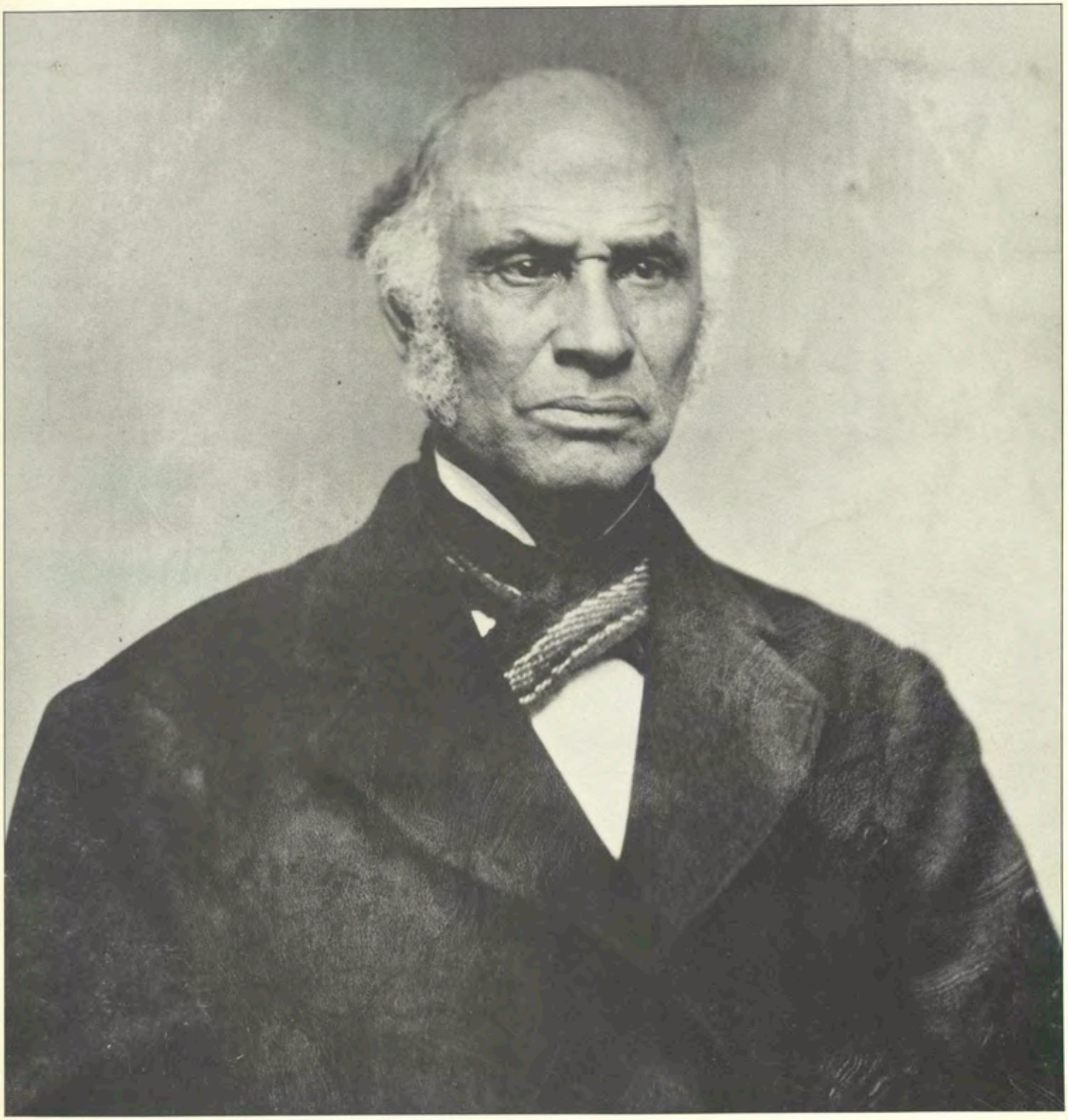
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Cover: *Antoine DeSant (ca. 1815–1886), a black Cape Verdean, became a New London whaleman in the 1830s and eventually settled ashore as a successful businessman and property owner in New London. His story reflects the rich traditions of Afro-American seafaring that Mystic Seaport is helping to document.* (M.S.M. 92.119.1)

The Log is printed on recycled paper

SIGHTINGS

In the United States today, we are increasingly aware of the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of our country. Our heightened consciousness of this aspect of our society has been further attuned recently by our new president's efforts to make his cabinet and other significant appointments reflect the nation's diversity.

The concept of this country as a melting pot that has been strengthened by the skills, talents, intellects, and character traits of many peoples has been a tenet of American social history for more than a century. As we seek to document the origins and interrelationships of each of our cultural elements, a fuller, more accurate understanding of our nation's character will emerge.

Maritime history provides an exceptional vehicle for the study of cultural and ethnic diversity. The fact that ships travelled the world, called at exotic ports, took on unusual cargoes, and often added crew members in distant lands made the maritime environment a significant influence on the mix of customs, traditions, and peoples. Even before the middle of the nineteenth century, the cosmopolitan makeup of American ships' crews was a harbinger of the nation's growing diversity.

This issue of *The Log* contains several articles that demonstrate Mystic Seaport's efforts to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the maritime aspects of American cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. The Seaport's skilled oral historian, Fred Calabretta, reports on the DeSant family of New London – whose patriarch was a Cape Verdean whaleman – and the family's involvement in the maritime trades of New London. Also in this issue, Leslie Gifford describes the Seaport's efforts to encourage scholarship through the Paul Cuffe Memorial Fellowships for the study of African Americans and Native Americans in New England maritime history.

American vessels – especially whaleships – often carried not only a mix of cultures, but also of sexes, as captains' wives increasingly began to accompany their husbands as part of the little world of a ship at sea. In this *Log*, New Zealand author and Seaport member Joan Druett introduces us to Mary Brewster, one of the early "sister sailors" who went to sea in their husbands' whaling vessels. Mrs. Brewster's journals of her two voyages aboard the Stonington whaleship *Tiger* have long been in the Seaport's manuscripts collection, and during the past several years Mrs. Druett has edited and thoroughly annotated them for publication by the Museum under the title *"She Was a Sister Sailor,"* Volume XIII of the Seaport's American Maritime Library. In its efforts to document the diversity of American seagoing, the Museum is proud to offer this valuable new compendium of the female perspective on seafaring to a wide audience.

