SUMMER 1987

THE LOG OF MYSTIC SEAPORT



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FRONT COVER: Where the Pacific whalers rested: Lahaina, Maui, Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands. Detail from the panorama, "A Whaling Voyage 'round the World," by former whaleman Benjamin Russell and house painter Caleb Purrington, ca. 1848. (Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum)

BACK COVER: "Life in the Forecastle" depicted (with artistic license) the raucous, brawling atmosphere found in many of the dank, dark caverns that housed whalemen aboard ship. Engraved by J. Halpin. (J. Ross Browne, *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise. . . .* New York, 1846)

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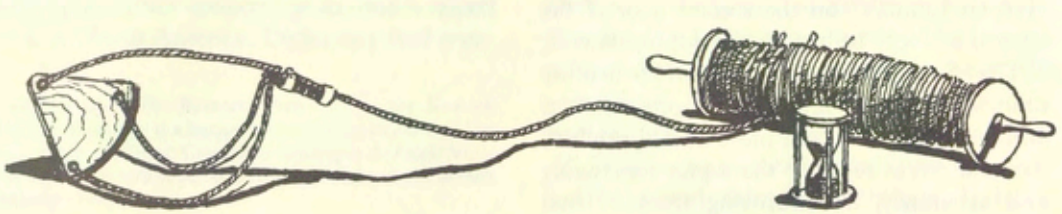
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SIGHTINGS



Today, popular literature, motion pictures, and television programs frequently focus heavily on sex and violence. It seems that the greater the emphasis on these themes, the greater the audience. Readers of this issue of *The Log* will be surprised, perhaps, to find that Mystic Seaport Museum is now publishing articles on these subjects. I can assure you, however, that it was not for the sensational aspects of the narratives that *The Log*'s editorial board selected these submissions. Rather, and with some trepidation, these articles were approved as representing historically valid themes, unsavory as they may be. To ignore these subjects would be to ignore an important reality of life at sea in the nineteenth century.

At Mystic Seaport we recognize our responsibility to give accurate information and representations of maritime life in the last century. We must resist romanticizing the seafaring experience. By the same token, we must resist overemphasizing the more sensational aspects of our story. This holds true throughout the Museum.

In the village area we have brought together representative structures from all over New England. The staff is constantly refining both the exhibits themselves and the interpretation of them to afford more credibility. There has been some "sanitizing" of our depiction in that we do not attempt to recreate the filth and stench that would have characterized some seaports. Nor have we installed an interpreted exhibit of "French Emma's" on the second floor of the tavern, as might be historically appropriate.

The effort to develop a portrait of life in other times is carried over into all of our presentations and publications. In our more formal exhibits, the staff works to cover the topics thoroughly and accurately, not shrinking from difficult issues such as the slave trade or the grim realities of naval warfare and crowded immigrant ships. Our educators at all levels are driven by a commitment to academic integrity, which is also the guide for our publications, both in written form and on video tape.

Certainly, we know that exploitive sensationalism would draw people. Even with accurate information, however, this approach—with fascinating stories of adventure, cruelty, terrorism, heroism, and sadism—gives a false impression. It is our goal to present to our visitors a balanced view, providing the information from which proper conclusions can be drawn. Then, visitors can play an active role in developing for themselves an understanding of life at sea and ashore in the nineteenth century. As in this issue of *The Log*, our challenge is to utilize our talents and collective imagination to convey accurate information in a manner that is vivid, exciting, and responsible.

J. Revell Carr

Connecticut Yankees in Queen Victoria's Fort

New London Whalemen on the Northwest Coast

ROBERT LLOYD WEBB

If you had signed on a whaleship in New London in the fall of 1844, chances are you would have spent the next two summers scouring the North Pacific for right whales. After a difficult passage around Cape Horn, and perhaps a season chasing sperm whales in the South Seas, you would have found yourself at liberty at Lahaina or Honolulu about the first or second week of April 1845, while the ship recruited for a summer cruise northward. Given that opportunity, you undoubtedly took advantage of the warm, tropical beauty, and listened avidly to the latest scuttlebutt from your fellow shipmates in the whaling fleet.

Had you arrived in the spring of 1845 or 1846 the scuttlebutt was this: first, the place to which you were about to set sail—the North Pacific—was a dismal spot, beset by cold, rain, snow, incessant fog, and those stubborn "Northwest Horses" of right whales that regularly pulled your whaleboat far away to stormy windward out of sight of your ship. Second, you heard of war: war between the States and Mexico over contested territory in California and the Southwest; war with England over the so-called "Oregon Territory" on the Northwest Coast of America. It seemed that only fighting would answer sovereignty issues concerning the undeveloped lands in North America. Diplomacy had regularly failed, so that the boundaries of young America in both the Southwest and the Northwest were very much in dispute.

It might have occurred to you that whaling was sufficiently grueling and dangerous without the added complication of an armed conflict. No doubt you and your fellows would have been all for America in any coming war; probably some of you would have been ready to join the Navy and fight. But for some, the threat of war must have provided a worrisome addition to a daily fomenting hatred of whaling. So you might have heard talk of desertions in comfortable harbors, and, if enough of your shipmates had similar thoughts, perhaps talked about forcing your ship's officers to shortcut their intended cruise, well, that might constitute an act of mutiny.

The Northwest Coast of America was an uncertain shore at best, where the known landings and safe harbors were principally found on the tentative charts of the eighteenth-century navigators and fur-traders. The sole occupants of these places, Indians, were regularly treacherous by reputation and probably likely to maraud your ship and take you prisoner, or worse. Added to the rumors of impending war and malicious whales, then, were numerous accounts, most of them none too recent, of Yankee trading ships plundered and their crews murdered by Indians at Nootka Sound and elsewhere along the Northwest Coast. The destruction of Henry Astor's trading ship *Tonquin*, allegedly by Indians, was still fresh in the collective mind, even though it had happened thirty years before. And the

Robert L. Webb, Research Associate at the Kendall Whaling Museum, is a frequent contributor to *The Log*. His book, *On the Northwest: Commercial Whaling in the Pacific Northwest, 1790–1967*, will be published by the University of British Columbia Press.

autobiography of John Jewitt, a captive among the West Coast Indians at Nootka Sound in 1803, was yet a "best-seller" in several trade editions.

Before 1840 few whaleships had ventured northeastward from the Sandwich Islands, or north from Alta California. But new industrial processes had created a growing need for lubricating oil, and the barons of fledgling industry demanded whale oil for their lamps. Additionally, the flexible plates of baleen, which serve as food-strainers in the mouths of the right whales, had begun to be employed in the manufacture of apparel, fashion accessories, and other items requiring both suppleness and strength.

Evidence in the whaling record suggests that southern-hemisphere populations of right whales had been much reduced by whalemen, so that the increased demand for baleen and oil occurred at a time when supply from the regular whaling grounds may have been unable to meet it fully. Such shortages were mitigated by the discovery of whales in the far North Pacific along the coast of Russian Kamchatka and on the Northwest Coast of America. During the 1840s whalemen from virtually every American whaling port would visit these distant places, and conspicuous among their number were the ships and crews from the port of New London, Connecticut.

In 1840, the merchants of New London had no sense of the "Northwest Coast of America" as a *destination* for their whaleships, but they were not as fastidious about sperm whales as their Nantucket colleagues and seemed content to make a profit where a profit could be got. Consequently the Connecticut fleet, and also those from the outports of New York, took an early interest in the whaling on the Northwest Coast, reaching those seas even before the extent and quality of that new whaling ground were fully understood.

One of the early arrivals was the New London whaleship *Phoenix*, which came northward from the equatorial sperm-whaling grounds in the spring of 1840. From 1 June until 16 July five whales were taken in the vicinity of 48° North, due west from the coast of what is now southern Washington State. During the summer of 1841, another New London ship, the *Superior*, sailed to the latitude of the Queen Charlotte Islands, now part of British Columbia. There the men struck no fewer than fifty-eight right whales.[1] In fact, they saw whales almost every day the fog lifted beyond the bowsprit, and in their enthusiasm, boats were lowered even when a carcass was already lashed alongside and the tryworks about to be lit. Twenty-six of the fifty-eight whales struck were recovered; five more were killed, but sunk before they could be brought alongside the ship. For Captain Albert McLean and his crew, the large catch ensured a return home after just one season of whaling. The *Superior* had sailed 29 September 1840; by early July 1842 ship and men had returned, with 2,000 barrels of whale oil, a few hundred barrels of sperm oil, and a very satisfactory 20,000 pounds of baleen.[2] McLean abstracted his catch for the ship's major investors, Noyes and William W. Billings,[3] and, after that, these New London shipowners held in their hands a new destination to which they could send other ships on an assumption of productive results. Outward-bound masters working for Billings received important new instructions:

> you will embrace the first favorable opportunity to proceed on your whaling voyage to the North West Coast. After you pass Cape Horn we should advise you to cruise on the coast of Chili [sic]—or go up to the Line & cruise [there] for Sperm whales taking care to leave in sufficient time to recruit at the Marquese Islands or at Mowee Sandwich Islands & be on the North West Coast by the 1 May. The cruising ground on the North West coast for right whales is all North of 40° & from one continent to the other—The Superior last voyage steered *North* from the Sandwich Islands & found whales in great abundance in lat 48 to 53° & we have no doubt the whales are to be found all over the Northern Ocean[4]

"When you leave the coast," Billings added cautiously, "you must be guided by your own judgment what course to pursue—we think it always an object to avoid the Sandwich Islands as they are expensive & the crew likely to desert. . . ."[5]



The right whaling bonanza of the North Pacific only lasted through the decade of the 1840s. By 1850 vessels were pushing north through the Bering sea. Benjamin Russell depicted "A Ship on the North-West Coast Cutting in Her Last Right Whale" (and the same ship homeward bound at left) on a typically overcast day. The crew forward at the windlass hoists aboard the upper jaw, with its long baleen plates. Lithograph by A. Mayer, printed by Lemercier, Paris. (Courtesy Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, Massachusetts)

The effect of home knowledge was immediate. In 1840, none of the twenty-three whaleships departing New London declared any intention of voyaging in the Pacific; by 1843, fifteen of thirty departing whaleships from that port declared not only for the Pacific, but specifically for the Northwest Coast of America. And this three-year hiatus represents only a lag in bureaucratic record-keeping, for the summer of 1841 can be documented as the first important whaling season on the Northwest Coast. The impact of this discovery can be noted in the general rise of New London's whaling industry during the early 1840s. Robert Owen Decker's research reveals that New London sponsored ten whaling firms and thirty-seven whaling vessels in 1835, and that this number remained about steady into the very early 1840s. By 1844, however, the fleet had enlarged to sixteen firms operating seventy-four vessels: exactly twice as many hulls as the total of nine years earlier.[6]

The enlarged Yankee whaling fleet in the northeastern Pacific Ocean attracted the attention of the Hudson's Bay Company, which nominally possessed commercial rights along the shoreline of British North America up to the Russian-American boundary at 54°40′ North latitude. Hudson's Bay officials had been warned of some "300 sail"[7] making summer cruises to the North Pacific, and it appeared that at least a few of the whaling captains intended to explore what they called "bay whaling," by seeking right whales in the involuted coves and passages along the coast.

The thousands of miles of broken coastline and protected waterways could not be ade-

quately protected against such intrusion. The Hudson's Bay Company had already determined to close several of the northern forts as being too difficult to man and provision. In their place, the new Fort Victoria would overlook the strategically important Strait of Juan de Fuca at the entrance to Puget Sound. The work of the northern outposts would be accomplished by the Company's paddle-steamer *Beaver*, which had come out from England in 1837. With fewer forts, and little hope of receiving protection from a weak British Navy in the Pacific, the Company feared the arrival of the whaleships as a direct threat to its fur-trade monopoly among the Indians; the whalemen might trade too liberally for furs, thus undermining the economy which provided the Company with the best furs for the least outlay.

Simultaneously, the diplomatic crisis over control of the Oregon Territory began to peak. A treaty signed in 1818 had originally given Great Britain and the United States joint control over the territory, but the increasing pressure of settlement there had caused friction. Most of the newcomers were American farmers who staked claims to land traditionally used by fur trappers in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. The settlers seemed to assume that the land was American by right, and they expected the U.S. government to take total possession of the territory in their behalf.[8] But none could agree on a suitable border between British and American lands in the Northwest. Some favored dividing the territory down the center of the Columbia River, while others preferred the forty-ninth parallel through the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The most aggressive Americans believed the United States should take sole possession up to the Russian boundary; they rallied around the cry of "54–40 or Fight!"

The importance of this stalemate was not lost on the whalemen, who had found the larger number of right whales near the disputed shore. Rumors were rampant; not only were Americans and English about to fight, but some claimed that Mexico would also go to war over territorial disputes in Texas and the Southwest. News circulated to the effect that Mexican gunboats were already at sea, preparing to seize American whaling ships. It is difficult to document, but certainly this agitation toward war added to the various miseries that infected the whaling fleet.

The years 1845–46, at the height of the diplomatic crisis, seem also to be years of total dissatisfaction among the whalemen. Of course, these years also marked the zenith of American whaling, when more than 700 ships, barks, brigs, and schooners sailed in search of the whale, and a principal effect of the rapid enlargement of the fishery was the placement of many men in whaleships who otherwise would not have been there, including untrained "greenhands" with no previous experience of the sea. For whatever reasons, the circumstances and conditions in 1845 and 1846 led to disaffiliations of all sorts, and sometimes to open mutiny.

In certain cases, dissatisfaction resulted from extreme circumstances, such as the death of a captain. Just this eventuality drove the New London bark *Fame* off the Northwest Coast in the discordant summer of 1846; on arrival at the Sandwich Islands about half the crew refused to go back north.[9] But much mutinous behavior stemmed from the poor lot of the working sailor aboard whaleships, and several Connecticut vessels were forced to return to the Sandwich Islands from the Northwest Coast during those two turbulent summers on account of this general and unspecific malaise.

These also proved to be uncertain whaling years. A very few seasons of intense hunting had begun to deplete right-whale populations on both sides of the North Pacific, and in 1845 the Kamchatka fishery fell off severely. The early-season catch was so much reduced that a number of shipmasters determined to cross the arch of the Pacific rim toward the American coast. This was rather unusual, as the two whaling grounds were some distance apart, and it was not customary for a cruise to include both the Asian and the North American grounds during the same summer. Beginning in 1845, however, some crews, both American and French, made that long journey.

A well-documented instance survives in the troubled account of three New London vessels

whose masters wound up the summer of 1845 by traversing the top of the Pacific rim. These were the *Louvre*, *Morrison*, and *Montezuma*.[10] Two of the masters shared a surname; James M. Green in the *Louvre* and Sam Green, Jr., in the *Morrison*. Along with Captain William M. Baker in the *Montezuma*, they experienced the poor kind of voyage that sometimes made wild dogs out of civilized officers, and exacerbated mutinous inclinations among the foremast hands.

Sam Green in particular suffered much difficulty and a high rate of desertion from the start. He heard many complaints about the *Morrison*, which, in point of fact, was in none too good condition. Even before reaching the coast of South America outward-bound, the crew was obliged to make repairs to masts and other wood that was found to be rotten.[11] But Green had his own doubts; after just one month at sea he confided to his Honolulu-bound passenger, the Reverend Thomas Douglass, that he wished he could "speak an hour" to the shipowners about both vessel and men. He seemed particularly dissatisfied with the cook and the cooper.

Green's unfamiliarity with his intended destination may have contributed to his uncertainty; he had only just returned from an Atlantic voyage in the *Neptune*, and had never been to the Sandwich Islands before. He was, nevertheless, a strong and determined man, twenty-eight years old, who regularly practiced and improved his fine penmanship by writing his own name—and that of Napoleon Bonaparte's—into his personal journals. Before leaving the Atlantic Ocean he clearly made every effort to inform himself about the places he expected to sail. When he spoke the Fairhaven whaleship *George*,[12] its master proved to be a friendly and outgoing man:

> Capt[n] Swift informed us that he had on board his vessel a large volume containing the voyages of several of the most distinguished navigators that have

Flying the houseflag of Havens & Smith, and a homeward bound pennant, the ship *Morrison* was painted in the Thames River, between the Fort Griswold monument, left, and Fort Trumbull, right. Built at Philadelphia in 1832, the 565-ton, 123-foot *Morrison* made only one voyage as a New London whaler. Oil on canvas, by John Ewen, Jr., August 1844. (Courtesy New London County Historical Society)



explored the North Pacific. It also contained maps or charts of all the principal bays together with accounts of the natives along the coasts their habits customs &c. The charts of the principal whaling bays he very politely offered to copy himself & present to Capt G if he would come on board . . . .[13]

The following afternoon Sam Green went aboard the *George* and obtained the charts from Captain Swift, doubtless very much relieved to have at least some information about this foreign and treacherous shore.

