size and cat-rigged single mast mark her as a late model boat of her type.

DIRECTOR'S PAGE

Since the close of World War II an expanding effort has been made in many nations to save venerable ships and small craft. These efforts were at first sporadic and plagued by inexperience and lack of skill; nevertheless, many vessels were kept from disappearing from the face of the earth.

During the last decade, interest has proliferated in many countries—notably America, England, Scandinavia and western Europe. The discoveries of Viking ships in Roskilda Fiord in Denmark, and the *Vasa* in Sweden, galvanized both nations; led by the king himself, Sweden flung herself into a race against time to save this remarkable ship, to discover new ways to stabilize her hull after submersion in the Baltic for 300 years, and to rediscover old ways to preserve her. These efforts have brought encouragement to ships preservationists in other nations; in England, the National Trust for Ships Preservation was founded and in this country the National Maritime Historical Society was organized.

In the mid-60s Mystic Seaport recognized the critical need to preserve our fleet of some 200 historic ships and small craft, to expand our knowledge, facilities and equipment to carry out this work before it was too late. I, and several members of my staff, prowled the world to meet and confer with ships preservationists, to study their methods, to seek answers. These close contacts with museum directors and curators have developed an active exchange of ideas, methods, successes, and failures.

Mystic's emphasis on ships preservation has been closely watched. Partly as a result of our leadership, and partly through national and international exchange, several important new organizations have been formed. Co-sponsored by Mystic Seaport and the National Maritime Museum in London, the First International Congress of Maritime Museums was held at Greenwich, England, in 1973. Now organized as a permanent international organization, a second Congress was held in Oslo in 1975, and the third Congress will be held at Mystic Seaport in 1978. In America the Council of American Maritime Museums was formed four years ago. CAMM works closely with the International Congress, the National Maritime Historical Society, and ships preservation efforts from coast to coast.

All of these organizations have high on their priorities the common objective of identifying and saving salvageable historic vessels, and Mystic Seaport is playing a leading role in these endeavors.

As we have learned more, particularly about the complex problems which make this effort unique among all other forms of preservation, we have come to realize the critical need to develop widespread national interest and awareness. We have therefore made these problems known to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Established by Act of Congress in 1949, this great organization has become the voice of historic preservation in America. In response to our request, the National Trust appointed a special ad hoc committee from its board of trustees to study the matter and make recommendations. I was a member of that committee; a thorough study was made and we earnestly sought advice from individuals and organizations such as the Council of American Maritime Museums and the National Maritime Society.

As a result, our recommendations were approved by the trustees of the National Trust last fall. The National Trust has thus accepted leadership in maritime preservation, and has established a maritime preservation section, including a standing committee on maritime preservation, of which I am Chairman. This committee is composed of two other trustees and a former trustee, together with representatives of CAMM, NMHS, the National Park Service and individual ships preservationists around the country.

Waldo Chapman Johnston

BOOK REVIEWS

Chesapeake Sailing Craft, Part I. By Robert H. Burgess. (Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1975. xviii + 283 pp. Illustrations and index. $12.50)

For fifty years, beginning in the 1920s, Mr. Burgess photographed, observed, and gathered information on Chesapeake Bay's sailing craft. He sailed on many, photographed others from tugs, steamers, or ashore, and spent much time talking to the men on the vessels. He visited shipyards and went up to the heads of creeks to examine abandoned wrecks. He also made a systematic study of the records. This book is the product of his long observation and study.

For various reasons—sheltered waters, accessibility by water, poor land communications, markets, and, in the case of oystering, legislation—sailing vessels survived on the Chesapeake longer than elsewhere. In the face of better road systems, trucks, cheap engines and fuel, depression, war, and a changing economy, the sailing vessels slowly lost out. Much of Mr. Burgess's story is of this decline. Of the types described, only a few skipjacks, log canoes and perhaps one ram and one brogan survive as sailing craft. His later photographs show the vessels rundown, patched, and hogged. Some he shows in a series of pictures taken over a period of years. It is a rather sad story.

A chapter is devoted to each of the following types: the log canoe, pungey, sloop, two-masted schooner, ram, skipjack, and three- and four-masted schooners. An introductory text before each chapter describes history, function, and features of each type. The photographs have extensive captions providing information on the history of the vessel pictured and, often, what was happening at the moment the picture was taken. Mr. Burgess draws attention to details shown that might otherwise be overlooked.

The photos show the vessels under many conditions: loading a variety of cargoes, under sail, under tow, at anchor, dredging oysters, hauled out, aground, and abandoned. There are deck scenes, closeups of gear, below deck scenes, and shots of the underwater hulls. The photographic record presented is very complete. The men who worked the vessels are also pictured and often identified by name.