In 1845, the whaleship *Tiger* was exceptional for having a woman on board, but otherwise its inhabitants reflected the typical racial and ethnic diversity found on shipboard. John T. Perkins, a student at Yale College who went to sea in hopes of improving his eyesight, described the range of maritime skills, backgrounds, abilities, and education of his shipmates. Among the officers was the fourth mate, Mr. Mingus, "a Portugue who probably understands whaling better than any person aboard." The crew came from New England states, New York, Pennsylvania, Canada, England, and Scotland and included a "mulatto" steward, an African-American cook, and a cabin boy "who had been to sea sometime before," because his father could not keep him at home and so "bound him out" to Captain Brewster.

The crew for Mary Brewster's second voyage was perhaps even more diverse: "the steward is a gentleman of color," and the crew consisted of "5 white, 5 kanaka [Pacific islanders], 2 portuguese, 3 colored bretheren with the cook who could be called black being the darkest one of all." In the close quarters of a whaling vessel this diversity of backgrounds and orientations created a complex social environment for all on board; in many ways it was a microcosm of the growing diversity of the nation itself.

At a time when we give special consideration to our nation's racial and ethnic heritage, this issue of *The Log* suggests the range of opportunities we have to study the historical diversity of American culture through the investigation of our maritime history. Mystic Seaport will continue to encourage and foster this work in coming years through research support, exhibition, publication, and an ever-broadening interpretation of our richly diverse American maritime heritage.

J. Revell Carr

An "Appearance of Menace"

The Royal Navy's Incursion in New York Bay, September 1807



David Gelston (1744–1828) was a merchant, political figure, and jurist before President Jefferson appointed him collector of customs for New York in 1801. During his 19 years as collector, few situations tried his diplomatic skills as much as his confrontation with the British Navy in September 1807.
Oil portrait by John Wesley Jarvis, ca. 1810.
(Courtesy The New-York Historical Society, N.Y.C.)

WILLIAM M. P. DUNNE
and
FREDERICK C. LEINER

On 22 June 1807, during a time of nominal peace between the United States and Great Britain, the Royal Navy's 50-gun ship *Leopard* overhauled the American frigate *Chesapeake*, just outside the three-mile limit near Norfolk, Virginia, demanding the return of British deserters on board the *Chesapeake*. When Commodore James Barron refused to permit a search, the *Leopard* opened fire, killing three Americans and wounding fourteen others.

This act of aggression against an American warship was the most overt effort to enforce British insistence on the right to stop and search neutral ships for deserters or any other British subjects on board. In the two years since the battle of Trafalgar, the British Navy had taken control of the Atlantic in the war with France. With the balance tipped, the British could be more forceful with the opportunistic Americans, who tried to maintain a neutral stance. For Great Britain, impressment became both a diplomatic right and a practical necessity as she tried to maintain her chronically undermanned fleet on the high seas.

For the United States, impressment concerned both national honor and the legal definition of citizenship. The United States maintained that a British subject might become a United States citizen by naturalization. By seizing such a naturalized American and forcing him to serve in a British warship, the Royal Navy violated American neutral rights and insulted American dignity. Conversely, Britain maintained that no man could abandon his natural allegiance to the King, and that whenever the Crown needed his services, it had a right to impress him. The British Privy Council held that, as long as America allowed British subjects, naturalized or not, to enter its merchant service, they would continue to reclaim them when needed. The English believed their safety, even their very existence as a nation, depended on the enforcement of that doctrine. Left unsaid was the Royal Navy's proclivity, whether by accident or intent, to impress innocent Americans as well as British subjects. As a result, thousands of seamen serving in American merchant ships fell prey to British impressment parties.

The *Chesapeake* incident disrupted the already tenuous relationship between the nations. The American response might have been an immediate declaration of war, but Congress had just adjourned and President Thomas Jefferson did not call an emergency session. Even if he had, the nation was hardly prepared to make war on Great Britain. Jefferson's own naval policy had favored a strictly defensive force of small coastal gunboats. With a few large frigates scattered on different stations and a fleet of small gunboats patrolling the coast, America was not ready to take the offensive against the largest navy on earth.