As the voyage progressed, Green and his crew received portents to suggest that their trip would not be an easy one; on 18 November they spoke the whaleship *Candace*, which had come from the North Pacific with but two whales, owing to the dissatisfaction of the crew, who allegedly refused to perform the whale-hunt with sufficient alacrity. Whether Green found out then, or learned afterwards, he had on board his own ship a sailor named Phillip Tully, believed to be one of the ringleaders behind the *Candace* incident; the man had returned ahead of his former ship and signed for another voyage, this time aboard the *Morrison*.

Tully is worth looking at, since he is in some ways a model for the type of man who worked in whaling during the peak years of the 1840s. He was not a big person, about 5′4″, a New Yorker, with dark hair and a light complexion.[14] When he signed on board the *Candace* in September of 1843 he was only seventeen years old, and it is probable that he had never served in a whaling vessel before. Tully may have been what modern-day corrections officers like to term a "troublemaker." He also seems to have disliked whaling; for reasons not now well understood, he stands accused of inciting strife on board the *Candace*, and then deserting from that ship.[15]

By February 1845 Captain Green had successfully brought the *Morrison* into the South Pacific. And he had begun to have trouble with Phillip Tully. Shortly before the ship reached Tahiti, Tully fought with another man and just escaped a flogging from Captain Green. A short time later, while coasting near shore, a mysterious fire broke out in the sail-room. Though soon extinguished, several sails were damaged and a number of stop-ropes burnt off. Tully was accused of this deed, since he had just been sent into steerage to get a light for use in the after hold. He was confined in irons by Captain Green. His shipmates then told how Tully had sworn not to return to the States in the *Morrison*, if he could help it.[16] He expected to be prosecuted on the *Candace* mutiny charge, and he realized that desertion at the Sandwich Islands, where the *Morrison* would next go, would be nearly impossible on account of bounties payable on deserters captured and returned to the consulate. It was speculated that Tully intended to escape during the fire; the ship was close to shore, and Tully was a swimmer.[17]

Captain Green tried to surrender his mutineer to the American Consulate at Papeete, but the regular consul had died and the substitute was gone on a mission to another part of the island. The sea captain in charge refused to take the man unless the *Morrison* entered the harbor and stopped a day. Tully is said to have "begged very earnestly" to be left on board of either the French or English warship then in harbor, "asking permission," the Reverend Douglass wrote, "*to do the very Thing which we supposed he intended to do in case he had succeeded in burning the Ship.*"[18] But Sam Green was anxious to hunt whales, and disinclined to pay port charges. He continued on to Maui, where Tully was finally discharged into the hands of the U.S. Commercial Agency at Lahaina, "suspected of an attempt to set fire to the Ship."[19]

From the Sandwich Islands, Green steered his whaleship north and west toward Kamchatka. But a few seasons of whaling there had significantly reduced the right-whale population, and the surviving animals were nervous and unwilling to allow boats to approach them. This shortage of whales on Kamchatka proved vexatious not only to Sam Green, but also to James M. Green, twenty-seven-year-old master of the *Louvre*. He wrote to his shipowners: "There is every reason to believe that you will be disappointed in not seeing the Louvre instead of this letter, but you will find Enough others to sympathize with you."

The cargoes which went home last season and the

account they brought must have raised high hopes. I will give you a small sketch in May I saw Enough whales to have kept boiling steady, in Lat. 46 to 47. Long. 165 to 169 East but it was one continuous round of bad weather. I got two in May sunk two in June saw a few whales in same place, got my last whales 8th day of July since then I have seen but two whales . . . I have been from berings [sic] Island to Cape Lopatka off to 170 and back again and have been up and down the coast off and on for 40 days. You can see from 20 to 15 ships daily I have not seen one start tack or sheet for 50 days.[20]

"I can not make whals [sic]," Green concluded. "I consider myself justified in leaving this coast—if you had been here you would have told me to go [a] month ago.

I have been trying to find Sam Green I have found him and now we are going around the Fox Islands . . . and if whales hang at those Islands late we shall go in, and anchor: after that I shall get to the coast [of North America] if possible I do not want to go to the Sandwich Islands if I can fetch the coast.

"I have got to stay out another season," he lamented; "that sticks. I can hardly swallow it, it makes me ugly. I give hard looks. I never did go on any [whaling] ground until it was all cut up, but you may be sure when you do see the Louvre to see a voyage in her."[21]

In their determination to "make a voyage," James Green and Sam Green decided to cross the North Pacific and take a look around the Aleutian Islands, and Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska. From there they planned to sail southward along the North American coast. They must have convinced Captain Baker to go with them, for the *Morrison*, the *Louvre*, and Baker's *Montezuma* were all spoken at sea in late August, "bound for the bays."[22] By 23 September they had arrived in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and came to anchor among the Makah whalemen in the harbor of Neah Bay, on the south side of the strait in what is now northwestern Washington.[23]

It is not known if the captains had previous knowledge of Fort Victoria, across the strait; it was barely two years old. Sam Green may have navigated to the strait on the strength of the charts obtained from Captain Swift. Nor is there a record of their arrival at Neah Bay, but the U.S. Exploring Expedition under Lieutenant Charles Wilkes had been there four years before, and had been met by some forty canoes, their people anxious for trade. About the occasion Wilkes wrote: "the clamour made by numerous visitors alongside was very great."[24] The whaleships' officers were probably greeted by the same English-speaking chief who greeted Wilkes's party, a man dressed partially in clothing obtained from the Hudson's Bay Company.

Nor were they the first whaleships to come into that place during 1845; Roderick Finlayson, chief trader at Fort Victoria, wrote to his superior in June of the year to report that the Cape Flattery Indians were not "much encumbered with furs, having disposed of them previously to an American Whaler, which lay for about two months in Neah Bay."[25]

On 1 October the ships' boats crossed the strait to Fort Victoria, "to enquire if any whales were found about this Neighbourhood, in winter."[26] James Douglas, overseer at the fort, met them and admitted with considerable relief that the only whales to be found in the strait were "Fin Backs" and "Black fish"—probably meaning humpback whales—"which whalers do not consider worth the trouble of Killing."[27] While at Fort Victoria, the men purchased needed supplies; Sam Green bought 2½ bushels of potatoes for the equivalent of eleven American dollars.[28]

On 16 October the Hudson's Bay Company bark *Cowlitz* entered the strait, and the whaling masters sent out a boat's crew to obtain a barrel of powder and a few other stores, but their request was declined.[29] The *Cowlitz*'s master must have felt some chagrin three days later, when the helpful whalemen assisted in towing the becalmed bark up to the fort.[30] On the following day, with the *Cowlitz* safely in port, the whalemen bought 120 bushels of potatoes—40 bushels per ship—"all they could carry & we could afford to furnish them."[31] They also requested blankets for the ships' crews, but these the Hudson's Bay people would not provide, for fear they would wind up as trade items in the hands of the Makah across the strait.[32]



Fort Victoria was established by the Hudson's Bay Company on a cove at the southern tip of Vancouver Island in 1843. Neah Bay, where the American whaleships anchored, was about sixty miles west on the south shore of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. In this engraving the company steamer *Beaver* is shown at anchor. (*Illustrated London News*, 26 August 1848)

The potatoes purchased at Fort Victoria were too many to put in the whaleboats, so Sam Green hired at least one native canoe to assist in bringing his forty bushels from "Fort Victory" to the ship. For such assistance he paid dearly: one red flannel shirt, ten pounds of tobacco, and a musket. He also gave a "red flannel Knit" to the local chief at Cape Flattery for recovering a watch that had been stolen.[33]

The Americans told Douglas and Finlayson that many more whaleships would likely call at the fort in the coming year, if only beef, flour, and potatoes could be made available to them. James Douglas, who had once termed the whalemen's arrival an "ominous visitation," now had cause to reverse his previous position:

> In future. . . I should be disposed. . . to act very differently. I would supply them with winter clothing for their crews at prices sufficiently high to secure our business, and to put it out of their power to trade furs, with any prospect of advantage to themselves, reserving moreover the prime articles of Indian trade, such as the Beaver Blanket, which the Natives chiefly value, in our own hands, and selling them only the "inferior" Blanket, which will not purchase furs in this quarter. By such means, we might greatly improve the business of this Post, which however convenient as a Depot, is not productive in furs.[34]

The whaleships remained at anchor off the native village for nearly five weeks. While there, no fewer than fifteen men deserted, three from the *Morrison*, six from the *Louvre*, and the other six apparently from the *Montezuma*.[35] Six of them stole a whaleboat and set out for the American settlement at the Columbia River. The other nine concealed themselves in the village until the ships had sailed. Afterwards, they were rounded up by the chief, "Cape Flattery Jack," and brought by him to Fort Victoria where Douglas took the sailors into protective custody. He planned to send them to the Sandwich Islands by the bark *Cowlitz* or else to the Columbia River, "as the sooner they are removed from this place the better."[36]

The nine who stayed behind with the Makah fared better than the six who escaped in the whaleboat. The shoreline of the Olympic Peninsula proved inhospitable, and there was no place to make a landing for fresh water or provisions. When they attempted to cross the breakers at Gray's Harbor the whaleboat capsized. Three of the men drowned, all of them from Sam Green's desertion-plagued *Morrison*.[37]

The three whaling captains sailed from Neah Bay southward past Gray's Harbor toward San Francisco Bay. Late in November they came into

the whaleship anchorage at Yerba Buena, and there the captains went ashore to file consular certificates for "men runaway at San Juan de fuga."[38] While at anchor in San Francisco Bay seven more men deserted from the *Morrison* alone, short-changing Sam Green's ship by a total of ten men. Green paid to get a seaman named William Pook out of prison, and shipped him into the forecastle. After another season in the Pacific, he eventually finished the voyage in the *Morrison*, when she got back to New London in May 1848.[39]

The Hudson's Bay Company meanwhile arranged for the passage of at least three of the deserters who had remained with Cape Flattery Jack, and sent them to the Sandwich Islands on the next sailing of the *Cowlitz*.[40] Only one is known by name—Thomas P. Davis—and it must have been a sight to see the faces of his shipmates in the *Louvre*, when he returned aboard at Honolulu. Davis delivered a message to his captain from the U.S. Consulate that read:

Sir,

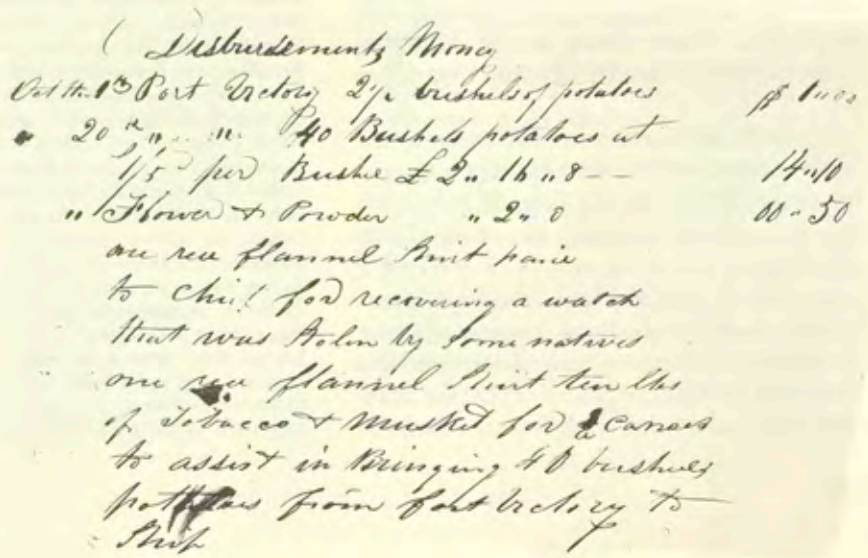
Herewith I send you a seaman, named Thomas P. Davis, who, it seems, deserted from the ship "Louvre" some time last season on the North West Coast, and who, being found by some of the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company in great distress and destitution, was sent down here about a month since in their Barque "Cowlitz."

Davis, in my opinion, deserves punishment, not only for his desertion, which from his own confession appears to have been without cause, but for one or two petty thefts here at the hospital boarding house where he has been staying since his arrival.[41]

Surviving documents fail to show whether James Green exacted any punishment for Davis's misdeeds. He completed the voyage in the *Louvre*, and when she returned to New London in April 1847 (two months ahead of the *Montezuma*), his "lay" consisted of 515 gallons of whale oil, 23 gallons of sperm oil, and 160 pounds of "bone." The whale oil was sold at 20½ cents per gallon, the sperm oil at 92 cents per gallon, and total of oil and baleen came to $226, which Davis received in cash.[42] He may not have been flogged for deserting ship, but he was surely and swiftly punished at the counting-house: the ship's agents docked him $21.50 for three months' absence.[43]

Of the rest of the Neah Bay deserters, or any who may have separated themselves from other whaleships at the Indian village, virtually nothing is known. But during the summer of 1846, the residents of Fort Victoria became aware of yet another white man who could occasionally be seen in the company of the Cape Flattery Makah. At this time the Makah were trading regularly with the fort, and during the forenoon of 17 July a large party of thirteen canoes arrived

Captain Sam Green recorded his purchases at "Fort Victory" during October 1845 in the *Morrison* Account Book. (Misc. Vol. 318, G. W. Blunt White Library)



with the usual cargo of sea otter pelts and oil. The white man was with them, and he seems to have taken the opportunity to seek asylum. The daily journal of the fort recorded his coming:

> The American sailor, deserter, accompanied them; he appears to have Conformed to the habits of the Indian since his sojourn among them, being much interest[d] about their property & securing their Canoes, acting in short as their hired Servant. He has got a *fair one* as partner, & is said to be now in the family way, Consequently we cannot Keep him here at present.[44]

It is almost certain that this man was a deserter from a whaling ship, who had perhaps become a slave or serf and may not have been well treated; in any event, he hid until the canoes were gone, and only then made his presence known to officers of the Company.[45] He gave the name Bill Edwards,[46] and received sanction to stay at the fort, where he remained until February 1847. Then, "having seemingly got tired of our Company, This morning solicited & obtained leave to joine his countrymen in the Brig Henry."[47]

The *Henry*, of Newburyport, Massachusetts, had come into the Strait of Juan de Fuca in distress after running short of provisions on a passage from the Sandwich Islands to the Oregon Territory. It remained but a short time, and then sailed, presumably with Edwards aboard, reaching the mouth of the Columbia River about 1 March with a cargo of merchandise, which its captain, William E. Kilbourne, used to open a general store in the new metropolis of Oregon City.[48] Nothing more is known of the fate of Bill Edwards, or the other deserters who preferred a chancy future on the Northwest Coast to yet another whaling cruise on the open sea.

The visit of the *Henry* to Fort Victoria confirmed unsubstantiated rumors that the Oregon boundary had been settled along the forty-ninth degree of latitude. The news was received with great interest at Fort Victoria, since its meaning was profound. War had been completely averted, but the Hudson's Bay Company was now evicted from the territory between the Columbia River and the Strait of Juan de Fuca; the headland visible across the strait from the fort, and the Indian whaling village at Neah Bay, now belonged to the United States.

NOTES

[1] The catch took place between 11 May and 19 August, while cruising in 51°–54° North, 148°–154° West.

[2] Alexander Starbuck, "History of the American Whale Fishery: From its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876," in the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, *Report of the Commissioner for 1875–76*, part 4, appendix A, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1876; reprint, New York: Argosy-Antiquarian Ltd., 1964), pp. 368–69.

[3] [Whales Seen and Taken], untitled abstract, New London County Historical Society, New London, Connecticut, hereafter cited as NLCHS.

[4] N. & W. W. Billings to Captain William Fitch, 4 October 1842, NLCHS.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Robert Owen Decker, *Whaling Industry of New London* (York, Pennsylvania: Liberty Cap Books, 1973), p. 181.

[7] Charles Ross (chief trader at Fort Victoria) to Donald Ross, 10 January 1844, quoted in W. Kaye Lamb, "Five Letters of Charles Ross, 1842–44," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* 7 (1943): 111.

[8] Robert Greenhow, *The History of Oregon and California, and the other Territories on the North-West Coast of North America*, 2nd. ed., (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1845), pp. 376–77; despite the settlers' concerns, the government passed no bills pertaining to the Oregon Territory before 1843.

[9] Noted in *The Friend* 4 (15 August 1846): 124–25.