This reviewer as a boy remembers seeing under sail a few bugeyes, schooners, rams, and many skipjacks. Also there were many power boats on the Bay in the late 1930s and early 1940s that were identifiable as former sailing vessels. He, too, used to row around the wrecks abandoned at the heads of Chesapeake creeks. Now even the wrecks are pretty well gone. It is fortunate indeed that Mr. Burgess made his painstaking record; through his pictures he has saved the vessels for us.

Willits Ansel

Longboat to Hawaii: An Account of the Voyage of the Clipper Ship HORNET of New York Bound for San Francisco in 1866. Assembled and Edited and with a Foreword and Afterword by Alexander Crosby Brown. (Cambridge, Maryland: Cornell Maritime Press, 1974. 254 pp. Illustrated, bibliography, and index. $12.50.)

Fire at sea with the loss of the ship is a terrifying maritime calamity. Three boats pulled away from the sinking clipper ship *Hornet* and two were never heard from again. This story traces the 43-day ordeal suffered by the fifteen who did survive and sailed a longboat some 4000 miles to safety.

Alexander Crosby Brown exhibits considerable expertise with his adroit amalgamation of the personal journals and letters of the master, Josiah A. Mitchell, and two passengers, the brothers Henry and Samuel Ferguson. Appropriately added to these are the concurrent reportings and subsequent writings of Mark Twain. By coincidence, the latter, whose real name is, of course, Samuel Clemens, was in the Hawaiian Islands as a field correspondent for the *Sacramento Daily Union* when the *Hornet*'s survivors landed at Laupahoehoe on 15 June 1866.

Despite the fact that we gain little pleasure from the pain and suffering of mankind, almost everyone will be captivated by the remarkable endurance of these fifteen men. For they rose from the very depths of hopelessness to become heroes in their own right.

Both the Introduction and Part I set the stage with materials to tie together the story of this passage and the history of the clipper ship *Hornet*. The journals of Captain Mitchell and the Ferguson brothers provide the narrative up to the morning of 3 May 1866 when the crew and passengers took to the boats. With these three

sources, the commentary of Mark Twain is intertwined to cover the survivors' dramatic struggle to westward with only 10 days' rations. Also, this segment of the story is underscored by the unfortunate aspect of navigating to mythical islands recorded on their chart but which never really existed.

Letters of the four principal recorders are used to announce the salvation of the survivors as they make their landfall in Hawaii and inform the world of the disaster that befell the ship, its passengers, and crew. Fortunately, these journals are continued well beyond this point in time, so the reader may learn the aftermath of the ordeal when Captain Mitchell and Henry and Samuel Ferguson go through the trials of readjustment to a society they never thought to enjoy again.

The three closing chapters of this book are very well thought out because they carry the story to its ultimate conclusion. Two periodical articles in an 1866 *Harper's Monthly* and an 1899 *Century Magazine* are reprinted. In his own words, Mark Twain presents a vivid assessment of the importance of his role as a reporter of this tragic incident, and how it contributed to what was to become a distinguished literary career. Also, the afterlife of the four recorders is traced to the end and beyond, to the present day. Finally, several similar types of open boat voyages undertaken as a result of disaster at sea are recalled in brief biographical sketches, which places the ordeal of the *Hornet*'s longboat in proper perspective as a superhuman accomplishment.

It is impossible to close without mention of the excellent illustrations. The endpapers contain a chart of the track of the *Hornet*'s passage and its longboat. Liberally dispersed throughout the pages are a newspaper advertisement, sailing card, woodcuts, paintings, photographs, additional charts, pages from the journals, and vignettes, all of which add significant visual reference to the text. In all, it is an excellent book and worthy of inclusion in any maritime collection.

Don Judge

BOOK ANNOTATIONS

Count the Cats in Zanzibar. By James W. Crawford. (Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1975. ix + 113 pp. Illustrations. $5.95.)

The unusual title is a quotation from Henry David Thoreau and these five yarns recount some of the postwar yachting experiences of the author. Delightful to read, with an excellent touch of humor.

Farewell to Old England: New York in Revolution. By Ellen F. Rosebrock. (New York: South Street Seaport Museum, 1976. 63 pp. Illustrations and notes. $1.95.)

The beginnings of a city as seen through the life and times of three men; mariner-merchant Joseph Rose primarily, and, to a lesser extent, privateer Isaac Sears and merchant Isaac Low. The period covered is from the end of the French and Indian War to the dawn of the century of growth. An excellent insight.

Gold Rush Steamers of the Pacific. By Ernest A. Wiltsee. (Lawrence, Massachusetts: Quarterman Publications, 1976. xi + 421 pp. Illustrations, appendices, and index. $35.00.)