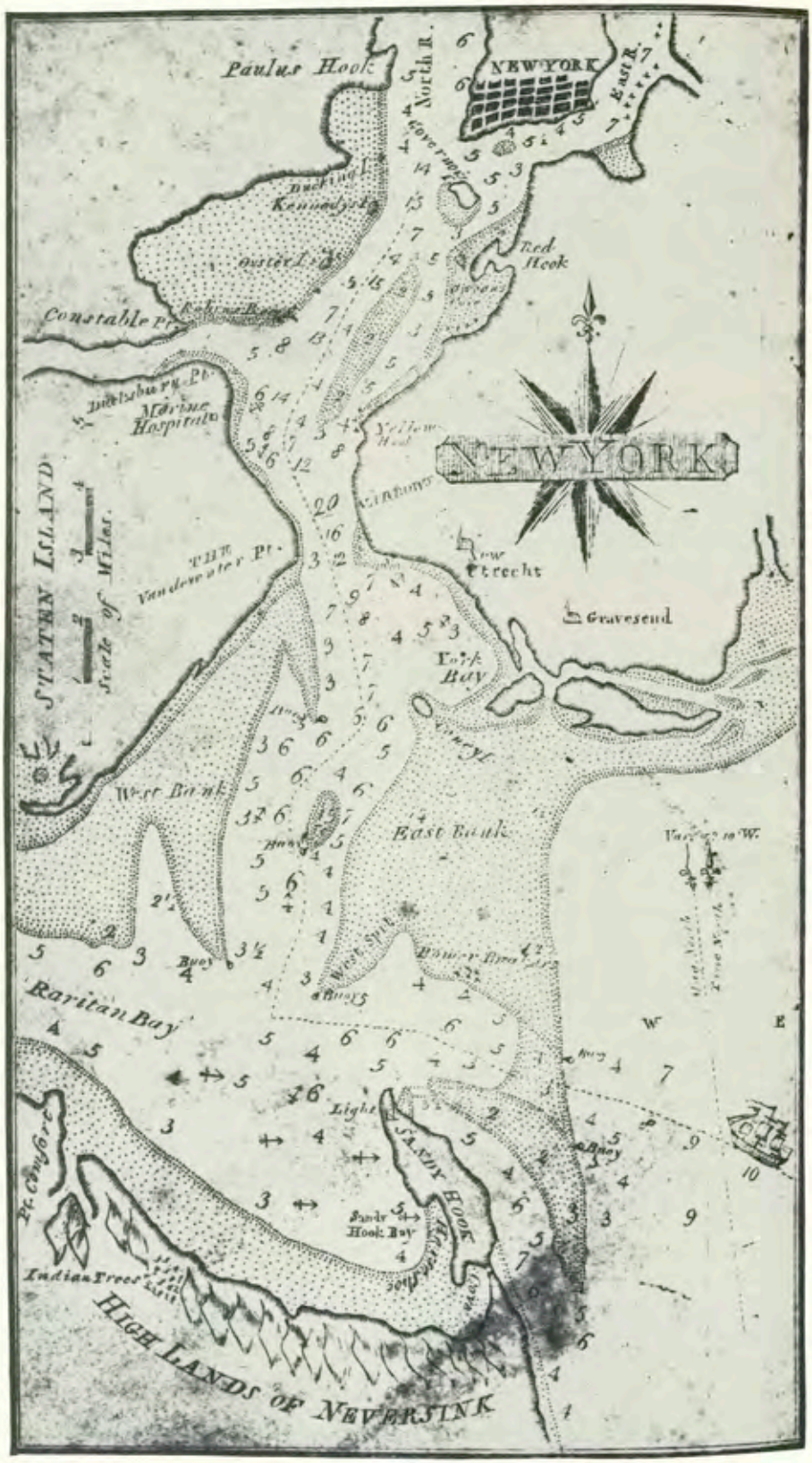
Instead of answering aggression with the sword, Jefferson answered with a presidential proclamation on 2 July 1807. Its preamble read: "Hospitality under such circumstances ceases to be a duty; and a continuance of it, with such uncontrolled abuses, would tend only, by multiplying injuries and irritations, to bring on a rupture between the two nations." The president's executive order banned all British warships from U.S. territorial waters. It allowed them to enter only if in distress or carrying official communications. If they did not comply, the proclamation forbade American citizens from delivering supplies to them.[1]

The Royal Navy seemed bent on heightening tensions. A day after Jefferson's proclamation, a British squadron sailed into Hampton Roads, intercepting all maritime traffic and threatening the city of Norfolk. A force of Royal Marines went ashore to seize freshwater supplies. In a quick response to this invasion,

Virginia Governor William H. Cabell called out the militia and manned the forts around Norfolk. The U.S. Navy's Captain Stephen Decatur blocked the Elizabeth River with the partially repaired *Chesapeake*, backed by a dozen gunboats, and hoped for the opportunity of "burning the first Powder" with the British.[2]

Three hundred miles to the north, the man charged with enforcing the president's proclamation at the port of New York was the regional collector of customs, David Gelston, a 57-year-old native of Bridgehampton, Long Island. Although he had been unsuccessful as a merchant, Gelston had an impressive record as a Republican politician that included terms in the New York State Assembly, the Constitutional Convention, the 1789 Continental Congress, and the New York State Senate. As customs collector, Gelston was a political appointee of the first rank and had immense authority: the customs duties collected in the New York district alone sufficed to cover the entire federal budget, except the interest on the national debt. Besides collecting duties on incoming goods, Gelston oversaw the activities and maintenance of revenue cutters, lighthouses, and buoys, and he administered the Staten Island marine hospital and quarantine grounds, as well as the public storehouse. Much of his daily routine involved preparing and issuing shipping documents: registers, enrollments, sea letters, and numbers of other papers involving the movement of vessels, cargoes, and passengers through the port of New York. He directly supervised the activities of the port naval officer, the surveyor of customs, the officers of the revenue marine, and scores of lesser officials including clerks, weighers, and gaugers.[3] Local enforcement of United States maritime laws also fell to the collector, and administering President Jefferson's proclamation would tax David Gelston's political diplomacy to the utmost.

The British 18-gun brig *Columbine* delivered news of the unexpectedly firm American reaction to the naval incursion in Virginia to Royal Navy headquarters at Halifax on 4 July 1807.[4] Vice Admiral Sir George Cranfield Berkeley, who commanded the North American Station, had issued the *Leopard*'s attack orders on his own authority.[5] He responded to the American actions as if Britain were the injured party, and immediately dispatched the *Columbine* with a letter to the British minister at Washington. Admiral Berkeley sought confirmation of his assumption that the American measures at Norfolk amounted to the onset of hostilities against the King.[6]



New York Bay, 1804. HMS Columbine *and* Jason *first anchored inside Sandy Hook. The* Jason *then proceeded up to the quarantine grounds off the marine hospital on Staten Island. Harbor pilots were essential to direct the navigation of large vessels among the numerous banks and shoals in New York Bay.* Edmund M. Blunt, *American Coast Pilot* (1804).



The Narrows between Staten Island (left) *and Long Island* (right). *HMS* Jason *passed through the Narrows to reach the quarantine grounds around the point at left. The fast-looking little vessel at right is probably a pilot schooner.*
Watercolor sketch by Royal Navy Lieutenant George Tobin, 1794. (VFM 965, G.W. Blunt White Library)

In command of the *Columbine*, Captain James Bradshaw brought Berkeley's message to the British squadron off Norfolk on 29 July.[7] While anchored in Hampton Roads, Bradshaw taunted the French frigate *Cybele* undergoing repairs there, and pointedly asked American authorities for supplies in contravention of President Jefferson's proclamation. The French ignored his baiting, and the Norfolk customs collector refused his improper requisition. To cap his cavalier behavior, upon receipt of dispatches for the British consul general at New York, Bradshaw left his Hampton Roads anchorage on 15 August without informing the collector of his departure as courtesy required.[8]