[10] The *Louvre*'s voyage was financed by Lyman Allyn, Noyes Billings, William W. Billings, John Brandinger, Joseph B. Congdon, John T. Crannell, James M. Green, Rubin Heath, James Clark, Charles W. Strickland, and Leonard Smith, all of New London. The ownership changed during the voyage as shareholders sold their interests: N. & W. W. Billings sold ⅛th of the ship to Brandinger for $3638.50 on 14 February 1845; later Heath sold his share to an unspecified buyer; Brandinger sold 3/32nd for $843.75; and Clark sold 1/32 to Lyman Allyn. The *Montezuma* was owned by Thomas W. Williams III, Acors Barnes, William H. Barnes, and William M. Baker of New London; Bela Peck of Norwich; Calvin G. Williams of Stonington; Henry Grinnell, Moses Hicks Grinnell, and Robert B. Minturn of New York; and Rowse Babcock of Westerly, Rhode Island. The *Morrison* was invested in by Henry P. Haven and Thomas W. Williams, together with Francis Allyn, Charles Butler, Jr., Samuel Green, Jr., all of New London; and Moses H. Grinnell, Henry Grinnell, Robert B. Minturn, and David Sewall of New York City, Ship Registry, Records of the Collector of Customs, New London, Connecticut, Record Group 36, Federal Records Center, Waltham, Massachusetts, hereafter cited as FRC.

[11] A journal, kept during the *Morrison*'s voyage from New London to the Sandwich Islands by the Rev. Thomas Douglass, survives in the collections of Mystic Seaport Museum: Journal of a Voyage in the Whaling Ship *Morrison* of New London bound to the Sandwich Islands & the North West Coast, Samuel Green, Jr., Captain, 16 September 1844–23 May 1846 (excludes the Northwest Coast cruise), hereafter

cited as *Morrison* Journal, Log 343, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, hereafter cited as MSM.

[12] A gam among the *Morrison*, the *Levant* of Sag Harbor, and the *George* of "New Bedford" is documented in the *Morrison* Journal, 23 October 1844. The *George* was not the *George* of New Bedford, as Douglass supposed, but the *George* belonging to Fairhaven, just across New Bedford Harbor. This vessel, under Captain Swift, had departed 16 September bound for the Northwest Coast. The *Levant* was also bound out to the same grounds; see Starbuck, pp. 412–13.

[13] *Morrison* Journal, 23 October 1844.

[14] Crew List, Ship *Candace* of New London, David Reed, master, 30 September 1843. Tully was described as 5'3½". He was 5'5" by the time he signed on the *Morrison*. Crew List, Ship *Morrison* of New London, Samuel Green, Jr., master. 14 September 1844, Records of Collector of Customs, New London, Connecticut, FRC.

[15] Corroborated in marginalia of Crew List returned by *Candace*.

[16] *Morrison* Journal, 14 March 1845.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*, 15 March 1845.

[19] Certificate, signed by Milo Calkin, U. S. Commercial Agency, Maui, Sandwich Islands, 5 April 1845, Records of Collector of Customs, New London, Connecticut, FRC.

[20] James M. Green to Lyman Allyn, aboard ship *Louvre*, 15 August 1845, MSS 76, Old Dartmouth Historical Society Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts, hereafter cited as ODHS.

[21] *Ibid.*; whaling improved enough that Captain Green sent home 20,191 pounds of baleen from the Sandwich Islands by the bark *Angola* of Salem in 1846; James M. Green to Lyman Allen, Mowee, 5 September 1846, MSS 76, ODHS.

[22] Dennis Wood Abstracts, 2:410.

[23] James Douglas to Governor, Deputy Governor, and Committee, Fort Victoria, 16 December 1845, A.11/72, fo.3, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, hereafter cited as HBC.

[24] Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition During the Years 1838, 1839, 1841 1842*, 5 vols., (Philadelphia: Lee and Blanchard, 1845), 4:487–88.

[25] Roderick Finlayson to John McLoughlin, Fort Victoria, 10 June 1845, B.226/b/1, fo.27d, HBC.

[26] Douglas to Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee, 16 December 1845, HBC.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Ship *Morrison* Book of Accounts, kept by Samuel Green, Jr., 1845–47, Misc. Vol. 318, MSM.

[29] Log of bark *Cowlitz*, 16 October 1845, C.1/259, fo.232d, HBC.

[30] *Ibid.*, 19 October 1845.

[31] Roderick Finlayson to John McLoughlin, Fort Victoria, 23 October 1845, B.226/b/1, fo.39, HBC; each officer paid in cash; an undated receipt for the *Louvre's* potatoes exists in the MSS 76, ODHS; the record of Sam Green's purchase for the *Morrison* of potatoes, flour, and powder survives in the Ship *Morrison* Book of Accounts.

[32] Douglas to Governor, Deputy Governor, and Committee, 16 December 1845, HBC.

[33] Ship *Morrison* Book of Accounts, 20 October 1845.

[34] Douglas to Governor, *et al.*, 16 December 1845, HBC.

[35] Consular Certificates, William A. Leidesdorff, Vice-Consul, San Francisco, 17 December 1845, Records of Collector of Customs, New London, Connecticut, Record Group 36, FRC.

[36] Douglas to Governor *et al.*, 16 December 1845, HBC; it is not clear why Douglas was so adamant about removing them, unless they were unwilling to work. Perhaps he was concerned about the rising Anglo-American crisis over the Oregon Territory.

[37] "Three Young Men Drowned in Gray's Harbor, North West Coast," *The Friend* 4 (14 March 1846): 42; the three survivors are not named. The victims Dudley Royce, an eighteen-year-old native of Tolland, Connecticut, and Richard C. Kirby, an Englishman, joined the ship in New London; Robert H. Church joined the ship sometime after the crew list was prepared. Crew List, ship *Morrison*, Records of the Collector of Customs, New London, Connecticut, Record Group 36, FRC; Ship *Morrison* Book of Accounts.

[38] "Ship Louvre & Owners To The Vice consulate San Francisco," 17 December 1845, MSS 76, ODHS; the three ships had arrived at San Francisco together, the *Montezuma* and *Morrison* coming in on 24 November and the *Louvre* the following day, Journal of the ship *Charles Phelps*, 24–25 November 1845, 368, Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, Massachusetts.

[39] Ship *Morrison* Book of Accounts.

[40] James Douglas to Captain Heath, Fort Victoria, 16 December 1845, A.11/72, fos.11–11d, HBC.

[41] Alex G. Abel to [James] Green, Honolulu, 27 February 1846, MSS 76, ODHS.

[42] "Wh Oil, Sperm, Bone Purchased of Louvre Crew Apl 14 1847" and "Division of Cargo to Crew of Ship Louvre, Apl 15 1847," MSS 76, ODHS.

[43] "Thomas P. Davis in a/c with Lyman Allyn," MSS 76, ODHS; the *Louvre* "turned out" 2,860 barrels of whale oil, 133 barrels of sperm oil, and 8,500 pounds of baleen on return, 6 April 1847; a further cargo of 20,191 pounds of baleen had been transhipped in 1846 in the bark *Angola* from the Sandwich Islands; the *Montezuma* returned 24 May 1847 with 3,177 whale, 56 sperm, 31,900 pounds of baleen, Dennis Wood Abstracts, 2:410, 475; the *Morrison* arrived, belatedly, on 5 May 1848, with 3,982 whale, 18 sperm, and 15,000 pounds of baleen; a further 23,712 pounds of baleen had been transhipped previously, Starbuck, pp. 418–19.

[44] Daily Journal of Fort Victoria, 17 July 1846, HBC.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] A seaman named William H. Edwards, age thirty-eight, of New York, deserted from the ship *Merrimac* of New London, on its voyage commencing July 1844; however, a consular paper filed in December 1846 indicates that Edwards was among eight crewmen who deserted at Sydney, New South Wales, Consular Paper, signed by T. H. Williams, Sydney, 24 December 1846, Records of Collector of Customs, New London, Connecticut, Record Group 36, FRC.

[47] Daily Journal of Fort Victoria, 17 July 1846.

[48] William R. Sampson, ed., *John McLoughlin's Business Correspondence* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973), p. 15(note).

Greenhand Hero or Mutineer?

Mutiny Aboard the Whaleship *Meteor*, 1846

JANE LITTEN

"There was never known a season of more trouble between crews and officers," lamented a Hawaiian Island newspaper, as whaleships began to arrive to recruit supplies and men in the spring of 1846. The *Polynesian* thought "disorganized ship discipline" was at the bottom of it all.[1]

A year and a half earlier, the owners of the whaleship *Meteor* had wished her success as she departed from her home port of Mystic on a two-season right-whaling voyage by way of the Indian Ocean. Neither the owners nor the men aboard could have forseen that by the time they reached the Hawaiian Islands, they would contribute to the formation of the editor's lament.[2]

The whalemen and the editor of the *Polynesian* did not fully understand the complex forces that contributed to friction and disorganization in the American whaling industry at mid-century. The driving force was a 60 percent increase in the number of vessels engaged in the industry in a dozen years, bringing the fleet to its all-time peak in 1846.[3] This expansion of the whaling fleet created a serious labor problem. The number of men needed to fill crews increased even as the local supply of labor dwindled. The young New England labor force was finding more inviting opportunites in the mills or moving west to claim their own lands. The traditional lay system, by which the crew was paid a percentage of the catch, was an unattractive gamble. Crewmen did not receive wages until the end of the voyage, by which time much of their earnings had been eaten away by interest on the cost of outfits and advances. Most men, unless they were bound to whaling by family ties, went one voyage and got out. All this led to a change in the composition of crews. Crews, which earlier were composed of seacoast families, neighbors, and a few local Indians, became a heterogeneous mixture of inland farm boys, city immigrants and foreigners, blacks, and Atlantic and Pacific Islanders.[4] A deterioration in proficiency and caliber of crew resulted as crews were filled with inexperienced greenhands. This deteriorating labor situation was met by an increased tyranny and brutality on the part of officers.[5]

At the same time, whaling capital in the 1840s was moving into more profitable investments in manufacturing and railroads.[6] This often meant the skimping of funds invested in a voyage.

Within these general conditions in the industry, each voyage had particular circumstances that affected the stability of the labor force. Most narratives of whaling speak of "luck," but success or failure grew out of the diverse factors of vessel, provisioning, seamanship, and skill. In the enclosed world of a single vessel, the results clustered psychologically around the competence and character of the captain. On the *Meteor*'s 1844–47 voyage, disruptions and friction between the captain and his officers and crew created a constant turnover of men, and contentiousness that finally erupted into mutiny.

The man charged with the responsibility for the voyage was thirty-two-year-old Francis A. Lester, from Ledyard, Connecticut.[7] The *Meteor* was his first command, though he knew every bulkhead and spar, having been carpenter

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aboard when he was twenty and his older brother Austin Lester had been first mate. After his brother took command, he had moved up to become second mate before going to the *Congress* as first mate when his brother became her captain.[8]

The brothers each owned a share in the *Meteor*, which was carried on the account books of its agent, I. & W. P. Randall, at a $23,094.31 value. Each invested a 1/32 share in outfitting the voyage. As captain, Francis Lester would receive a 1/17 lay or proportion of the officers' and crew's share of the voyage.[9]

The economic decision to invest less than seven thousand dollars to outfit the vessel, including gear, supplies, and food, considering the age of the vessel and the probable two-year length of the voyage, was parsimonious.[10] Bluff bowed with a broad midship section, the *Meteor* was a slow, comfortable, and reliable sailor, but she was twenty-five years old and needed constant care. Like many whalers, she had been built as a general trader. After serving as the first of the Red Star Line transatlantic packets in 1822, she was converted for whaling in 1827, sailing out of Hudson and New York City before her purchase by Mystic owners in 1834.[11]

When she sailed on 15 September 1844, the *Meteor* had the usual whaling crew, consisting of a master, three mates, three boatsteerers, a cooper, steward, carpenter, blacksmith, cook, and fifteen seamen: twenty-seven men in all. [12] The accidents, ineptness, rotten spars, wormy potatoes, fighting among the crew, punishments, and bad seamanship that can be gleaned from Captain Lester's journal are the more notorious incidents of the voyage. Like a background hum, the irritants to a confined and increasingly exasperated community continued from watch to watch and day to day.

Serious accidents began early in the voyage. Just before rounding the Cape of Good Hope in mid-December, two men fell from aloft. The *Meteor* was luffed to, lowered a boat, and was able to pick the men up. One man was so badly hurt that Lester doubted he could live, but since all men appear to be accounted for later, the hurt man must have survived.[13]

The one death of the voyage came off Hawaii in April 1845. A sperm whale stove Lester's boat. The second mate struck another whale, but it turned his boat over. Seaman William Howard was caught in the line and drowned as the whale pulled him down. The first mate's boat then got fast to the same whale and saved it. But after cutting in the body, Lester was forced to cut the head loose when the ship drifted within three miles of shore. The two sperm whales they struck had cost them one stove and one overturned boat, and a dead man. They had abandoned the head, which contained the more valuable spermaceti oil, and saved only thirty-five barrels of sperm oil.[14]

Only one disciplinary action had been recorded up to that time. Lester had stuck two men in the whaling pots as punishment for fighting in March 1845.[15]

The *Meteor* arrived at Lahaina seven months out from home port with 150 barrels of sperm and 250 barrels of whale oil, which equalled about 15 percent of her capacity.[16] On their fourth day at anchor, the watch on liberty stepped into the office of U.S. Vice Consul Milo Calkins at the beach landing to make a formal protest declaring the ship unseaworthy and with provisions scarce.[17]

Although none of the officers had signed the protest, Lester agreed to the survey. Calkins appointed Captain Herskill, Captain Macomber, and John Halstead, a carpenter from shore, who reported the *Meteor* "entirely safe" and declared the complaint unfounded.[18] In his official position, as consul, Milo Calkins received insignificant fees, so it was as a shipchandler that he made his living. "As a bill broker," he supplied "the coin which the fleet required: as a merchant he received back a good deal of it into his own coffers." Accommodation flowed from that position "so it became his policy, as also his naturally liberal heart led him, to cultivate good feelings towards all, but especially towards the captains."[19]

Whatever the crew understood about the Consul's "merchant-customer" relationship, they did not care for the report. They insisted the ship was leaky and they would be damned

if they would sail on it. Only Peter George, the cooper, and James Polise, a boatsteerer, were willing to continue. Lester discharged "six of the scamps" he considered the most disorderly: two boatsteerers, the steward, and three seamen.[20] The seamen were foreigners, two and possibly all three being English. Lester put the rest of the crew in irons "and kept them soaking," giving the men all the water they wanted to drink, but nothing to eat.[21]

A pattern began to emerge of harsher treatment for men who were not white Americans. Lester asserted his control over the men by having the sheriff send two soldiers from the fort aboard as guards.[22] He brought on "blacks" (Hawaiians) from shore to work with the officers in cleaning ship. Their cost he would charge against the men who refused duty. Then he shipped four Hawaiians as seamen to replace some of the discharged men.[23] This combination of treatment proved more persuasive than the survey of experts. Ten of the crew said they were willing to go back to duty, and the irons were taken off. Henry Shaw, the carpenter, and two seamen, Adrian Howard and Robert Cleghorn still refused duty. Adrian Howard had signed on with William Howard, who was killed by the whale two days before coming into Lahaina. If they were brothers, he may have been under special emotional stress.[24] After the consul ordered Henry Shaw placed in the rigging and flogged eighteen to twenty lashes, Howard, Shaw, and Cleghorn returned to duty. Another Hawaiian and three American whalemen, Frances Freemont, Owen Spywood and James H. Cain, also shipped.[25]

The *Meteor* was preparing for sea when the whaleship *Midas* of New Bedford carried under her stern, preventing her from heaving up the anchor.[26] This minor mishap delayed their departure for only a few hours. Yet if one had a sense of fate, one might believe that these two ships were inextricably interwoven in misfortune. They would meet again.

Touching at the port of Honolulu, the ship picked up boatsteerer William H. Comstock to fill the place of one of the two discharged at Maui.[27] Lester also found Alvan B. Sweet to take over the carpentry work of the obdurate Shaw, whom he reduced to seaman.