A reprint of the 1938 edition, limited to 500 copies, to which 50 pages of additional illustrations have been added. Covering the period from 1846 to 1869, this often-overlooked subject is treated with exceptional clarity. The steamship forged a vital link in the transportation chain and the return of this title is most welcome.

The History of Maritime North Carolina: An Annotated Bibliography. By William N. Still, Jr. (Greenville, North Carolina: Institute for Coastal and Marine Resources, 1976. 84 pp.)

Excellent. Subjects covered are General, Exploration, Shipping and Transportation, Shipbuilding, Fishing, Military Affairs, Auxiliary, Shipwrecks, and Unpublished Sources.

On Watch: A Memoir. By Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr. (New York: Quadrangle, 1976. xv + 568 pp. Illustrations, appendices, and index. $12.50.)

Admittedly controversial, this volume deals with national figures and international policy through the eyes of the former Chief of Naval Operations. Candid and blunt, the other side of the coin has a right to be heard, and should be read by all who "give a damn."

Ships and Parts of Ships on Ancient Coins. Edited by Arie L. Ben-Eli. (Haifa: National Maritime Museum Foundation, 1975. 80 pp. Illustrations and bibliographic notes.)

Printed in both Hebrew and English, the first nineteen pages describe the Israeli museum's col-

lection of ancient coins in the context of maritime history. This is followed by 73 plates and captions which illustrate and describe specific coins in detail, dating from 370 B.C.

Shore Walks on Cape Cod and the Vineyard. By Paul and Ruth Sadler. (Chester, Connecticut: The Pequot Press, 1976. 96 pp. Illustrations. $3.50.)

A very delightful small book describing 25 "Nature Trail" walks. Numbers 1 through 21 are distributed from southwest to northeast on the Cape, with the balance on the Vineyard. Complete directions are given and each site is described in detail.

Singlehanded Sailing: The Experiences and Techniques of the Lone Voyagers. By Richard Henderson. (Camden, Maine: International Marine Publishing Co., 1976. Illustrations, books relating to singlehanded sailing and index. $15.00.)

If you ever wondered about the why and how of singlehanded sailing, this book will prove to be fascinating. Regardless of the level of personal experience, all sailors will find a strong measure of worthy information in this well-balanced text, which is enhanced by the author's illustrations.

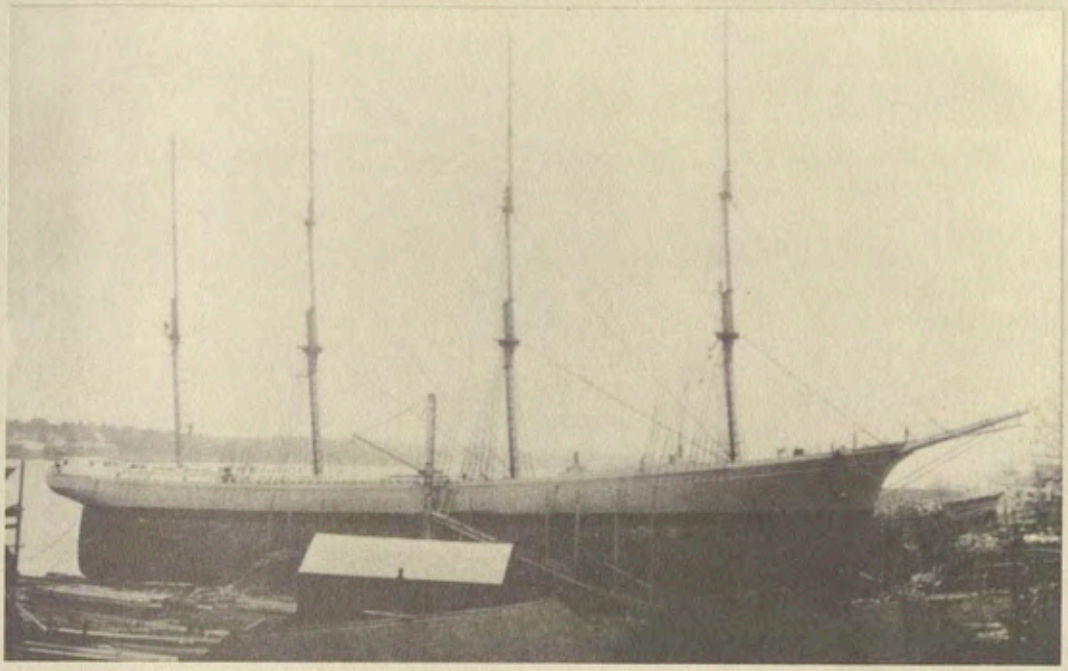
Tell It Good-Bye, Kiddo: The Decline of the New England Offshore Fishery. By David Boeri and James Gibson. (Camden, Maine: International Marine Publishing Co., 1976. 154 pp. Illustrations, bibliography and index. $9.95.)