Bradshaw brought the *Columbine* to anchor outside Sandy Hook at 7 A.M. on 1 September.[9] An hour later Midshipman Eli E. Danielson, commanding U.S. Gunboat No. 33, came upon the *Columbine* as he approached New York Harbor on a passage from Portland, Maine. The American officer boarded the British brig and later reported that Bradshaw "showed me the superscription of the Dispatches and desired me to take them to New York, but I refused, [nevertheless] He treated me with great politeness."[10] Evidently Bradshaw's disdain for American civilian authority did not extend to its military, even young midshipmen.[11] Danielson told the New York harbor pilots that the *Columbine*'s mission was legitimate, and pilot William Conway then went out to display the president's edict. Bradshaw informed him that he "did not Come under it and Offered to Show . . . the Dispatches." Persuaded by the sight of them, Conway guided the British brig inside Sandy Hook on the morning of 2 September, and Bradshaw "found riding here several American Gun Boats."[12] A flotilla of gunboats from Portland and Boston, including Danielson's No. 33, had paused inside the Hook to regroup before moving upstream to the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Bradshaw awoke on 3 September to find "a Frigate at Anchor outside of Sandy Hook," and he "made Signal 275, exchanged numbers with HMS *Jason*."[13] A fifth-rate 32-gun frigate, the *Jason* was a larger warship than the *Columbine*, but she was commanded by a much less experienced officer. Captain Thomas John Cochrane was only 18, although he had already commanded the frigate for a year. As able as he may have been, he owed his precocious advancement to his father, Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, commander-in-chief of the Leeward Islands Station, who had advanced him in a blatant act of patronage. Young Cochrane had been in the Royal Navy since the age of seven and had become a stringent martinet, quick to apply the cat-o'-nine-tails to suppress his crew.[14]

HMS *Jason* had arrived from Halifax during the night and moved into Sandy Hook Bay a half an hour after Bradshaw first saw her. Cochrane then addressed a note to Collector Gelston: "I beg leave to inform you of my Arrival here last night with dispatches for His Britannic Majesty's Consul General . . . and have to request you will be good enough to order that a Pilot may be sent down to take the ship up the river."[15]

Confronted by two unwelcome British visitors, the next morning Gelston ordered revenue officers Thomas Randall and Robert Hunter to take the customhouse vessel down to the lower bay and investigate the situation. When they reached the lighthouse, Surveyor of Customs Peter A. Schenck told them that an officer from the *Jason* had come ashore for a pilot, but had not asked for supplies. During the interview with Schenck, Randall and Hunter "observed the *Jason* frigate get under way & proceed towards the Narrows."[16] Soon after, Cochrane brought her to anchor on the quarantine grounds off Staten Island.

Cochrane then sent out a boat, which ran alongside the pilot boat *Thorn*, then on her way into port from her station off the Sandy Hook bar. The British boat's officer asked for a pilot to take the frigate up to the city, asserting that the *Jason* bore dispatches for the British consul in New York. When the *Thorn* continued its course up to the city, Cochrane recalled the *Jason*'s boat, put a lieutenant in charge of it, and sent the boat out again to overtake the *Thorn*. The British officer demanded that the pilot boat heave to, repeated that the *Jason* had dispatches, and again demanded a pilot.

American civilian officials had allowed the *Columbine* to lie at anchor in lower New York Bay and the *Jason* to move up to the quarantine grounds, but the pilots plainly were not going to bring British warships further up to anchor off Manhattan. The American pilot, a Mr. Mitchell, claimed that he had no business with the *Jason*, but proffered that its dispatches might be sent by a British gig to Governor's Island. Despite the *Jason*'s ostensibly peaceful mission, an armed party clambered aboard the *Thorn* to demand compliance. Mitchell knocked down the first British sailor to grab the helm, and after some abusive language the British party backed down.

The local civil authorities did not. Collector Gelston published a notice in the newspapers that the president's proclamation would be "rigorously enforced" to prevent all communications with or resupplying of the British intruders. All eyes turned to the American naval commander when a local paper ended its account of the goings-on in the lower bay

With the simple statement "A division of gun boats we understand are ordered out."[17]

The senior American naval officer at New York, Commodore John Rodgers, a blustery man with a mercurial temperament, took issue with the arrival of the unwanted foreign visitors. Rodgers had Jeffersonian naval power at hand: the six U.S. Navy gunboats, mounting twelve guns between them, had come up from Sandy Hook to the navy yard in Brooklyn. He quickly organized five of them. Hoisting his broad pennant in Gunboat No. 8, Rodgers led the way down the East River with the intention of challenging the British or, in his words, "to have compelled them by force to leave said Waters." Aware that he had no definite orders, Rodgers recalled that Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin was summering in the city. After being under way for less than an hour, he decided to anchor his flotilla off Governor's Island and go ashore to consult with Gallatin. If anyone could clarify the presidential proclamation, it was the president's chief lieutenant and policy adviser.

When Rodgers reached Gallatin, the secretary told him that "it was not the intention of the President that force was to be used, even in case of refusal to leave the waters." Gallatin advised him "not for the present [to] proceed down with the Boats, as it might bear the appearance of a menace." Gallatin's advice was galling, so Rodgers requested instructions from Navy Secretary Robert Smith, concluding that "if it is with five gunboats only, to force the Frigate that is now within our Waters without the same, I will pledge you my life, and my reputation that it shall be done."[18] Of course, in an era of horseback communications, with the navy secretary in Washington and the president at Monticello for the summer, Rodgers's definite orders would be weeks away. In the interim, the U.S. Navy was relegated to the sidelines by Gallatin's caution.

While Rodgers and Gallatin met, tensions escalated around the British ships, stirred by American smuggling and British aggression. On 4 September the revenue officers caught two local entrepreneurs red-handed: "Capt. Hunter will inform you of our having detected a Jonathan Eldridge, and his son David Eldridge returning from the Frigate *Jason*, having carried on board refreshments," announced revenue officer Randall. British aggression the next morning forced Randall to amend his account. An armed boarding party in the *Columbine*'s launch, mounting a boat carronade and commanded by two midshipmen, came alongside his customhouse vessel. Despite Randall's refusal, the Englishmen forced their way on board to look for a deserter.[19] After an unsuccessful search, the senior midshipman, "using menacing & insolent language," forbade the American revenue officers from anchoring near the *Columbine* because their presence was a temptation for British tars to desert.[20] The Royal Navy's disdain for Americans had reached a new high: foreign officers under arms boarding an American government vessel and ordering her to shift anchorage while she lay within New York Bay.