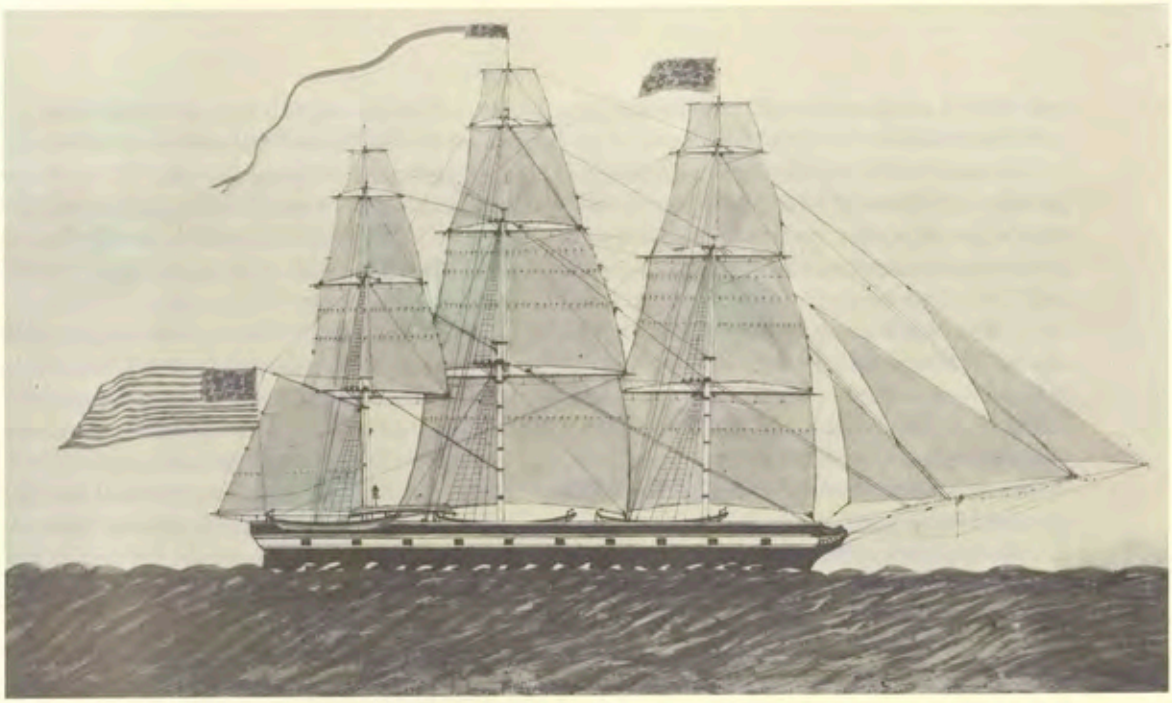
Sweet had just arrived from Australia in a gang of pardoned prisoners. In the 1830s, in Canada near the U.S. border, the men had attempted a revolt to attach their lands to the United States. They had been captured and condemned to hang, but were transported instead to Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania), where they worked at forced labor for seven years. Selah Younger, master of the whaleship *Steiglitz*, brought them from Hobartown. Wanting to leave some of the men on shore while he went to the Northwest for a season, he supported his request to the Hawaiian government by saying "they are men of quiet and orderly habits." In Sweet's case, the same aggressiveness that moved him to revolt on land would reappear at sea.[28]

After the stop in Lahaina, Lester showed little hesitation in resorting to violence to maintain order. Headed for the Northwest Coast, less than a week out of port, Lester "seezed one man up" for fighting and gave him a whipping of twelve lashes.[29]

On the Northwest there was a month of what was always referred to in whaling as "bad luck," but seemed very close to incompetence. They lowered more than twenty times, struck whales ten times, but each time the line parted or the iron broke or they cut their own line. Finally, despite difficulties, they saved a good sized 125-barrel whale.[30]

A week later the decks caught fire. While boiling their largest catch, a 215-barrel whale, the decks under the tryworks burned through because no water had been put in the "goose pen," constructed beneath the trywork to insulate the deck.[31] It was then that Lester got sick, laid up with St. Anthony's fire, a skin inflammation that may have been a visible sign of tension. The rotten condition of yards and sails further aggravated his disposition.[32]

Moving south again as the Northwest season ended, Lester recorded in his journal, "loud squalls of my own making." He had a confrontation with a "huge Negro" who had been fighting. For "the insulting language the snow



The 106-foot, 325-ton ship *Meteor* was built at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1819 as a general trader. In 1822 she initiated service for the Red Star Line of New York-to-Liverpool packets. After three years of packet service and two more as a general trader she became a New York whaler in 1827. In 1834 she joined the Mystic, Connecticut, whaling fleet, sailing until 1856. The most prosperous whaler out of Mystic, she returned $350,000 from her nine voyages. In 1861 she was scuttled as part of the Stone Fleet intended to obstruct the harbors of Charleston and Savannah during the Civil War. In his journal of the 1840–42 voyage, Francis A. Lester drew the *Meteor* flying a homeward bound pennant. (Courtesy Connecticut Historical Society)

ball used towards me" Lester said, "I put him in Irons and put him out of the way of the weather." He had the man placed in the "run," a small storage space aft in the lower hold often used for disciplinary confinement on a whaler.[33]

Going into the Lahaina roadstead, the *Meteor* managed to "Run a foul" of the Bark *Vesper* of New London, and stove the bow boat.[34] Five days later, in the roadstead, the anchor got entangled, so they hove up to make sail and "got currented." The wind was light and they could not get back into the anchorage.[35] These two incidents create a suspicion of ineptness in seamanship that would have contributed to the mates' lack of confidence.

Despite the difficulties, the ship had 1,250 barrels of whale oil, above average for a season's catch, so it was not the fear of a losing voyage that motivated the first and second officers to quit when they got to port.[36] The first mate's discharge, as was customary, was reported "on account of sickness," and the second's was by mutual consent. Third Mate Henry Hart was promoted to second. The boatsteerer, who had come aboard at Honolulu, the five Islanders, and two of the other seamen may have signed only for the season, for they left by mutual consent.[37] Henry Shaw, who had started from Mystic, and had been flogged and displaced as carpenter, simply headed for the hills. He had signed to ship the voyage, but the fear of breaking a legally enforceable contract would have meant little to him, though a bounty was available for bringing in deserters, and he would have to hide himself so as not to be captured and returned to his ship.[38]

To fill out the crew, Ira F. Horton was shipped as first mate. Angelina Sylva came on as third mate. James M. Cain, who had been on the Northwest Coast with the ship, was discharged

and rehired as boatsteerer. Five additional seamen were taken on.[39]

The day after Francis Lester had anchored at Lahaina his brother, Austin Lester, master of the *Congress* of Mystic, came in. Their ships got underway together to stand out of the anchorage. The *Meteor* got foul of the *Calumet*, a vessel from their neighboring village of Stonington, Connecticut.[40] It had been bad enough to run into a vessel entering the broad roadstead at Lahaina; but it was an embarrassment to do it again going out, and in front of his older brother.

Sailing towards the New Zealand cruising grounds, the two ships kept in sight and came into Rorotonga together. George Brown, one of the original Mystic crew, and Christopher Carlo, who had just signed on at Lahaina, deserted but were recaptured. Later, in his deposition to the consul, Lester stated that a third seaman, Owen Spywood, was not "retaken."[41] Lester's journal shows that he had abandoned Spywood, an Indian: "left him in the guard house on shore." He would not have mentioned that to the consul, for leaving a seaman in a foreign country was against U.S. law. Two Rorotongans were taken on as seamen.[42]

Cruising began dull, but the ship needed attention as the sheathing came off the larboard bow, and when the waist boat was hoisted in to paint "she roled over and got stove."[43]

January 1846 was a month filled with whaling activity. They lowered fourteen times and saved three whales. Mr. Horton, the first mate, got into a couple of scrapes with the men. He shoved Christopher Carlo into a boat for being insolent, and when William Force was disobedient and insolent, Horton "choked him until he promised to behave himself."[44] Lester put Second Mate Hart off duty for "refusing to comply with my orders." A few days convinced Hart to acknowledge "his faults."[45]

In February spouts were seen only once, and at the beginning of March they headed in to anchor at Tahiti. Severe disciplinary action began again. When they broke out oil for coopering "one black refused to do duty." This was James Cain, a boatsteerer who had refused duty once before and been put in irons. This time "I put him in the rigging and gave him a few by the way of no harm." Lester then placed irons on Cain and put him in the run.[46] When Cain got out of irons he was discharged. One "Kernacka" (Hawaiian) could not resist the lure of local hospitality, and one man got thrown in the "calaboose" ashore.[47]

When part of the crew combined to send a written complaint about the ship's leaking to Acting U.S. Consul George R. Chapman, Lester cracked down on his "good for nothing scamps."[48] Even though the consul refused the complaint because no officer and not enough crew had signed, Lester felt the protest "subversive of order." He could not get the men to say who wrote the letter so he hauled ten of the "ringleaders" who signed into the rigging and "gave them a seasonable flogging for misconduct." "Seasonable" was six to eighteen lashes. Three of those flogged, Cleghorn, Sweet, and Brown, were put in irons and confined in the run for almost two weeks on short rations until the ship left Tahiti. Two of the flogged seamen ran. Christopher Carlo did not have any better luck at hiding than when he tried to desert at Rarotonga. He was caught, but Lester waited until they left the island to flog him another twelve to eighteen lashes.[49]

Two new boatsteerers were hired and three seamen, but one deserted immediately. Three more men "disappeared" the day before the ship left Tahiti. Thomas Fullam, James Lawton, and Adrian Howard, who had just been flogged, were all part of the original Mystic crew. They had stuck it out for eighteen months. In their desperation, they abandoned their share in the catch, which would constitute their only wages, and risked themselves ashore in the midst of armed attacks by Tahitians on the French colonial fort.[50]

The *Meteor* had been at anchor almost a month when it sailed in company with the *Congress* for the island of Maui, having more sail problems on the way.[51] They were only at anchor for two days to pick up some provisions and ship a new second officer. Coming from Tahiti, Lester had sent Second Mate Hart off duty for neglect of duty and also for "talking falsehoods to one

of my crew while at the wheel at night."[52] Hart was discharged and Jeremiah Clarke hired in his place. At Lahaina four seamen were signed on: John Leamy from Ireland, John Stanley from England, William Taylor, and William Woolverton.[53]

Leamy and Stanley, as greenhands on the *Obed Mitchell*, had turned out to be masters at agitation. Leamy had gotten into trouble for fighting. Then he and Stanley stirred up things over a ration of molasses, one of the few luxuries of shipboard life, and tried to parlay it into a mutiny. Leamy threatened to kill the steward over the molasses ration. It took the coordinated strength of the officers, boatsteerers, and their guns to apprehend the two men and put them in irons. The rest of the crew, who confessed that they were being bullied to take the ship, and that their lives had been threatened by Leamy and Stanley, wanted the two men kept in irons. At Lahaina the prisoners were delivered to the U.S. consul. He had them flogged, lashed into the boat in irons, and carried to His Majesty King Kamehameha III's fort.[54] Built twenty years earlier to protect the town from whalemen's cannons, its crumbling coral walls, decorated with a few obsolete and rusting cannons, served as a prison during the shipping season.

Captain Lester may have shipped the men right out of the fort, as was sometimes done. Whether he knew their past history or not, he had just added to the *Meteor*'s already volatile crew the two men who would incite it to mutiny. Of Lester's existing crew only two of the men had never been punished. The rest had been put in irons and six had been flogged. The newer members of the crew, one officer, two boatsteerers, and six seamen had been on board less than two months.

The ship headed for a second season on the Northwest Coast. Two weeks out of Lahaina, blackfish were sighted and Captain Lester

Lahaina, on the west shore of Maui, Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands, became a major recruitment port for the Pacific whaling fleet in the 1820s. Benjamin Russell and Caleb Purrington depicted its roadstead crowded with whaleships in their panorama, "A Whaling Voyage 'round the World," ca. 1848. The fort lies along the shore in the middle of the settlement, behind the ensign of the whaleship at left. (Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum)



ordered three boats lowered. Mr. Clarke, the new second officer, fixing the steering oar as they shoved off, accidentally hit John Leamy with his foot. Leamy struck Clarke in the face several times and they began to grapple. Captain Lester and the first mate turned their boats back alongside. Seeing that two of the men in Clarke's boat were urging Leamy on, Lester ordered all back aboard.[55]

The officers rushed below to get their pistols, which they were in the habit of bringing on deck at any sign of trouble. Given this chance, the crew quickly secured the hatches, ran below, and slammed and nailed the cabin door, imprisoning the officers. Shut below, the officers were threatened with death if they tried to force the hatches. Attempting to negotiate, the crew said they were afraid for their lives, but if the officers would give up their firearms to the boatsteerers, they would let them out and go to their duty. When Lester refused, the crew decided to sail to California, but no one knew how to navigate there.

On the third day the *Meteor* fell in with the *Midas*, with which they had been briefly entangled at Lahaina the season before. The storm-damaged *Midas* had turned back for Honolulu to make repairs. When some of the *Meteor* mutineers took a boat over to find a navigator, Captain Jacob T. Davis of the *Midas* showed Cleghorn the law on mutiny and tried to persuade him of the crew's folly. Cleghorn and the boat's crew allowed Davis to return with them to talk with Captain Lester, but when he urged the men to go back to duty they refused unless the officers' guns were given up.[56]

Captain Davis hammered out an agreement with the crew. The first mate was to take charge of the *Meteor* and follow the *Midas* into Honolulu. Lester signed an agreement to discharge the men there without troubling them. Lester and the second mate were sent aboard the *Midas* for the return passage. The crew would not allow them on deck, so they were forced to climb out the *Meteor*'s cabin window to a waiting boat.

The *Midas* arrived in Honolulu before the *Meteor*. His agreement notwithstanding, Lester went directly to the U.S. consul to report the mutiny. When the *Meteor* came in, the consul carried four of the mutineers to the Honolulu fort, and Captain Lester regained possession of his ship. After the consul had taken depositions from the officers and a few of the men, he apprehended several of the other men.[57]

U.S. Consul Anthony Ten Eyck decided to send the leaders of the mutiny to Connecticut for a Federal court trial. He singled out John Leamy, John Stanley, William Taylor, Robert Cleghorn, and Alvan B. Sweet to be tried. First Officer Ira Horton and seaman Samuel Maine were to be sent along as witnesses.[58]

Getting rid of the mutineers did not end the *Meteor*'s labor troubles and turnovers.[59] A whole new set of officers, two seamen from shore, and two Hawaiians were shipped. Lester then took his ship out through the reef. While the ship laid aback offshore, he took a boat in and got five of his men out of the fort where the consul had stashed them for safekeeping. Two of them, Carlo and Thompson, refused duty, so Lester put them in irons for a couple of days until they promised good behavior.[60]

The whaleship *Meteor* sailed from Honolulu on 24 June 1846, 700 barrels short of being full, planning to cruise and go home. It was late for the season on the Northwest Coast so the *Meteor* headed toward Chile.[61] Though the whaling was good, Lester became annoyed when his boat chased down a right whale, but the boatsteerer, "being nearer an ass than a man never darted."[62]

After rounding the Horn at the end of the year, the third officer got "exiled in the South Atlantic": sent off duty for abusive language.[63] At the end of February, Lester flogged a "Cape de Verdgee" and put him in irons for five hours for abuse toward the mate. He let him out after he acknowledged his guilt and promised to behave in the future.[64] Homeward bound at the island of Fernando de Noronha, off the coast of Brazil, two boat crews on liberty got drunk. Four of them ran away but were caught and brought back.[65]

On 6 April 1847 off Sandy Hook, the tryworks were hove overboard, and the whaling business of the voyage ended. Lester's closing comment on day 933 of the journal had a sense of comple-

tion about it, "furld the sails and Home we went after being absent from home 2½ years with 1900 blls of oil and 18000 pounds of bone Consignd to I & W P Randall."[66]

The final accounting for the voyage showed slightly higher totals, which at 1847 prices would have brought in $33,976, or a per-month return of $1061.75. This was $75 less than an average voyage among the vessels of the American whaling fleet arriving home in that year.[67] Lester's 1/17 share as master paid him $224.10, or 24 cents a day. His $200 return for outfitting was about what he had invested.[68] Though it had not been a losing voyage economically, repercussions from Lester's treatment of his crew blighted the remainder of his whaling career.

The whaleship *Bengal* sailed from Honolulu on 8 August 1846 with five reluctant passengers: Leamy, Cleghorn, and Sweet, charged with the *Meteor* mutiny, and the two witnesses placed on board by the U.S. consul. Stanley and Taylor had managed to escape from the badly administered and casually patrolled Honolulu fort and sailed on a passenger ship for California.[69] Because the *Bengal* was full, it did not whale on the way home and arrived back a month before the *Meteor*.