The subtitle reveals the subject matter, but in no way can these few words truly describe the stark reality of decimation suffered by a once prominent industry. The authors are personally involved and their eyewitness account is frank, factual, thought-provoking, and well presented.

ACQUISITIONS

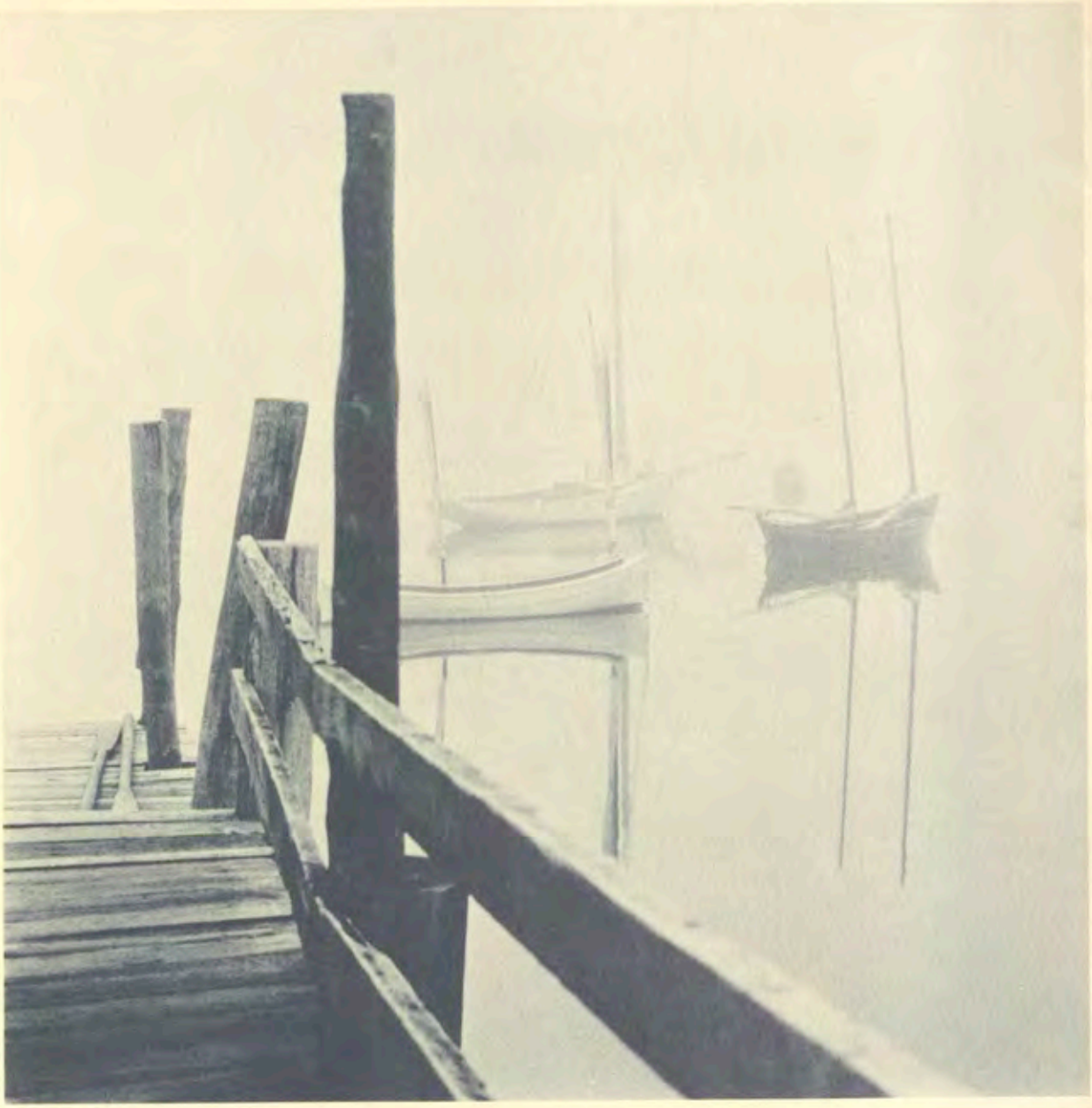
The photograph on the facing page of one of the fastest vessels of the American merchant marine in the days of sail is one of an extraordinary collection brought together in his lifetime by the late John Faunce Leavitt. There are 2,700 photographs, annotated as shown in the artist's own handwriting, and together they represent a source of rare value for maritime historians and scholars. Thanks to the Seaport Pilots, and to the generosity of Mrs. Virginia Leavitt, they are now part of the Seaport's unique pictorial record of the age of sail.

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