Before Gelston heard of the *Columbine*'s provocation, he discovered that one of the *Jason*'s officers had come into the city without his permission. He dashed a note off to British Consul General Thomas Barclay: "I am this moment informed that a Barge from his Britannic Majesty's ship *Jason* has landed an officer in this City contrary to the prohibitions contained in the Presidents Proclamation." He demanded that the offender return to his ship immediately.[21] Gelston did not realize that the officer he referred to was Captain Cochrane himself.

Gelston would not permit the *Jason* to anchor off New York, so Cochrane had come in himself to deliver his dispatches, in defiance of Gelston's demand that all communication pass through his office. By flaunting Gelston, Cochrane had completed his mission to New York, but things were about to worsen for the young captain of the *Jason*. Even as he met with Consul General Barclay, six of the crew of his gig deserted and slipped away into the busy New York streets.[22]

Trying to maintain American dignity without provoking conflict, Gelston took a measured approach. He relied on Barclay's honor to comply promptly concerning the British officer who had landed without permission. Gelston then drafted a conciliatory reply to Bradshaw. He acknowledged Bradshaw's status as a bearer of dispatches, adding "the supply that you have requested will be granted agreeably to the list you have made out, it being expected that you will depart immediately after you shall have received the same."[23]

The letter to Bradshaw was no sooner sent than Randall's report on the behavior of the *Columbine*'s midshipmen arrived on Gelston's desk. He promptly penned a curt follow-up message to the brig's commander:

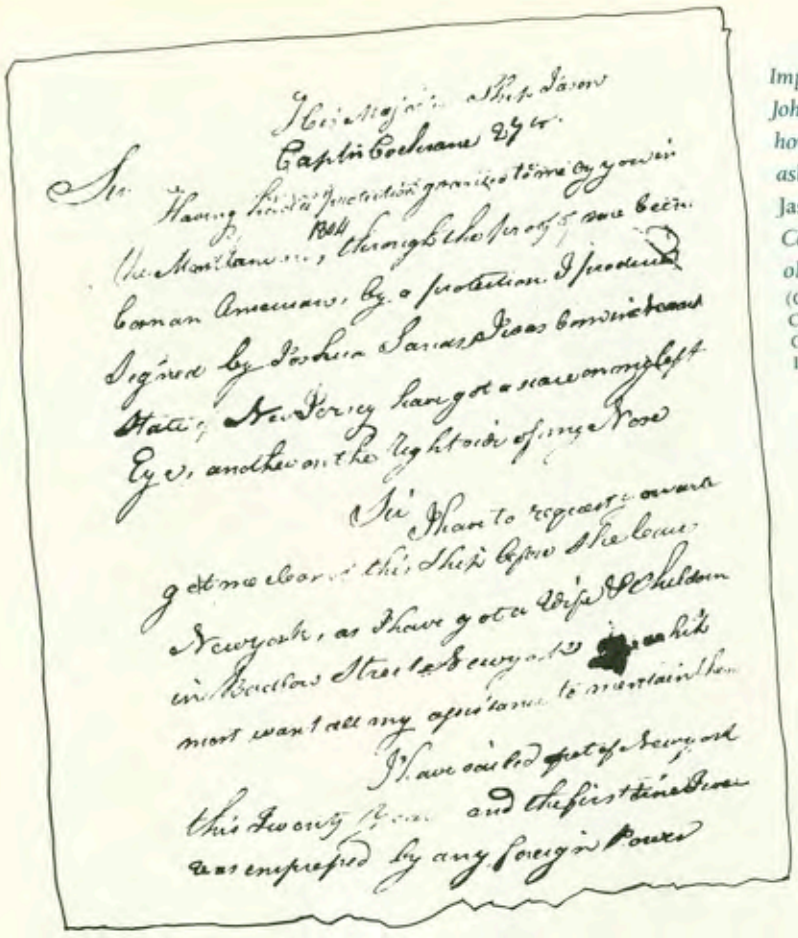
> *Since writing to you my letter of this day I have received informettion [sic] from two officers of the Revenue of the conduct of two officers from your Ship in attempting and actually searching by force a vessel in the employ of the Government of the U.S. knowing her to be such, under pretense of finding deserters; and within the waters & jurisdiction of the United States . . . it is impossible after such unwarrantable conduct any provisions or supplies can be granted to your Ship . . . you are hereby advised to depart from this harbour & District of New York immediately.*[24]

This bald injunction did not reach Bradshaw until the seventh, two days later. Unaware of Gelston's strong reaction to his midshipmen's misconduct, Bradshaw wrote to Gelston on 5 September, complaining about the incident that had triggered the illicit



Lower New York Bay, with Sandy Hook lighthouse at left and the Highlands of Navesink on the right. HMS brig Columbine anchored in this area.

Watercolor sketch by Royal Navy Lieutenant George Tobin, 1794. (VFM 965, G.W. Blunt White Library)



Impressed seaman John Bateman somehow got this letter ashore from HMS Jason, beseeching Collector Gelston to obtain his freedom. (Gelston Papers, Coll. 170, box 23, G.W. Blunt White Library)

search by his junior officers. He also professed his unhappiness at being spied upon:

> *A Seaman having contrived to swim away last Night unobserved . . . and having . . . strong reason to believe he got on board a Custom House Boat sent down from New York, to . . .* watch our motions, and prevent our getting any supplies . . . *[the deserter] has been put on shore by one of her boats; I hope both Honor and Justice will oblige you to make an enquiry respecting it, which, should it turn out as here represented, I entertain not the smallest doubt but the man will be honourably given up . . . I am confident it could not be your intention to send a Boat on so disgraceful a Service as that of harboring any Men that may desert.*[25]

The series of abrasive incidents triggered by the arrival of HMS *Jason* and *Columbine* at New York peaked later that afternoon of 5 September when Gelston received surreptitious letters from two men on board the *Jason* who claimed to have been illegally impressed.

Frequently, when a British warship stopped an American merchant ship to search for British subjects among the crew, the inspecting officer rounded up any likely looking men, whatever their nationalities. Merchant captains had no recourse on the high seas. American seamen were encouraged to carry a Seaman's Protection, an official document issued by a customs collector, which contained a physical description of the man and a guarantee that he was an American citizen. Yet, in the face of a determined British boarding party the documents offered little protection – especially since they were known to be sold among sailors.