When the prisoners arrived in Connecticut on 7 March 1847, U.S. District Attorney Jonathan Stoddard swore out a complaint against them. The complaint charged that John Leamy, Robert Cleghorn, and Alvan B. Sweet had by threats, fraud, and great force driven Captain Lester of the ship *Meteor* off the deck of the ship and confined and imprisoned him for three days, usurping the command of the ship and transferring the authority and command to someone not lawfully entitled to it. They were charged with making a revolt, mutiny, and riot. The complaint said that they used force and arms to solicit, incite, and stir up the crew to disobey and resist the lawful orders of the captain and to refuse and neglect their lawful duty and trust.[70]

The language of the complaint was taken from the law of 1835, which reflected a growing concern for the rights of seamen. Prior to that act, mutiny had been punishable by death. After the law was amended, men convicted of mutiny faced a fine of up to $2,000 and imprisonment at hard labor for up to ten years. Convicted only of attempting to make a revolt or mutiny, make a riot or confine the master, they could be punished by a fine up to $1,000 or imprisonment not to exceed five years, or both.[71]

Newspapers of the day concentrated on politics, but from the arrival of the accused mutineers they carefully recorded the progress of the case. Leamy, Cleghorn, and Sweet pleaded not guilty. Bail was set at $1,000 apiece, which would have seemed an unbelievable amount to a greenhand like John Leamy, who had shipped at a 185th lay (about $183 of the *Meteor*'s return). Samuel Maine and Ira Horton, the government witnesses, were required to post $300 bail. The Deputy Marshal stood surety for First Officer Horton, but Maine could not raise that amount and was put in jail with the three accused.[72]

A grand jury summoned to hear the complaint indicted John Leamy, but dismissed the charges against Robert Cleghorn and Alvan B. Sweet. John Leamy must have been a personable young man, for New Haven papers showed a sympathetic tone to the seaman, reporting his version of events, in which he was more aggressed against than aggressor. Captain Lester was summoned as a witness against Leamy. The New London *People's Advocate* intimated it had not been quite honorable of the captain to report the mutiny to the U.S. consul after having signed an agreement to discharge the men without proceeding against them.[73]

Judge Nelson did not view the case as did the newspapers. He charged the jury strongly against the prisoner, and John Leamy was found guilty, as expected. Courts commonly upheld the authority of captains in the belief they were protecting ships' discipline, which if undermined might endanger vessels, property, and lives.[74]

The surprise turn came after the Leamy verdict, when a grand jury indicted Captain Francis A. Lester for "intolerable cruelty" to his men. The *Daily Register* headlined it "Boot on wrong



When Captain Lester began to flog his crew it was a clear admission that he had lost positive control of them. While painful and potentially crippling, flogging was intended more to degrade and break the spirit of the victim. It was finally outlawed aboard American ships in 1850. "A Picture for the Philanthropists," engraved by John Halpin, was published in J. Ross Browne's *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise* . . . (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1846).

leg," saying "Sailors are frequently made desparate by the tyranny of masters." Lester was bound over to the next court term for trial, the same term that would pronounce sentence on John Leamy.[75]

At the same time, other cases of abuse on whaling ships had broken, which, along with the *Meteor* mutiny, excited the public against the whaling hierarchy. For the Democratic Party press it meant an irresistible opportunity to attack the entrenched Whig whaling industry as they showed their empathy for the common seaman. The May term of the U.S. District Court of Connecticut, with a "Righteous Grand Jury" sitting, appointed a commission to proceed to New London and investigate the treatment of recently arrived whalemen by their officers. The Democratic *Daily Register* was sorry to find that officers of whaleships sailing from New London had the reputation of being more cruel to their men than those from any other port in the country, except New Bedford.

> Masters must be taught that though the poor sailor boy may lack influential friends to secure him from abuse, the laws of his country will come to his relief, and visit upon petty tyrannts the most condign punishment—let them be who they may—high or low.[76]

In this atmosphere, the court sentenced John Leamy to two years imprisonment in the county jail at New Haven with possible release after one year for good conduct. Leamy had the grace to play his role well. The *Daily Register* said Leamy "we doubt not, has been abused" and quoted his evaluation "that the jail here is a palace compared with . . . fare on board the ship *Meteor.*"[77] So John Leamy, who had gone whaling, been involved in a fracas and tried to incite mutiny on the *Obed Mitchell*, who had served a total of fifteen days on the *Meteor* before embroiling it in mutiny, came home to become the unworthy symbol of a worthy cause—reform of labor conditions for seamen aboard whaling vessels.

On the thirty-two-month voyage there had been a turnover of sixty-two men. Most damaging to discipline and suggestive of the shortcomings of the captain was the turnover of three complete sets of officers. Lester's lack of patience was clearly expressed in the nineteen discharges. Captains were instructed to hold onto men to assure getting back the cost of outfits and to avoid discharge pay-off requirements. Disciplinary actions had put men in irons sixteen times, seen men flogged eleven times, and sent officers off duty on three occasions. There had been eight attempted or successful desertions. Only ten of the original crew of twenty-seven returned with the ship.

The grand jury indicted Captain Lester for flogging and imprisonment of his crew at Tahiti in March 1846. Using the language of the law of 1835, it said that he "unlawfully from malice hatred and revenge," without any justifiable cause "did beat, wound and imprison" ten of his men. The indictment accused him of using a "cat" to inflict severe wounds on Cleghorn, Sweet, and Brown, and dragging the three men off the deck and "into a place called the run," where they had been imprisoned for eight days, during which suitable food was withheld from them.[78]

The popular voice that infected the news articles and shaped the grand jury indictment did not have its say in court. Served with a warrant from the U.S. Circuit Court, Captain Francis A. Lester had his brother Austin stand surety for a $200 bond for him. Lester followed the practice of whaling officers of his day: he did not show up for trial and forfeited his bond. The Court did not pursue him. Its final action in the case was to place an attachment on his brother's estate for the bond money.[79]

Although Francis Lester never stood trial, he was judged by his fellow whalemen. On his next voyage he sailed as first mate while another man served as captain.[80] The rapid expansion of the whaling industry and the extreme shortage of qualified men had brought Francis A. Lester to a position of responsibility he was not able to handle.

NOTES

[1] Honolulu *Polynesian*, 7 February 1846.

[2] Francis A. Lester, Journal of the ship *Meteor*, 1844–47, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut, hereafter cited as *Meteor* Journal.

[3] James H. Lanman, "The American Whale Fishery," *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*, 3 (November 1840):322, says there were 434 whaling vessels in 1834. The same magazine, 14 (March 1846):279–283, lists 734 whaling vessels in 1846.

[4] Elmo P. Hohman, *The American Whaleman* (Clifton: Augustus M. Kelley, 1972), pp. 48–61.

[5] Hohman, pp. 59–61.

[6] George R. Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 237, 246.

[7] John Avery, *History of Ledyard, Connecticut* (Norwich: Noyes & Davis, 1901), p. 148.

[8] Charles Schultz, "Whalers out of Mystic," *G. W. Blunt White Library Information Bulletin* 69–3 (Mystic: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1969), p. 137; Francis A. Lester, Journals on board the ship *Meteor*, 1834–35, 1840–42, 1844–47, Journal of ship *Congress* 1842–44, Connecticut Historical Society.

[9] I. & W. P. Randall Account Book, 1844–50, Misc. Vol. 344, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.

[10] *Ibid.*; Schultz, p. 7, estimates average cost of outfitting at $9,000; Hohman, pp. 325, 328, estimates average outfitting for right whaling at $17,129.45 and the average voyage of 112 two-season right-whaling vessels sailing in 1844 at twenty-five months, nine days in length.

[11] William A. Fairburn, *Merchant Sail, 1876–1947*, 6 vols., (Lovell, Maine: Fairburn Marine Educational Foundation, Inc., 1945–55), 5:3042–43.

[12] *Meteor* Journal, "List of Crew on Board of Ship *Meteor*."

[13] *Ibid.*, 1 December 1844.

[14] *Ibid.*, 11 April 1845.

[15] *Ibid.*, 5 March 1845.

[16] *Ibid.*, 14 April 1845; *Polynesian*, 10 May 1845.

[17] *Meteor* Journal, 18 April 1845; Depositions before Consul Abell, June 1846, U.S. State Department, Consular Despatches, Honolulu, microfilm 144, roll 3. Depositions from Captain Francis A. Lester, First Mate Ira F. Horton, Second Mate, Jeremiah Clarke, cooper Peter George, boatsteerers Antonio Levara, James Polise, and William Hunt, seaman Samuel L. Maine, and Captain Jacob T. Davis of the *Midas*, hereafter cited as Depositions.

[18] *Meteor* Journal, 18 April 1845; Depositions, Lester; Theophilus Parson, *A Treatise on Maritime Law* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1859), 1:455, cites U.S. Act of 20 July 1840, "the consular or commercial agent at the foreign port, is directed on complaint being made in writing by any officer and a majority of the crew, to appoint two persons to inspect the vessel."

[19] Thomas G. Thrum, "The Growth of Greatness," *Hawaiian Almanac and Annual for 1909* (Honolulu: Thomas G. Thrum, 1908), pp. 144–45; Hohman, p. 81, explains that the "merchant-customer" relationship between consul and captains caused the consul to refrain from displeasing customers by unfavorable decisions.

[20] *Meteor* Journal, 18 April 1845. Depositions, Lester.

[21] *Meteor* Journal, 18 April 1845.

[22] *Ibid.*, 19 April 1845.

[23] *Ibid.*, 19, 20 April 1845; Hohman, p. 259, says seamen were usually debited with the wages of any shore labor necessitated by their absence.

[24] *Meteor* Journal, crew list.

[25] Depositions, Lester.

[26] *Meteor* Journal, 28 April 1845.

[27] Depositions, Lester.

[28] Depositions, Lester; *Diary of Rev. Moses How* (New Bedford: Reynolds Printing Company, 1931), 15 March 1846; How, Chaplain of the Seaman's Bethel in New Bedford, recorded the arrival of some of the group and a relief meeting held to hear their story; Younger to Hawaiian Foreign Office, 28 April 1845, FO&Ex, Archives of Hawaii, Honolulu; Honolulu *Polynesian*, 3 May 1845.

[29] *Meteor* Journal, 7 May 1845; flogging aboard U.S. vessels was not outlawed until 1850.

[30] *Ibid.*, 13 May–13 June 1845.

[31] *Ibid.*, 21 June 1845.

[32] *Ibid.*, 23 June, 13, 14 July 1845; in mid-July, in turning a reef out of the main topsail, the yard gave way. When it was hoisted out Lester found it rotten and unsalvageable. He went aboard the New London ship *Mogull* and got a spar to shape for a new topsail yard.

[33] *Ibid.*, 9 September 1845.

[34] *Ibid.*, 3 October 1845; Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, 2 vols., (reprint; New York: Argosy-Antiquarian Ltd., 1964), 2:418–19.

[35] *Meteor* Journal, 8 October 1845.

[36] *Ibid.*, 24 September 1845; *The Friend*, Honolulu, 1 November 1845.

[37] Depositions, Lester; 830 men, 6 to 8 percent of the men in the whaling fleet, got their discharges at Lahaina in 1845, *Polynesian*, 4 April 1846.

[38] Depositions, Lester: Hohman, p. 67.

[39] Depositions, Lester.

[40] *Meteor* Journal, 21 October 1845.

[41] Depositions, Lester.

[42] *Meteor* Journal, 8, 9 December 1845.

[43] *Ibid.*, 12, 23 December 1845.

[44] Depositions, Horton.

[45] *Meteor* Journal, 8, 11 January 1846.

[46] *Ibid.*, 10 March 1846.

[47] *Ibid.*, 15, 19 March 1846.

[48] *Ibid.*, 20 March 1846.

[49] *Ibid.*, 20 March 1846; Depositions, Lester and Horton; *United States vs. Francis A. Lester*, U.S. Circuit Court, Connecticut Law 10:185–189, Federal Records Center, Waltham, Massachusetts, hereafter cited as FRC; *Meteor* Journal, 24, 25 March 1846.

[50] *Meteor* Journal, 21–27, 30 March 1846; Depositions, Lester.

[51] *Meteor* Journal, 2, 3 April, 6 May 1846.

[52] *Ibid.*, 18 April 1846.

[53] Clarke had been discharged, sick, as second mate of the *Liverpool* and had been ashore three weeks, Joseph Wilcox, Journal of a Whaling Voyage, 1844–47 in the *Liverpool* of New Bedford, Old Dartmouth Historical Society Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts, 15 April 1846; Depositions, Lester.

[54] New Bedford Free Public Library, crew card index; Christopher Slocum, Journal of a Whaling Voyage, 1845–48, in the *Obed Mitchell* of New Bedford, 23 March, 3, 6, 20 April 1846, Nicholson Whaling Collection, Providence Public Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

[55] Depositions; the account of the mutiny, unless otherwise indicated, is taken from these depositions; *Meteor* Journal, 22 May 1846.

[56] *Polynesian*, 13 June 1846; Clinton Palmer, Journal of a Whaling Voyage, 1844–47, in the *Midas* of New Bedford, 24 May 1846, New Bedford Free Public Library.

[57] *Meteor* Journal, 7 June 1846; New Bedford *Whalemen's Shipping List*, 24 November 1846.

[58] *Whalemen's Shipping List*, 16 March 1847.

[59] *Meteor* Journal, 18, 20, 21, 23 June 1846.

[60] *Ibid.*, 24, 25, 27 June 1846.

[61] *Whalemen's Shipping List*, 23 March 1847.

[62] *Meteor* Journal, 18 November 1846.

[63] *Ibid.*, 3 February 1847.

[64] *Ibid.*, 25 February 1847.

[65] *Ibid.*, 27 February 1847.

[66] *Ibid.*, 6,8 April 1847.

[67] Starbuck, returns 2:420–421, average prices 2:660; sperm oil $1.01 per gallon, whale oil 36 cents per gallon, bone 31 cents per pound, 32 gallons per barrel; Schultz, p. 38, figures a return of $32,975. The difference may be in the estimate of the number of gallons per barrel, since Schultz probably used 31½ gallons per barrel. The average 1847 return is computed on 130 completed voyages reported in Starbuck, for vessels that touched at Lahaina.

[68] I. & W. P. Randall Account Book.

[69] *Whalemen's Shipping List*, 23 March 1847; *The People's Advocate and New London County Republican*, 17 March, 12 May 1847, hereafter cited as *People's Advocate*; *Polynesian* 11 July 1846.

[70] *United States vs. John Leamy &c*, complaint before Commissioner Charles A. Ingersoll, 11 March 1847, Record Group 21, agency container 826, accession 54–866, FRC.

[71] Parsons, pp. 592–93.

[72] *U.S. vs. John Leamy &c.*; New Bedford Free Public Library, crew index.

[73] *People's Advocate*, 12 May 1847.

[74] *Ibid.*; Hohman, p. 77.

[75] New Haven *Daily Register*, 30 April 1847.

[76] *Ibid.*; 28 May 1847.

[77] *Ibid.*; 27 May 1847.

[78] *U.S. vs. Francis A. Lester.*

[79] *United States vs. Austin M. Lester*, U. S. District Court case files, February term, 1848, Record Group 21, Box 26, FRC.

[80] Francis A. Lester, Journal of a Whaling Voyage, 1847–50, in the *Mary & Susan* of Stonington, Gilbert Pendleton Jr., Master, Connecticut Historical Society.

More Decency and Order

Women and Whalemen in the Pacific

JOAN DRUETT

We could see canoes coming loaded with natives both men and women. Just before they reached the ship the women jumped overboard and swam for the ship and the canoes reaching the ship about the same time the men jumped up into the chains and politely assisted them on board by pulling them up the chains by the hair of their heads and then marching them up to us would point at them and say "Tobak". As for modesty that was all left on shore as it was of no marketable value on board of a ship. The men were entirely naked while the women had nothing but a bunch of reeds or rushes fastened around their hips and hanging down halfway to their knees and they were in the market for anybody for a piece of tobacco an inch square which they would hand to their husband (if they had any such institution) or father or whoever it might be who would receive it with evident delight.

While the women were occupied in their traffic the men would be going around amongst the crew with hats and mats and strings of coconuts. . . .[1]

So Alfred Peck recalled his visit to Ocean Island in the late 1850s. The reminiscences of such men who went a-whaling and then came home to write about it became an accepted literary genre in the nineteenth century, and it was all a lot of seemingly harmless fun. No whaling tale was worth its salt without a gory mutiny or two, a couple of pugnacious whales, and an assortment of dusky beauties. The women had to be there, and they had to be seductively amenable, as in the jaunty rhymes of the log of the Nantucket ship *Dauphin*, commanded by Captain Zimri Coffin in 1820, devised by Charles Murphey, the naughty third mate:

> And now our decks with girls are filled
> Of every sort and kind
> And every man picked out a wife
> The best that he could find.[2]

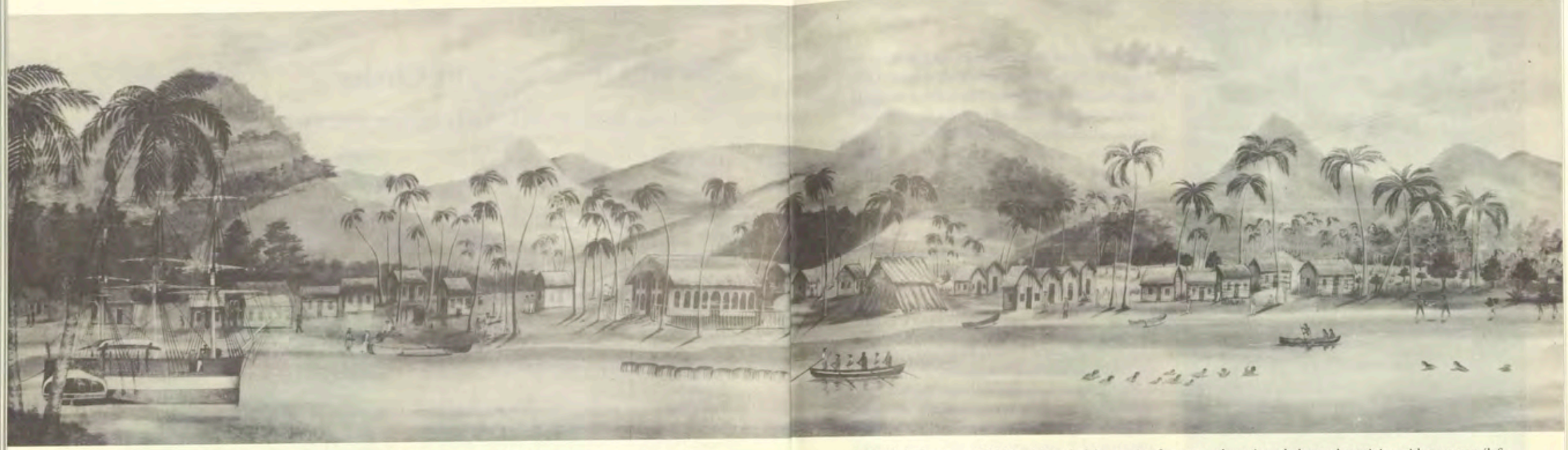
It was the most unashamed of escapist literature, part of the romantic legend of whaling, and deservedly popular. But how true was it?