Both of Gelston's correspondents had protections. William Lang of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, claimed to have been impressed aboard the *Jason* from the Baltimore brig *Antilope* on 1 December 1806. John Bateman, originally of Newark, New Jersey, but later a resident of New York City, possessed a *bona fide* protection signed by Gelston himself. Part of Bateman's plea to the Collector is particularly poignant:

> *Sir*
>
> *I have to request you will get me clear of this Ship before she leaves Newyork, as I have got a Wife & Childern in Badlow Street who must want all my assistance to maintain them.*
>
> *I have sailed out of Newyork this Twenty Years and [this is] the first time I ever was impressed by any foreign Power.*
>
> *I was impressed by H.M. Brig* Demerara *and drafted on board this Ship about 9 or ten Months ago, I was taken from the Brig* Ullyses *of New York Capt. Ingleson and has since suffered much in my mind In consequence of my helpless family being absent they may be in much Want of all necessaries required for [their] Mentainance . . . [and] I am all they have to look too for that.*[26]

To add to his plight, in mid-August the American sailor's back had been lacerated by a dozen lashes authorized by Cochrane for "neglect of duty."[27] Bateman's story is all the more melancholy because it personifies the sufferings of thousands of American mariners and their families during the two decades of American neutral trade.

With their crews of desperate men held in prison-like conditions, British warships like the *Jason* seethed with discontent. Several sailors had already deserted from the *Jason*, and now, with the captain still ashore, a larger group took action. Lying so close to the beckoning green hills of Staten Island and New Jersey, a third of the *Jason*'s enlisted complement of about 140 men stormed the quarterdeck towards sunset in an attempt to escape ashore in the ship's boats. Surprised in the act, they barricaded themselves below. Only determined resistance by the ship's officers and marines restored order. By the time Captain Cochrane returned after midnight, the officers had regained control of their ship, confining 44 men in irons. At daylight on 6 September the ship's company was mustered, and two ringleaders were promptly strung up for punishment. One received ten dozen lashes and the other eight dozen for their attempted mutiny.[28]

Unaware of the turmoil aboard the *Jason*, Gelston responded to the pleas of Lang and Bateman by writing to the *Jason*'s captain on the morning of the sixth to claim the two Americans. Gelston also advised Cochrane that he was sending down a pilot as requested.[29] Relying upon the Briton to act honorably, Gelston ordered harbor pilot Christopher Leonard to conduct the *Jason* from the Staten Island quarantine grounds down to Sandy Hook.

Inexperienced in diplomacy, and perhaps anxious to get his unruly crew away from land as soon as he could, young Captain Cochrane gave up Bateman without question. Lang, however, was beyond Collector Gelston's reach. Cochrane explained that, "With respect to Wm. Lang, whatever Nation he may belong to, he has now put it totally out of my Power to give him up from having

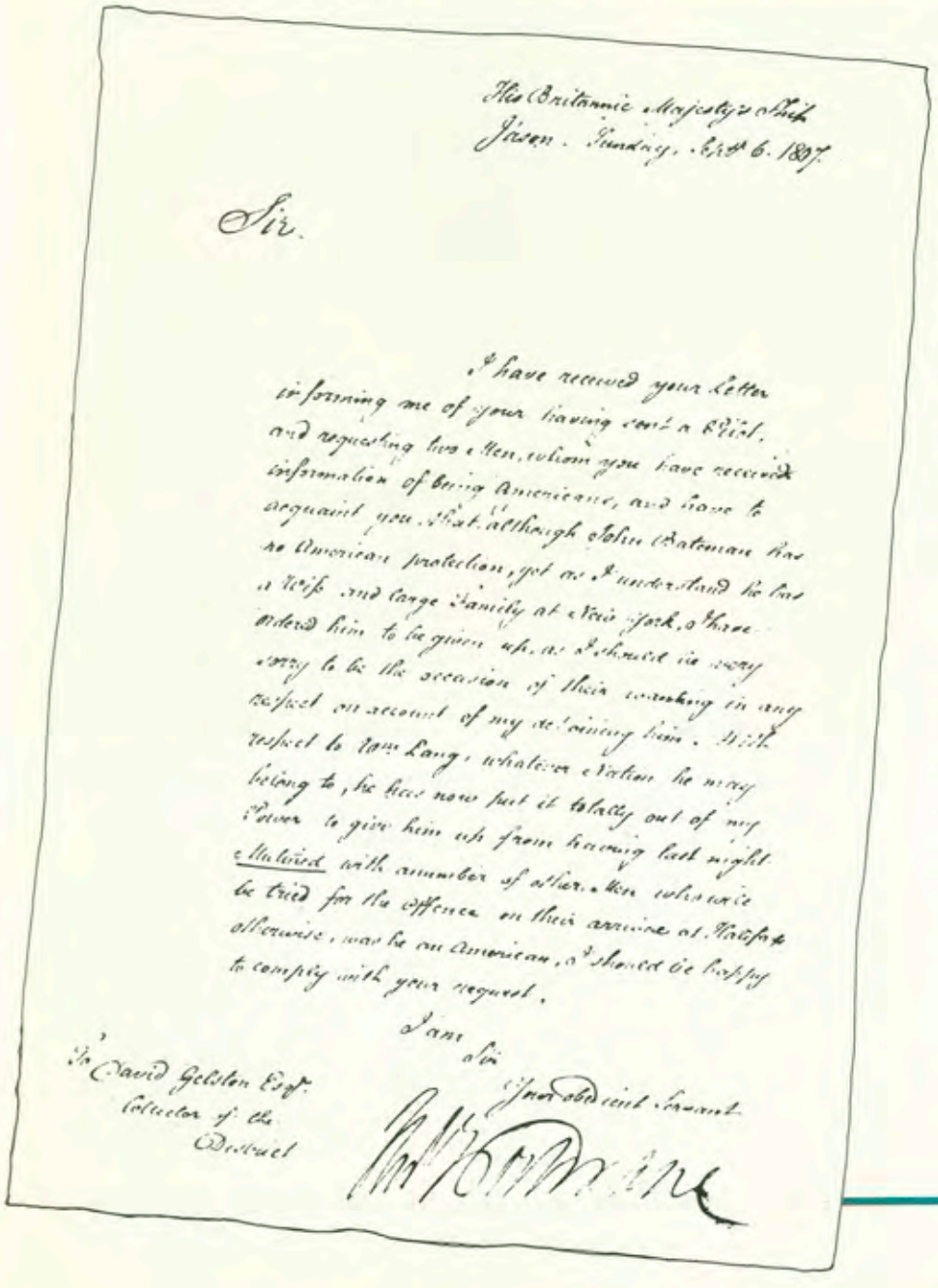
last night *Mutinied* . . . otherwise, was he an American, I should be happy to comply with your request."[30]