Primary source materials, and particularly spun-sugar reading like the rhyming log, have to be studied with some care. In the words of Sandra Myres, who has so perceptively researched the writings of westering women, "Reminiscences are particularly unreliable, either because the writer forgot the details of the initial experience or because she, or he, chose to delete, add to, or embellish certain events."[3]

In the nineteenth century strict adherence to truth in so-called factual accounts was not a necessity; actually, mixing fact and fiction was perfectly respectable and expected. In the case of the *Dauphin* log, which in tone is blatantly frivolous, this would seem particularly applicable. Obviously, the grains of truth need sifting from the mass of sensation. How typical was the womanizing whaleman? And if the prostitution did occur, was it as sordid as described in Peck's account, or as carefree and swashbuckling as young Charles Murphey inferred?

The former seems much more likely. The journal kept by Second Officer Higgins on the 1845 voyage of the ship *Ann Alexander* provides substantiation. On 29 January 1848 he recorded: "PM fine weather. Byron's Island in sight and about forty or fifty canoes alongside with four or five Natives in each one. . . . There was some of the Ladies came to be our wives. . . ." The next day, "when the decks were washed off there were several canoes came alongside and

Joan Druett, of Hamilton, New Zealand, is a professional writer with a particular interest in Pacific history and culture. Her popular study of whaling wives—*Petticoat Whalers*—is now in press.



The tropical islands of the South Pacific offered deprived whalemen many sensual delights, from fresh water and fruit to women. In their panorama, "A Whaling Voyage 'round the World," ca. 1848, Benjamin Russell and Caleb Purrington depicted the harbor at Tahiti, with a whaleboat going for water, a lounging whaleman bargaining with a woman (left center), and native maidens perhaps swimming from a whaleship. (Courtesy New Bedford Whaling Museum)

two Ladies. One of them could satisfy all hands easy enough; at least she did several and wanted more for a head of tobacco a piece."[4] A long way indeed from the frivolity of young Charles Murphey with his:

> 'Twas here the girls, including all
> (To speak it rather dryly)
> The sailors' amorous wants supplied
> And think they are hon'red highly.'

While this fits the romantic tradition, one is entitled to wonder what Captain Coffin and Captain Sawtell thought of the fun. When one reads Peck's much more scornful and authentic-sounding account, one wonders even more why a presumably house-proud whaling master would allow these goings on on his newly washed decks. Sawtell at least seems to have found it distasteful: he noted later in his own journal, on 28 July 1849, that four men were off duty, "three of them by their own bad conduct in port. 4 years ago they would abhored the thought. (How has the mighty falen)."[5]

So what were his motives in permitting the sordid transactions of the insatiable lady? It seems a waste of a day of whaling and a day of recruiting. No doubt he was pragmatic enough to reason that some men would desert if they had no sexual outlet, and that others would desert if they were allowed to find sexual partners on shore. It was logical, therefore, that it was better the activity should take place on board of the ship rather than on a tropical island, which was seductively beckoning in itself. Nevertheless, one feels certain that this reprehensible recreation would have been sternly forbidden had Mrs. Sawtell been on board.

There is also no doubt that a great deal of this kind of convenient prostitution did go on, all around the Pacific. Plenty of contemporary and shocked observers went to some trouble to describe it. John Dyes, writing in a letter to *Sailors' Magazine*, dated 28 November 1840, on board the U.S.S. *Vincennes* in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, described, "*The ships filled* with *nativewomen* dancing all day Sunday. The American ships are just as bad as English and French," he protested, ". . . and in many cases outstript them in some of their vices afloat in the harbour." John B. Williams of Salem, the second American Consul to the Bay of Islands, substantiated this in even more thunderous terms. "Merciful Heavens!" he wrote in his journal. "When a ship arrives her decks are almost instantly lined with native women—a floating castle of prostitution. How can it be different when the Master and Officers set the example?"[6]

The missionaries, who were striving to reform the easy-going natives, agreed with him. They had to struggle with European opportunism as well as the natives' own traditionally relaxed attitude toward sex. Dwight Baldwin of Lahaina wrote, in 1846:

> A few nights since, after midnight, our police hauled out of the windows of the lodging place of one firm of our merchants eleven (11) young Hawaiian girls who had sold themselves to pollution—slaves to the Devil & their own lusts. One of this firm was our late Dep. Consul who came out with Mr. Abell—another proprietor was our present Dep. Consul who came out with Judge Turrill, his bro. in law—a third was a professor of religion, of respectable connections, from N.York. O tempora!![7]

It is understandable, therefore, that some missionaries and some owners expressed approval when some masters began to carry their wives on voyage. As Charles W. Morgan put it, when Captain Prince Ewer took Mrs. Ewer on the 1849 voyage of the *Emily Morgan*, "This custom is becoming quite common and no disadvantages have been noticed. . . . There is more decency on board when there is a woman." While Morgan himself believed there were disadvantages in sending a woman to sea, he acknowledged that they were far outweighed by the beneficial effects. The Reverend Samuel Damon remarked that taking a wife seemed "a very sensible custom."[8]

The women themselves seemed to believe it. The very idea of being an arbiter of morals gave a whole romantic aura to the rather uncomfortable prospect of spending several years at sea.



Luther Gulick (1828–1891) was born in Honolulu, the eldest son of a missionary family. After attending medical school in New York, being ordained, and marrying Louisa Lewis, he returned to the Pacific as a medical missionary. Outraged at the effects of the whaling fleet on the native population during his tenure in the Caroline Islands in the decade after 1852, he and his brother Theodore sought to eliminate the problem by publicizing it. In later years he and his wife, a devoted missionary herself, were tireless workers for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the American Bible Society from Europe to China. This photograph of Luther and Louisa Gulick was taken ca. 1870. (Courtesy Peabody Museum of Salem)

When we are told that one Mrs. Wallis heard that the native women swam naked, it is no surprise to learn that she insisted on shipping along next voyage. To her grim displeasure it was true. At Pleasant Island, she wrote in her journal, "The girls came on board for the vilest of purposes." Those girls were sent packing, "as the sailors were afraid of the captain's woman."[9]

There was a parallel sense of righteousness in Mary Hayden Russell's letters written on the English whaler *Emily* in 1823. Mary visited a Malay village, and the natives sang that the *Emily* was a good ship, for it "bring good Capt'n, no get drunk good Capt'n." Mary recorded this in her journal-letter of 29 July with perceptible complacency, but was the credit hers? Would Captain Russell have been paralytically intoxicated if she had not been there? It seems hardly likely.

One of those to question the salutory effect of captain's wifes on crews' morals, in a most unexpected and astounding manner, was the missionary Luther Gulick. Several missionaries had publicly condemned the dissolute habits of the whalemen, and Gulick and his brother Theodore were particularly outspoken. Luther was a member of the Melanesian Mission, and was stationed at Ascension Island (Ponape) in the Caroline Islands from 1852 to 1859.

In August 1857 he published a most inflammatory letter in the *Boston Journal of Missions. The New Bedford Whalemen's Shipping List & Merchants' Transcript* of 5 January 1858 described its contents with affronted passion, declaring the letter "an amazing attack on whaler captains which was strenuously denied by the *Honolulu Commercial Advertiser* and the *New Bedford Whalemen's Shipping List*." Luther Gulick had written: "You may not be fully aware that most of the ships which you are sending to this ocean are the most disgusting of moral pesthouses. Not only are the sailors given to every crime, but the captains with nearly all their officers practice in these seas vices similar to those which brought destruction to Sodom and Gomorrah."

The furor that ensued can be vividly imagined. As Gulick himself wrote later, "The letter excited indignation both in America and the Pacific Ocean, and particularly at Honolulu, where a large whaling fleet was soon after congregated. . . . I was told," he added with indignation, "that a missionary had nothing to do with such matters, and that it was especially amiss to state such things to the American public where the character of the seafaring world was not known." Gulick then proceeded to pen another letter in defense of his stand, and sent it to Samuel Damon's newspaper, *The Friend*, Honolulu, in November 1858.

Damon did not publish it. He reportedly

remarked, "Perhaps the less said on this subject the better." This only served to fuel Luther Gulick's righteous wrath: he proceeded to publish privately a four-page document of potential dynamite. It contained three letters and three lists.[10]

The first letter, addressed "To My Personal Friends, And the the Friends of Virtue," was dated Ascension Island, Pacific Ocean, August 1859. In it he described the circumstances of writing the 1857 letter, its effects, and also the reasons for wishing to publish the second letter, the one that Samuel Damon had failed to print.

> At Honolulu so great was the pressure that even some religious and missionary men were convinced I had gone too far and wrote me to that effect, the mere fact of which, so far as it was known, had a very disastrous influence among the immoral, though there were many who decidedly approved. . . .
>
> The facts given can only be seriously denied at a distance. I have visited many whalers since the excitement, and none deny the general truthfulness of my statements; those whose vessels were populous with prostitutes could not, others would not.
>
> Soon after the report reached me of the discussions concerning my letter, I wrote an article for the *Friend*, of Honolulu, which I trusted its worthy editor, the friend of morality and of seamen, would publish. This reached him Nov. 1858, but was not inserted as late at least as the issue of Feb. '59. I cannot consent to its suppression even though it be the published opinion of so honored a personal friend as the Rev. Mr. Damon, that "perhaps the less said on this subject the better."

Gulick then attached the letter he had sent to Damon and that Damon had neglected to publish. It was addressed "To Captains and Owners of Whaleships" and was dated February 1859. It began:

> DEAR SIRS:—In a letter addressed to the Christian Owners of Whale Ships, and which there was good reason for fearing would meet the eye of but few of even such owners, I made certain statements that have received unexpected and I hope beneficial publicity nothwithstanding the obloquy brought on myself.
>
> In again writing on the subject I take great pleasure in saying that there have been a few noted exceptions to the general course of immorality practiced in these seas. We have been visited by some Captains and officers whose influence over their crews and the natives has been admirably for right and strict morality, that though even such ships must necessarily bring great evil with them, we hail their approach to our harbors.

In the next paragraph he proceeded to apologize to those who may have been offended when they did not deserve offense. "What was written was not occasioned by acts of insult, slight, unkindness, or even impoliteness, or any thing that could be distorted," he assured them.

> Having said thus much, let me now give a fact—but one of the many that might be given illustrating the general statements of my first communication. Seventy-four vessels have visited the two harbors of the tribe in which I live, since Sept. '52. Ten only of them have not been the public residences of native females during the whole time of their stay in port, some of them always finding their homes in the cabin, while others live in the steerage and forecastle, females alone being thus domiciled. The Captain has but to say that he does not wish them, and they do not come near, while he secures just as good supplies, and has as little trouble with his men as others, as is proved by the experience of the ten captains just mentioned . . .

Then, with a self-justifying sentence "we regret that these things cannot be told without its seeming to those we expose an act of personal enmity," Luther Gulick announced his motive in publishing this document: to establish his case by listing the vessels that had called at Ponatik Harbor in 1858, 1859, and 1860, and the vessels that had touched at Boston Island, Marshall group, together with their masters' names and the information of whether prostitutes were allowed on board or not. The lists had been provided by Luther's brother Theodore.

> My brother gives over his own signature, a detail of facts, for which I am equally responsible. I was not at first prepared to take this step, but the time has it seems to me come, when it is no longer best to conceal the names of those who sin thus publicly, in violation too of their Article, and then deny it. Let not those owners whose vessels' names do not appear on our published list, be certain that their property is not at all involved, for since Sept. 1852, ninety vessels have entered the harbors of this tribe, most of them Amer-

ican whalers, and only thirteen of these have not been public brothels, which gives a fair indication of the morality of their fleet at large wherever like opportunity offers.

To every friend of humanity I subscribe myself, yours,

LUTHER H. GULICK.

The third letter was a short explanation of the lists, provided by Theodore Gulick, and was headed, "To the Lovers of Truth and Morality." He described the two important harbors of the island, Kiti and Ponatik. "At Kiti alone, where a missionary resides, public prostitution on ships is prohibited. During the last two seasons only about one ship out of four has visited Kiti harbor." Then he explained that in the lists the "word forbidden is placed against *all* those on which open prostitution was prohibited." For our purpose, it is significant that the lists included a notation when a captain's lady was on board.

"These things are not done in a corner," wrote Theodore Gulick. "When a ship casts anchor in Ponatik, it is soon known from one end of the tribe to the other whether prostitutes are desired on board."

Clearly, Luther Gulick, despite his protestations, was no unbiased reporter. His desire to end prostitution by exposing it makes his account as subject to question as are the reminiscences of the period. We must scrutinize the evidence closely before accepting it.

Any survey that eliminates 25 percent of the sample—the "about one ship out of four" that visited the port of Kiti—is instantly suspect. One feels persuaded to assume that the masters who chose to anchor at Kiti knew that the harbor did not have girls available and that their choice was deliberate.

There are omitted ditto marks on the Ponatik and Boston Island lists. What did they mean? Did Captain Corsen of the brig *Kohola* ban girls

PONATIK HARBOR—METALANIM TRIBE

1858	*Ship*	*Master*	*Owned*	*Morality*
	Wavelet	Swain	New Bedford	—
	Empire	Russell	do	—
	Minerva	Crowell	do	—
	Cicero	Courtney	do	—
	Caroline	Gifford	do	—
	Warren	Miller	do	—
	Young Hector	Hager	do	forbidden
	C. W. Morgan	Fisher	do	forbidden
	Sarah	Swift	Mattapoisett	forbidden
	South Seaman	Norton	Fairhaven	—
	Kauai	Mammen	Honolulu	—
	Hawaii	Schimmelfening	do	—
1859				
	Silver Cloud	Coggeshall	New Bedford	—
	Thos. Dickason	Plaskett	do	—
	Jireh Perry	Cannon	do	—
	Cicero	Courtney	do	—
	Wavelet	Swain	do	—
	Fran. Henrietta #	Drew	do	—
	Tempest	Allyn	New London	—
	Mary	Jenks	Edgartown	—
	Amazon	Eldridge	Fairhaven	—
	Sea Shell	Ware	Warren	—
	Turku	Soderblom	Russia	forbidden

Forbidden only while the Captain's lady was on board.

ASCENSION I. SHIPPING LIST—PONATIK (or Middle) HARBOR

1860					
Jan.	Sch. Emerald	Lambert	New Bedford	Prostitutes	allowed
Feb.	Bark Gypsey	Mantor	do	"	"
	Bark Martha 2d	Daily	do	"	"
	Carolina	Harding	do	"	"
	Rapid	Drew	do	"	"
	Omega	Whalon	do	"	"
	South Boston	Randolph	Fairhaven	"	"
Mar.	Magnolia	Pierce	New Bedford	"	"
	Brig Kohola	Corsen	Oahu		
	Vesper	Bailey	New London	"	forbidden
	Progressive Age	Holcomb	New Bedford	"	allowed

N. B. The above facts were gathered from the foreign residents and Missionaries, on my recent visit at Ascension Island in the *Morning Star.* L. H. GULICK.

LIST OF VESSELS TOUCHING AT BOSTON I., MARSHALL Is.

Date	*Vessel*	*Capt.*	*Owned*	*Remarks*	
1859					
Dec. 6	Sch Micronesia	Foss	Guam	Prostitutes	allowed
24	Brig Kohola	Corsen	Honolulu	"	forbidden
27	Chandler Price	Holcomb	New Bedford	"	allowed
1860					
Jan. 22	Arab #	Grinnell	Fairhaven	"	"
Feb. 27	Oscar	Landers	Mattapoisett		
Aprl 14	Moctezuma +	Tinker	New Bedford		
22	Marengo	Weld	do		
July 4	Brig Morning Star	Gelett	Boston	Prostitutes	forbidden

Captain's lady on board. + Kidnapped three men at Ebon. These vessels touched at Boston Island during my own recent residence there.