Thanks to David Gelston's intervention, John Bateman returned to his wife and children in Badlow Street, a free man once again after a year in the King's service. Lang's desperate attempt to desert led to his incarceration on board HMS *Jason* and ultimately a court martial's sentence to be hung by the neck until dead.[31]

The next day brought less happy circumstances. Bradshaw haughtily replied to Gelston's directive sending his brig away:

> *I have received both your Letters of the 5th instant. In reply to the second one of that day's date I have to remark that the peremptory manner in which you have ordered His Britannic Majesty's Brig under my Command ('to depart from the Harbour, and district of New York immediately') without having made the smallest enquiry or enter'd into the least explanation with me of the supposed transgression, puts it out of my power, under such Circumstances and such measures as you have thought proper to adopt to explain the case, which otherwise I am convinced could have been satisfactorily adjusted without having recourse to the Unwarrantable order you have thought proper to send me; which I certainly shall not comply with, but remain until the Service I am sent on is executed, or as long as I find convenient.*[32]

The day after the mutiny aboard HMS Jason, Captain Cochrane informed Collector Gelston that he would release Bateman. As a mutineer, the other professed American, William Lang, was retained for trial.
(Gelston Papers, Coll. 170, box 23, G.W. Blunt White Library)



His Britannic Majesty's Ship
Jason. Sunday, Sept 6. 1807.

Sir.

I have received your Letter informing me of your having sent a Writ, and requesting him, Wm. whom you have received information of being American, and have to acquaint you that although John Bateman has no American protection, yet as I understand he has a Wife and large Family at New York, I have ordered him to be given up, as I should be sorry to be the occasion of their wanting in any respect on account of my detaining him. With respect to Wm Lang, whatever Nation he may belong to, he must now put it totally out of my Power to give him up from having last night Mutinied with number of others, who are to be tried for the offence on their arrival at Halifax otherwise, was he an American, I should be happy to comply with your request.

I am Sir
Your obedient Servant
Jno Bowman

To David Gelston Esqr
Collector of the
District

While Bradshaw displayed no inclination toward conciliation, Gelston had the means in his power to enforce his order. With Secretary Gallatin on the spot counseling caution, Gelston could not turn to Rodgers's gunboats; but, by simply isolating the *Columbine* from shore supplies, he could outwait Bradshaw, and wait he did.

Bradshaw made his point by staying at Sandy Hook, but dwindling supplies forced him to weigh anchor in company with the *Jason* on 9 September. And the *Columbine*'s quarrelsome captain paid another price for his arrogance: at least three of his seamen deserted from the brig's jolly boat, which he had sent out to board and examine an inbound American schooner.[33]

Nine days after the British warships had lifted their anchors and sailed away – thirteen days after Commodore Rodgers had pleaded for firm orders – President Jefferson at Monticello responded to the appearance of menace in New York Bay. Jefferson wrote the secretary of the navy that "So long as the British vessels merely enter the Hook, or remain quiet there, I would not precipitate hostilities." Yet the commander-in-chief refused to draw the line that the British could not pass without a fight, leaving that vaguely at the Narrows or "perhaps some other place which yourself [sic] or Commodore Rodgers can fix." But Mr. Jefferson finished with brave rhetoric, that "a line should be drawn" and if the British crossed that line, Rodgers "should attack them with all his force."[34] The confrontation was long past when the message finally reached New York.

Today, the affair of HMS *Jason* and *Columbine* in New York Bay in September 1807 is rarely mentioned among the incidents that preceded the War of 1812. But in its details, it highlights many of the maritime attitudes and conflicts that caused a second war between the United States and Great Britain. The incident also reveals how weak the country's coastal defenses were, and how inadequate was the communication system that allowed diplomatic control of events.

But the British incursion in New York Bay had another side, revealing the toughness and common sense of New Yorkers of another day. A false step by Collector Gelston could have triggered war. Instead, by patience and his control of supplies to the British, he was able to deflect the British and help preserve the uneasy peace for a few more years.

NOTES

An "Appearance of Menace"
The Royal Navy's Incursion in New York Bay, September 1807

1. Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America During the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1986), p. 948.

2. *Richmond Enquirer*, 3, 7, 11 July 1807; Decatur to R. Smith, 4, 8, 12, 15 July 1807, "Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy: Captains Letters 1805–1861," Navy Department Records, Record Group 45, M125, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as "Captains Letters").

3. Robert G. Albion, *The Rise of New York Port, 1815–1860* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939); Douglas Stein, biographical essay, David Gelston Papers, Coll. 170, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum (hereafter cited as Gelston Papers).

4. HM brig *Columbine* arrived in Lynhaven Bay on 27 June 1807, and came under immediate orders from Captain John Erskine Douglas of HMS *Bellona* to return to Halifax and deliver his reports of the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair to Vice Admiral Berkeley (Douglas to Berkeley, 27 June 1807, ADM1/497, 221, Public Records Office, London (hereafter cited as PRO); log of HBM brig *Columbine*, 27 June 1807, ADM51/1800, PRO. The *Columbine* was a *Cruizer*-class brig of 18 guns and 386 tons, built by Adams, at Bucklers Hard, Hampshire, and launched on 16 July 1806, see J.J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy* (London: Greenhill Books, 1987).

5. Berkeley to the captains of HMS *Belleisle, Bellona, Triumph, Chichester, Halifax*, and *Zenobia*, 1 June 1807, ADM1/497, 220, PRO. The Admiralty reprimanded Berkeley for this order and relieved him in command of the North American Station with Vice Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, see Wellesley W. Pole, First Secretary of the Admiralty, to Berkeley, 16 December 1808, ADM2/1365, 10-13, PRO.