T. W. GULICK

on his ship at Boston Island (now Ebon) in 1859 and then relent at Ponatik in March 1860? Did the masters of the bark *Oscar* and ships *Moctezuma* and *Marengo* allow prostitution at Boston Island? The log of the ship *Marengo* is singularly unhelpful. On Sunday 15 April 1860 it read:

> Continues light breezes Steering WNW 3PM Saw Roatches Island bearing NNW Distance 12 miles Middle part Calm and rainy Latter part light breezes heading to the WNW Several canoes Came of from the island traded with them for broom stuff &c So ends.
>
> Monday April 16th Commences with light breezes heading WNW Middle and latter part moderate breezes steering NW crew employed in various Jobs.[11]

The next page is cut out. Not a trace of writing remains between the dates of 16 April and 29 April. This may appear to confirm the Gulicks' accusations.

The arrivals at Ponape and Ebon can be checked further in Robert Langdon's index to the Pacific ports that the whalemen visited.[12] This valuable index confirms many of the arrivals in the Gulick lists, and, surprisingly, gives a great many more. Were these the vessels that anchored in Kiti in preference to Ponatik? The index does not say, but if these unmentioned vessels numbered ten or less (the 25 percent of the total sample) then it would seem likely that these are the names of the so-called moral ves-

sels. However the number is fourteen. Why did the Gulicks not list them? Because such a large number did not fit their case?[13]

Did these vessels all have strict masters? If they did, and their number is added to the seven that the Gulicks admitted were chaste, then the Gulicks' case is well lost. Twenty-one strict masters out of a total of fifty-one (if the ditto marks that are missing are taken as read) makes a very respectable 41 percent. If the ditto marks that were missing implied that the masters were moral, then the ratio is even higher.

There is little doubt that the Gulicks manipulated the facts for their own very obvious reasons. But why did they implicate Mrs. Drew and Mrs. Grinnell among the vessels that allowed prostitution? Why did they not mention Mrs. Roswell Brown aboard the *Belle*, Mrs. Thomas Russell aboard the *Lancaster*, and Mrs. Thomas Williams aboard the *Florida*? They must have known that Eliza Williams, for one, had been on Ponape, for she spent a very pleasant week as a guest of Reverend Sturges, the missionary, when the *Florida* called there in December 1859.[14]

Certainly, the Gulicks were familiar with the moral rectitude and spiritual backbone that characterized the captains' wives they had hosted on the islands. For example, on 2 April 1855, Betsy Morey of the ship *Phoenix* of Nantucket had written:

> At eleven oclock AM came to anchor in 7 fathoms of water at Ascension Island. . . . The next day after our arrival here it Raind almost incessantly all day, and the People on Board wer Every Preparation Possible to Smoke the Rats from the Ship which wer gitting verry Numerous, and it was verry essential for me to make a Haste, retreat somewhere, here we was as Strangers in A Strange Land.
>
> fineley our pilot advised me to go to Another Harbour about six miles from here to doctor Gulicks and stop with them he informed that they wer missionaries and I should find them to be verry kind People.
>
> I made up my mind verry Readily to go although it was A Great cross to me leave the Ship where I could not see her However I Got Ready the Boat was Loward and Husband and Mr. Brigs and the Boats Crew Proceeded to the Doctors found his Lady at home she appeared Glad to see us, invited in the Doctor had gone from home on Business he soon Returned he Also appeared verry pleasant and Sociable I stopt here three nights Husband came after me and we took our leave of these Dear Christian People, with A hope that God will Bless them, and they will be the Means threw him of inlighting those Poor Natives and at last they may all be Brought into the Kingdom of Heaven.[15]

It is difficult to understand how men who had met women of Betsy's ingenuous spirit could be sufficiently ungallant to include the names of two of Betsy's whaling sisters in their accusatory document, unless they were trying to prove an unstated point: that a woman on board did not have the salutory effect that their "friend" Samuel Damon proclaimed.

Did the presence of a virtuous female on board a whaling vessel have little or no effect on the way her husband ran his ship? After all, as Amelia Bloomer once wrote, husband and wife then were considered as one, and that one was the husband, his wife being merely his appendage. Wharton's Law—that the wife is merely servant to the husband—was still valid. A whaling sister might exchange her house for a ship, but her husband was still the domestic Jehovah. As we have already seen, it is improbable that a sober captain would get drunk just because his wife happened not to be present. If the Gulicks were, indeed, making this unstated case, then their argument was most probably correct.

At least, however, on the ship *Frances Henrietta*, Mrs. Drew had sufficient influence over her husband for him to make certain that prostitution did not occur when she was on board. But where did she go while the girls were on board? If she stopped at a mission house, then the Gulicks' document is doubly carping, and if she saw their letters later, as perhaps she did, then her sense of injustice would have been doubly strong.

Furthermore, for all their moralizing, the missionaries themselves had less influence on Ponape morals than Luther Gulick liked to claim: the prostitutes stayed away from the ships at Kiti not because the missionary who lived there stopped the practice, but because the local *nahnken* banned it.[16]

We can only guess at Mrs. Grinnell's humiliation at witnessing prostitutes aboard the *Arab*, but the humiliation of another whaling wife has been more clearly recorded. This was Mrs. Randolph, of the ship *South Boston*, which the Gulicks reported to have allowed prostitutes on board at Ponatik in February 1860. It is a mystery why the missionaries did not report her, for she was most certainly on board the ship at the time. Eliza Williams of the ship *Florida* visited her just a few weeks later, and on 3 April 1860 she wrote: "Mrs Randolph is not at all well. She was very much pleased to see me. . . . She has not been on deck for 6 weeks. She has been seasick ever since they left the Islands—5 months."[17] Seasick? No wonder. Other reasons for not wanting to go on deck are implicit. It is impossible not to speculate on the numbers of women who went through a similar experience.

Some were pragmatic enough to live with it. Clara Wheldon was able to write to her family in August 1869 that "sailors need harsh sounding words of command, and the stearnest of treatment, without which they would soon be unmanageable." Perhaps other women, recognizing that sailors were men, and often as uninhibited by conventional morality as the island natives, were able to rationalize prostitution in much the same way.[18]

Surprisingly enough, despite her image of frailty, the average woman in the nineteenth century was probably better fitted to cope with male weakness than a female today in a similar situation. Recognition of female virtue and male sensuality was integral to the popular and sentimental concept of 'True Womanhood' that Barbara Welter has so intriguingly described: "All True Women were urged, in the strongest possible terms, to maintain their virtue, although men, being by nature more sensual than they, would try to assault it. Thomas Branagan admitted in *Excellency of the Female Character Vindicated* that his sex would sin and sin again—they could not help it. . . ."[19]

It was also part of this philosophy that men should be grateful for this difference in the sexes. They were taught that women would save them from their own weak and carnal natures,



Mary Brewster (1822–1878) of Stonington, Connecticut, accompanied her husband, Captain William E. Brewster, to the Pacific aboard the Stonington whaleship *Tiger*, 1845–49. Daguerreotype by J. Gurney, ca. 1854. (48.1146)

because well-raised women were "the more refined and virtuous" sex, and that frequent association with them would save them from contamination by "low pleasures and pursuits."[20]

As the Gulicks deliberately or unwittingly suggested, this sometimes did not happen. To improve the morals of a vessel and to guard the natures of the weak young men in the forecastle (to say nothing of the steerage and the cabin) was a very fine aim indeed, but the women themselves may have been the first to recognize, if tacitly, that this was not likely to occur. Men would be men, six months in a whaling vessel did not make a plaster saint of a boy, and the morals of the voyage depended, ultimately, on the morals of the husband and master, to say nothing of frustrations, the quality of the ship, the quality of the crew, and the luck of the voyage.

Nevertheless, the women did not have to like

it when men took so little notice of the sensibilities of the lady on board. Mary Brewster, wife of Captain William E. Brewster of the Stonington whaler *Tiger*, for one, wished "to have no connection with their actions I abhor."

While whaling at Magdelina Bay on the Baja California coast in 1847, Captain William Hussey, of the bark *J. E. Donnell*, came to visit one day. He caught her at a bad moment: Mary was just sitting down to a dish of fresh oysters, which were her favorite treat.

Now, Captain Bill Hussey had a mistress on board his vessel. "Oh shame, shame is not felt here," Mary had written when she discovered this. He had had sufficient delicacy to leave her behind, nevertheless, Mary Brewster knew that her guest was living in sin. She decided to take a strong stand, and show him what she thought of his behavior. She darted from the cabin before he descended, only to return an hour later, "*so prim.*"

Was Captain Hussey embarrassed? Did he stammer and blush? Hardly! He grinned wolfishly, rubbed his hands, and sat down and ate her oysters.[21]

NOTES

[1] This description of Ocean Island is from Alfred F. Peck, retrospective account prepared in the Seaman's Hospital, Honolulu, ca. 1861, after a voyage 1856–61 on an unnamed vessel, Capt. Newman, Nicholson Whaling Collection, Providence Public Library, Providence, Rhode Island, hereafter cited as NWCPPL; microfilmed as Pacific Manuscripts Bureau (PMB) 797.

[2] Charles Murphey, Journal of the ship *Dauphin*, 4 September 1820–July 1823, NWCPPL.

[3] S. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience 1800–1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), p. xviii.

[4] Clement C. Sawtell, *The Ship* Ann Alexander *of New Bedford, 1805–1851* (Mystic: Marine Historical Association, 1962), p. 52.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

[6] Robert W. Kenny, "Yankee Whalers at the Bay of Islands," *American Neptune* 12 (1952): 39, 40.

[7] Baldwin to Dr. Anderson of Boston, 15 December 1846, Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, Honolulu, Hawaii.

[8] Diary of Charles W. Morgan, 25 July 1849, Charles W. Morgan Papers, Coll. 27, vol. 3, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, hereafter cited as MSM.

[9] M. D. Wallis, *Life in Feejee, or, Five Years among the Cannibals* (Boston: William Heath, 1851), p. 202.

[10] Gulick's letter to "Christian Owners of Whale Ships" was widely published in New England whaling ports. His letter to "My Personal Friends and to the Friends of Virtue" was published on his own press in 1859. Evidently the 1860 lists were published as an addendum. See Francis X. Hezel, S. J., *The First Taint of Civilization: A History of the Caroline and Marshall Islands in Pre-Colonial Days, 1521–1885* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), pp. 147, 330 (note). A copy of the document itself is held by the library of the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, Honolulu.

[11] Log of the ship *Marengo*, 1859–1861, NWCPPL, microfilmed as PMB 875.

[12] Robert Langdon, ed., *Where the Whalers Went: An Index to the Pacific Ports. . . .* (Canberra: Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, 1984), p. 13. This, of course, is not all-comprehensive, for it is an index to just one collection: the collection resulting from the New England microfilming project that was initiated by the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau. However, the collection is huge, and the index valuable because of that.

[13] The vessels were: *Gideon Howland*, Williams, 10–11 January 1859; *St George*, Pease, 25 January 1859; *Midas*, Tallman, 5–6 February 1859; *Belle*, Roswell Brown and wife 21–22 February 1859; *Endeavour*, Wilson, 30–31 March 1859; *Superior*, Wood, 18 May 1859; *Young Hector*, Hagar, 9–25 November 1859 (in Gulick's 1858 list); *General Scott*, Huntting, 30 November–27 December 1859; *Florida*, Thomas Williams and wife, 1–12 December 1859; *Chandler Price*, Holcomb, 4–17 January 1860 (reported at Ebon); *Martha*, Manchester, 11–21 January 1860; *Lancaster*, Thomas Russell and wife, 20–30 January 1860; and *Oregon*, Toby, 19 February 1860. All these vessels anchored at Ponape, but at which harbor is not known.

[14] Harold Williams, ed., *One Whaling Family* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), p. 101.

[15] Mrs. Israel Morey, journal on board the ship *Phoenix*, 1853–55, Nantucket Whaling Museum, Nantucket, Massachusetts, microfilmed as PMB 385.

[16] Hezel, *First Taint of Civilization*, p. 147.

[17] Williams, *One Whaling Family*, p. 130.

[18] Mrs. Clara Kingman Wheldon, journal and letters on board the bark *John Howland*, Old Dartmouth Historical Society Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts, microfilmed as PMB 274.

[19] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood 1820–1860," in *The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective*, M. Gordon, ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), p. 315.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 316.

[21] Mrs. Mary Brewster, Journal on board the ship *Tiger*, 1845–48, 30 January–2 February 1847, Log 38, MSM.

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Charles R. Schultz. *Bibliography of Maritime and Naval History Periodical Articles Published 1978–1979 with Cumulative Indexes for 1970–1979.* College Station, Texas: Sea Grant College Program at Texas A&M University, 1982. 238 pp. $5.00.

Susan K. Kinnell and Suzanne R. Ontiveros. *American Maritime History: A Bibliography.* Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 1986. 260 pp. $32.50.

In the 1950s Robert G. Albion regularly compiled maritime history bibliographies and faithfully submitted his work to the *American Neptune* each quarter for publication. Between 1971 and 1979 Charles R. Schultz had five volumes of bibliographies on maritime history published, which covered periodical articles from 1970 to 1977. With these exceptions, searching serial literature for articles with maritime themes has proven difficult and the results unsatisfactory. Since most periodicals covering this subject are largely ignored by the majority of abstracting and indexing services, the publication of this pair of bibliographies by Schultz and by Kinnell and Ontiveros will greatly facilitate the maritime and naval researcher's labor.

With the addition of the 1,700 references in his new volume, Schultz has now accumulated a store of citations from more than 6,300 articles culled from hundreds of periodicals spanning the decade 1970–1979. Although he states that this work is selective, he has assembled the most complete listing of published articles available on the subject for those years.

Schultz follows the same basic format for his five earlier bibliographies, each of which contained from 500 to 1,600 entries that encompassed seventeen broad subject categories, from exploration to yacht racing. These entries are annotated in most instances, but the titles are left to serve as their own explanation in the remainder. Most of the earlier volumes include author and vessel indices, whereas the new work contains cumulative author, vessel, and subject indices, which make the whole series more tractable. The cumulative indices are especially important since the first two volumes did not contain vessel indices.

Another new aspect of this 1978–1979 volume is the use of some additional sources for citations. In his previous bibliographies, Schultz took all his entries from journals in the collections of the Texas A & M University or the G. W. Blunt White Library at Mystic Seaport Museum. In the current volume, he has included citations obtained by examining the entries in the abstracting publications *America: History and Life* and *Historical Abstracts*, as well as those selected from Texas A & M's holdings of approximately 150 journals involving maritime subjects.

If Schultz continues his publications into the 1980s, and also completes his bibliography of pre-1970 material, the field of maritime history will become more manageable and, therefore, more enjoyable.

Anyone interested in obtaining copies of his earlier bibliographies should contact Schultz at the following address:

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The main attractions of Susan Kinnell and Suzanne Ontiveros's *American Maritime History: A Bibliography* are the well-written indicative abstracts of each article cited and the thorough manner in which the subject index was constructed. Also of interest is the inclusion of a very handy directory of maritime museums.

This volume cannot be used exclusively to do a proper search however, but rather would be much more helpful if used in conjunction with other works, such as the bibliographies by Schultz and Albion. One reason for this is that although the publisher claims that its seventeen *Research Guides*, of which this is number seventeen, "provide comprehensive control of the recent journal literature on high-interest topics," *American Maritime History: A Bibliography* contains only 919 entries covering the period 1956–1984. Compare this with Schultz's 6300 for the period 1970–1979. Most of the Kinnell and Ontiveros citations are from the '70s and '80s, so the '50s and '60s are not as well covered as one might hope. Some good reasons for using this as a supplementary work are the inclusion of a number of foreign journals not abstracted in the other bibliographies mentioned earlier, and the articles cited from the '50s, '60s, and '80s that do not appear in those bibliographies.

The major flaw of this bibliography appears to be that it does not live up to its publisher's claim of comprehensiveness. Coverage of most journals is spotty at best, though the editors do state that they used only articles of four pages or more in length in

most cases, which may account for some of the exclusions. Whether the limited number of references is due to the editors' selectivity or a defect in either the search technique used in ABC-CLIO's data base, which is the source of the citations, or in the data base itself, cannot be entirely determined from the book.

This does not mean that this bibliography is beyond redemption. The material in this volume, though obviously scanty, is nonetheless very well presented. And because most abstracting and indexing services do not include maritime history, every reference to the subject is especially valuable.

Even though ABC-CLIO touts itself as "the largest history data base in the world," it seems that they should spend more time collecting citations in specific subject areas, including maritime history, before they decide to publish bibliographies devoted to them. *American Maritime History: A Bibliography* is a good foundation upon which its editors and publisher should build. If more substance is added to this foundation in the future, the result should be welcomed by the maritime research community.

Paul J. O'Pecko
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Stuart Frank's new volume, *Herman Melville's Picture Gallery: Sources and Types of the "Pictorial" Chapters of* Moby-Dick (Fairhaven, Massachusetts: Edward J. Lefkowicz, Inc., 1986; xxv, 133 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, paperback, $18.95), is a significant addition to the literature of whaling and especially of Herman Melville. Never before has anyone sought to assemble the illustrations of whales and whaling that Melville knew, was influenced by, and commented upon in *Moby-Dick*. Working within the structure of Melville's "pictorial" chapters, wherein he discusses "Monstrous Pictures," "Less Erroneous Pictures," and whales "in Paint; in Teeth; in Wood, in Sheet-Iron; in Stone; in Mountains; in Stars," Frank presents period illustrations, many of which can be documented as those Melville knew, as well as objects, such as scrimshaw and weathervanes, that Melville referred to as types. Not only is this valuable as whaling iconography, it is also an important contribution to Melville scholarship.

Two recent books detail aspects of the Pacific whale fishery. Don Grady's *Sealers & Whalers in New Zealand Waters* (Aukland: Reed Methuen Publishers Ltd., 1986; 307 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index) is a heavily illustrated popular history of the business around New Zealand. First came the sealers: Australians as early as 1792, and later Americans, with most of the slaughter taking place before 1826. On more than one occasion, the crews sent ashore to kill fur seals wound up in mortal combat with the native Maoris. On a much reduced scale, the hunt for fur seals and elephant seals continued until well into this century.

The first recorded visit of a whaleship to New Zealand waters also occured in 1792, but it was not until the 1830s that the whalers came in large numbers. In 1839, 150 American ships, plus 50 from other nations, cruised the New Zealand islands. Kororareka (Russell), at the Bay of Islands, and nearby Mangonui became notorious liberty ports as whaleships resupplied there.

Shore whaling was introduced to New Zealand in 1829, and 113 stations operated during the ensuing ninety-seven years. Even the Maoris (who were recruited as whalemen quite early) adopted western techniques and began whaling from shore. One whaling station began netting humpbacks in the 1890s. Modern whaling came to the islands in the 1920s when the Norwegian Rosshavet Whaling Company established a base for its Antarctic fleet of factory ship and whalecatchers. The industry came to an end in New Zealand in 1964, and the nation is now committed to conservation. This book, with its wealth of exquisite illustrations and personal details, will be of use in any whaling library.

Another beautifully illustrated popular work is MacKinnon Simpson and Robert B. Goodman's *WhaleSong: A Pictorial History of Whaling and Hawaii* (Honolulu: Beyond Words Publishing Company for Lahaina Whaling Museum, 1986; 130 pages, illustrations, glossary, index). In 1819 two whaleships took a sperm whale near the island of Hawaii, initiating whalers' interest in the region. With the rush to the Sea of Japan in 1822, the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands became a convenient place for recruitment and transshipment. Honolulu and Lahaina became the principal ports and, indeed, the busiest whaling ports in the world; in 1846, 596 whaleships of all nations called at the Hawaiian ports. While the local fleet was never large, the native islander—Kanaka (Hawaiian for person)—became a major element in the American fleet. Between 1840 and the 1860s, one-third to one-half of the men aboard American whaleships in the Pacific were Hawaiian islanders.

With the decline of American whaling came the decline of Hawaiian whaling-related activities. Yet, fortunes garnered in supplying the whalemen formed the basis for some of Hawaii's modern industries; whales are now stalked with camera, rather than har-

poon, for science and recreation off Maui; and the Lahaina Whaling Museum preserves the memories of Hawaii's bustling whaling days. Though flawed by typographical errors, this self-styled coffee-table book is a handsome addition to whaling literature.

In addition, reprints have brought some popular titles back into general availability. The University Press of New England has reissued *The Captain's Best Mate: The Journal of Mary Chipman Lawrence on the Whaler* Addison, *1856–1860*, edited by Stanton Garner (1986, paperback, $10.95). This is one of the classic accounts by a woman of life aboard a whaleship.

The whaling industry of Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, (1836–1862) is described in excellent detail by Frederick P. Schmitt in *Mark Well the Whale: Long Island Ships to Distant Seas*. The Whaling Museum Society of Cold Spring Harbor has published a second edition of this valuable study (originally published in 1971) of one of the smaller whaling ports (xii, 151 pages, illustrations, appendices, index, paperback, $9.95).

The Wherry Oarsman

John R. Bockstoce. *Whales, Ice, & Men: The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986. 400 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.
W. Gillies Ross. *Arctic Whalers, Icy Seas: Narratives of the Davis Strait Whale Fishery*. Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1985. 263 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. $35.00.
W. Gillies Ross, editor. *An Arctic Whaling Diary: The Journal of Captain George Comer in Hudson Bay, 1903–1905*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984. 271 pp., illustrations, notes, appendices, glossary, bibliography, index. $29.95.

Arctic whaling has been the subject of considerable study and a number of published works in recent years. Two individuals, John R. Bockstoce and W. Gillies Ross, have established themselves as the leaders in this field. The volumes being considered here represent the most recent efforts of these two men, strongly reaffirming their positions as outstanding authorities on the subject of Arctic whaling. It is significant, and perhaps not a coincidence, that they have focused their attention on two distinct realms of the Arctic whale fishery; Bockstoce being interested in the western Arctic and Ross concentrating on the Hudson Bay and Davis Strait fisheries of the eastern Arctic.

Whales, Ice & Men is a history of whaling in the western Arctic. The most recent of several books John Bockstoce has written about this subject, it is certainly the most important. While his earlier works have dealt with only limited aspects of the whale fishery in this region, this book presents a comprehensive account with optimum effectiveness and style.

Bockstoce intentionally avoids the heavy romanticism that has characterized much of the whaling literature. While the author is thorough and straightforward in his approach, with considerable attention to detail, the book is highly readable, reflecting the author's enthusiasm for his subject.

Illustrations and maps are numerous and of high quality. Some of the photographs, such as a view of the whaleship *Jane Gray* capsized amid the Arctic ice, are quite dramatic. Finally, the book has five appendices and is well documented with notes and a lengthy bibliography. *Whales, Ice, & Men* is essential reading for students of Arctic whaling, and should have great appeal for readers with less specialized interests as well. Bockstoce's outstanding scholarship and fine writing have resulted in a book that must be considered a standard work on the subject of whaling.

W. Gillies Ross's *Arctic Whalers, Icy Seas* does not profess to be a comprehensive history of the Davis Strait whale fishery. It is instead a survey or overview comprising fifteen firsthand accounts of nineteenth-century whalemen. Ross has skillfully unified these accounts, all of which are from different sources, creating excellent continuity. Ross's commentaries on each narrative describe all the major elements of whaling in the North. Although there is an emphasis on the hardships endured by the men, subjects such as Eskimos and the Arctic environment in general are also considered. The combination of original narrative, Ross's well-informed commentary, and numerous high quality illustrations has resulted in a book that creates a vivid image of the Arctic whaling experience.

The book is intended to be a tribute to the whalemen, as plainly stated by the author. There is a certain appeal in this; it is far more distracting when a writer of individual or collective biography thinly disguises admiration for a subject. In any event, the book works well as a tribute to the men, and at the same time provides a fascinating and highly informative portrayal of Arctic whaling.

As with the Bockstoce book, this volume is quite attractive and includes a number of excellent illustrations. Ross has also provided a glossary, notes, and an annotated bibliography, although the notes and bibliography are somewhat brief. In summary, this is

a fine book which provides a useful and at times compelling account of whaling in the eastern Arctic.

An Arctic Whaling Diary is an account of a twenty-seven-month whaling voyage to Hudson Bay. Although its author, Captain George Comer, was a whaling master, this book encompasses a great deal more than whaling commentary. Comer, who died in 1937, was widely recognized in his lifetime for his comprehensive studies of the Hudson Bay region and its Eskimo inhabitants. He made extensive collections of Eskimo artifacts and natural history specimens for several major museums, provided detailed information that was utilized in a number of scientific publications, and took hundreds of photographs. All of this activity, in addition to whaling, is described in this book.

W. Gillies Ross has added many notes and a great deal of additional text. This, along with Comer's thorough journal entries, has resulted in an excellent account of Hudson Bay whaling and a detailed portrait of the region and its native population. Although Comer's work was quite significant, it seems to have been largely overlooked following his death. Ross, whose interest in Comer dates back to the mid-1960s, deserves a great deal of credit for his "rediscovery."

This book may not have high appeal to general readers due to its detail and journal format. However, it is highly recommended for those with an interest in Arctic whaling, as are the other two books cited.

Fred Calabretta
Oral Historian, M.S.M.

A. B. C. Whipple. *The Challenge*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1987. 320 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index. $19.95.

Most casual readers and maritime history buffs (and they, after all, constitute the vast majority of potential readers) will find this an exciting, interesting, and well written addition to the literature about clipper ships. Some serious academic maritime historians may find parts of it disappointing. The author has provided an extensive bibliography as well as an excellent brief bibliographic essay, plus separate "chapter notes" containing a fascinating array of information and rather cryptic "source notes." The latter are a disappointing feature because the references are not precise enough to lead the reader to the proper location in the source cited.

While the book does contain a brief summary history of clipper ships and their builders and captains from the conception of the type in the 1840s to their demise in the 1860s, unquestionably the principals are the *Flying Cloud*, built by Donald McKay and captained by Josiah P. Creesy, and the *Challenge*, built by William Webb and captained by Robert H. Waterman. Detailed accounts of the characters and exploits of these two vessels and their builders and captains are the heart and soul of the book. The role of Matthew F. Maury in helping captains determine the best sailing routes is also explained in detail.

Occasionally the author made an assumption which I am not sure is valid or justified. He assumed that since Creesy sailed in the *Flying Cloud* before Waterman left in the *Challenge* Creesy got all the good sailors and left Waterman with the dregs of society. If Waterman had sailed first, would he have had the good crew and Creesy the dregs? Quite possibly not, considering Waterman's bad reputation. Also, there does not seem to be any real evidence in the form of crew lists or descriptions to indicate the superiority of Creesy's crew. Perhaps Creesy was simply living proof of the old adage that "you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Is it not possible that Creesy got more work and cooperation from his crew because he treated them better? Certainly Creesy was no softie, but then neither was he the brutish dandy Waterman appears to have been. No one in the *Flying Cloud* could match the brutality of the mate of the *Challenge*.

In my careful perusal of *The Challenge* I noted only two minor errors, two possible misinterpretations, and one intriguing character conflict. The "fifteen-hundred-mile racecourse" (p. 96) should probably be fifteen thousand, and the reference to "75° south longitude" (p. 187) must be west. In describing the situation in San Francisco in late 1851, the author implied that San Francisco had always been a city full of crime and that it was just then beginning to experience over supply of staple commodities. Actually, in all of 1849 and much of 1850, according to many diarists who arrived from the East coast, San Francisco was virtually free of crime. It was a common belief that the swift justice meeted out to thieves by "Judge Lynch" was better than any police force. What led to the drastic change that enabled the Hounds and Sydney Ducks to run rampant by the middle of 1851 is a mystery. Dozens of diarists lamented as early as the last quarter of 1849 that their cargoes of lumber, flour, and other staples were virtually worthless because of over supply, and a couple told of seeing crates of tobacco and sacks of flour being used for walkways in the muddy streets.

Finally, Waterman's very modest ranch house, depicted on page 173, is not at all in keeping with the strutting, pretentious dandy described earlier in the

book. I would have expected him to have a much more ostentatious dwelling, even though the cost of shipping the materials from the East Coast and the labor of constructing it would have been very high.

Seldom have I become as engrossed in a book as I did in this one from the very beginning. Likewise, seldom have I found a book which lived up so well to the accolades on the dust jacket. The author has truly woven a tale to capture the interest and fancy of any reader with an interest in maritime history. Equally well has he portrayed the ebullience of the mid-nineteenth century. In spite of any shortcomings, I highly recommend *The Challenge* to readers of *The Log of Mystic Seaport*.

Charles R. Schultz
University Archivist
Texas A&M University

ACQUISITION

When just a boy, Dr. Carl Wies acquired his first whaling artifact, a harpoon. This began a lifelong interest in whaling and especially the whaling history of his hometown, New London, Connecticut. In 1975, fulfilling a longtime dream, he and his wife Alma established The Tale of the Whale Museum above his medical office in a large Greek Revival house, which is part of the "Whaling City's" famed "Whale Oil Row."

While many of the items that they exhibited were on loan, particularly from the New London County Historical Society, most had been purchased during the years by Dr. Wies and belonged to The Tale of the Whale Museum. The central focus of the popular little museum was a completely outfitted whaleboat from the *Charles W. Morgan*. Harpoons, lances, scrimshaw, photographs, a maritime library, and manuscripts rounded out the collections.

Long-standing members of Mystic Seaport Museum, Dr. and Mrs. Wies were among the original members of the Mystic Seaport Pilots. Dr. Wies, who still made house calls and held office hours with no appointment necessary, looked forward to his two weekends with the Pilots as a welcome respite from his 365-days-a-year schedule. He was a dedicated humanitarian who gave selflessly in many ways to his community; The Tale of the Whale Museum was just one manifestation of his generosity.

With his passing in April 1986, the daily operation of the museum became an impossible burden for Mrs. Wies. She decided, because of their long and happy association with the Seaport, to donate their collection to us. Alma Wies, who is also a tireless worker in many community organizations, continues to be active in the Pilots and hopes to spend more time at Mystic in the future. The Tale of the Whale manuscripts, books, and artifacts, including the whaleboat, have been integrated into the Seaport's collection. [86.94.1–.418]

The Tale of the Whale Museum. (Courtesy Mrs. Alma Wies)



HISTORIC SHIPS AFLOAT

The *Ernestina*

The North Atlantic has been her home for ninety-three years. Through those nine decades and three distinct careers she has left her wake from New England to Europe and from the Arctic to the tropical Cape Verde Islands. Yet, even as she approaches her hundredth anniversary she is entering upon a fourth seagoing endeavor.

The 106-foot schooner launched by James & Tarr at Essex, Massachusetts, in 1894 was named *Effie M. Morrissey* for the daughter of her captain, William E. Morrissey of the Gloucester fishing fleet. George M. McClain designed her in the spirit of the innovative *Fredonia* model that married a seaworthy, narrow, deep hull to the clipper bow and lofty rig of the unstable Gloucester "clippers" dating from the 1850s through the 1880s.

Owned by the John F. Wonson Company of Gloucester, she became a salt banker, fishing the Grand Banks for cod and on a single trip bringing back as much as 320,000 pounds packed in salt. In winter she might make the perilous passage to Newfoundland for frozen herring, and two summers she went mackerel seining. In 1905 she was sold to Digby, Nova Scotia, owners, though she was kept in American registry and often landed her catch at Portland. Sold to Harold Bartlett of Brigus, Newfoundland, in 1914, she became a British fishing vessel. He later sold her to his brother, the Arctic sailor Captain "Bob" Bartlett.

Her second career began in 1926, when Bartlett sheathed her hull in greenheart and installed an engine. Through the 1930s she made many northern trips for scientific experiments and observations, on one voyage getting within 600 miles of the North Pole. During World War II Bartlett operated her as an Arctic supply and survey vessel for the Navy.

With Bartlett's death following the war, the *Morrissey* was purchased as a yacht, but soon caught fire and was scuttled. Raised, she entered her third career as a "Brava packet."

In 1948 Henrique Mendes of the Cape Verde Islands, off the coast of Africa, purchased her, removed her engine, and put her into the regular passenger and freight service that had been established between the Islands and New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1892. Renamed *Ernestina* for Mendes's daughter, she became the major link between the Cape Verdean-Americans (many of whose ancestors had arrived in Massachusetts as whalemen) and their homeland. For more than twenty-five years she made the 3,000-mile passage regularly under sail, carrying food, cargo, and occasional passengers.

Retired about 1975, she was supported by the Friends of the *Ernestina/Morrissey* for a return to the U.S. in 1976, but was dismasted. Taken over by the new Republic of Cape Verde, she was rebuilt and presented to the U.S. as a symbol of the historic ties between the two countries. In August 1982 she returned to New Bedford and was taken over by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

After further restoration, which emphasized the quality of her original construction, she has embarked on a fourth career as a sailing schoolship, museum ship, and cultural ambassador. She will continue to sail the North Atlantic waters that have been her home for so long, carrying the spirit of her former lives in her new career. Between cruises she will be found in New Bedford.

The *Ernestina* bound in to New Bedford, 1986.
(Courtesy Massachusetts Schooner *Ernestina* Commission, Photo by Dave Arruda)



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