6. Report of Vice Admiral Berkeley to William Marsden, Esq., First Secretary of the Admiralty, 4 July 1807, ADM1/497, 213-214, PRO. "Sir/You will be pleased to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I have thought it right, to lose not a moment, in dispatching the *Sylvia* Cutter, Lieutenant Drury home, with the intelligence received this morning, by the *Columbine* from the Chesapeak, of His Majesty's Ship *Leopard* having met the United States frigate the *Chesapeak* at Sea and from the information of her having many deserters belonging to His Majesty's Squadron as part of her crew, and from the orders each Captain had in consequence from me, a Copy of which I enclose, Captain Humphreys [sic] proceeded to search her, and was by the pertinacity of the American Captain compelled to use force. The event of which will be detailed in the enclosed letters from Captains [John Erskine] Douglas and [Salusbury Pryce] Humphreys. . . ."

7. Captain Isaac Hull to R. Smith, 31 August 1807, "Captains Letters"; log of brig *Columbine*, 29 July 1807, PRO.

8. Brigadier General Thomas Mathews to Governor William H. Cabell, 17 August 1807, quoted in H.W. Flournoy, ed., *Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts from January 1, 1799, to December 31, 1807* (Richmond: 1892), 9:585; log of brig *Columbine*, 15 August 1807, PRO.

9. Log of brig *Columbine*, 1 September 1807, ADM51/2227, PRO (the PRO number of this log changed on 19 August 1807).

10. Danielson to Commodore Rodgers, 4 September 1807, enclosed in Rodgers to R. Smith, 5 September 1807, "Captains Letters."

11. Danielson, while young, was certainly not callow. The son of Revolutionary War Brigadier General Timothy Danielson, and stepson of Brigadier General William Eaton, he was an African veteran, having accompanied Eaton to Alexandria to find Hamet Karamanli. Danielson then rejoined *Argus*, while Eaton took his famous march across the Egyptian desert that lead to the capture of Derne. Danielson participated in the naval bombardment of that city. He received his midshipman's warrant on 2 April 1804, and accepted it on 15 April 1804. A Dartmouth graduate, his promising career came to an abrupt end when he was killed by a fellow officer, Midshipman Philip Pieterse Schuyler, in a groundless duel on 5 August 1808. At the time he commanded Gunboat No. 52 and Schuyler Gunboat No. 40 (See Rodgers to Robert Smith, 7 August 1808, "Captains Letters").

12. Conway to Gelston, 3 September 1807, Gelston Papers (the entire Gelston correspondence that follows is contained in Box 23, folder 10 of this collection at Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library); log of brig *Columbine*, 1-2 September 1807, PRO.

13. Log of brig *Columbine*, 3 September 1807.

14. *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Cochrane, Sir Thomas John." Cochrane's older cousin was the better known Captain Thomas Cochrane who served with distinction on the French coast. The younger Cochrane was notorious with the cat-o'-nine-tails. In just under six weeks Cochrane ordered 627 lashes laid on the backs of his men for offenses ranging from insolence to neglect of duty to sleeping at one's post, see log of HBM frigate *Jason*, 6 August, 14 September 1807, ADM51/1965, PRO. The *Jason* was a 661-ton, 127-foot *Circe*-class frigate launched at Woolwich Dock Yard on 21 November 1804. Built of fir, she lasted only 11 years, Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, p. 184.

15. Cochrane to Gelston, 3 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

16. Randall and Hunter to Gelston, 4 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

17. *New York Public Advertiser*, 4 September 1807.

18. Rodgers to R. Smith, 5 September 1807, "Captains Letters."

19. ". . . found missing Benjamin Harrison (seaman)," log of brig *Columbine*, 3 September 1807, PRO.

20. 5 September Addendum of Randall and Hunter to Gelston, 4 September 1807, Gelston Papers; log of brig *Columbine*, 5 September 1807, PRO.

21. Gelston to Barclay, 5 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

22. ". . . AM . . . 5 lowered the Gig washed Cloaths . . . PM . . . 12:15 Gig returned from Town absconded from Do. James Sparrow[,] Saml. King[,] William Ashley[,] Isaac Moore[,] Peter Smith and David McIntire," log of frigate *Jason*, 5 September 1807, PRO. 23. Gelston to Bradshaw, No. 1, 5 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

24. Gelston to Bradshaw, No. 2, 5 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

25. Bradshaw to Gelston, 5 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

26. Lang to Gelston and Bateman to Gelston, 7 September 1807, and apparently smuggled from on board the British frigate on the same date.

27. Log of frigate *Jason*, 14 August 1807, PRO.

28. "7:35 [P.M.] the Ships Co. came aft to lower the Boats down an alarm was given to the Officers whose presence on the Quarter Deck startled them and they all rushed forward immediately In their flight Thos. Martin and Edwd. Jones were wounded by Lieut [George] Pringle, found the Hatches secured and the Ship in a state of Mutiny got the Officers & Marines under Arms, secured Emanuel Compton[,] J.G. Murphy[,] John Eakins[,] Thos. Martin[,] M. Tinning[,] John Ross 2d on Suspicion. . . . at 1 [A.M.] the Captain came on board from New York in a Shore Boat. . . . at 6:15 Mustered and examined the Ships Company to find out who were wounded found only Thomas Martin & Edward Jones – Peter Bond was found Stowed away in the Larboard Wing secured him on suspicion of being one of the Ring leaders . . . Punished George White (M) with 10 dozen lashes and Dennis Sullivan (S) with 8 dozen lashes for Mutinous attempts," log of frigate *Jason*, 5 September 1807, PRO.

The *Jason*'s normal wartime complement specified a crew of 215 men, but ships on the Royal Navy's North American Station during the early-nineteenth century were chronically short-handed. It is estimated that the *Jason* had no more than 180 people on board during her September 1807 visit to New York Harbor. Of these, between 120 and 140 would have been seamen, landsmen, and boys, RUSI/NM/77, List of H.M. Navy 1795–1807, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England.

29. Gelston to Cochrane, 6 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

30. Cochrane to Gelston, 7 September 1807, Gelston Papers. An American newspaper later noted, in a report from Halifax, "that the British August packet had just arrived at that place; – that *Jason* had returned from New York, with 50 of her crew in irons," *Norfolk Gazette & Public Ledger*, 17 September 1807.

31. "Minutes of the Proceedings of a Court Martial assembled and held on board His Majesty's Ship *Acasta* in Halifax Harbour Nova Scotia," dated 29 September 1807, specified "that the charges against Thomas Campbell, William Caton, Mounsey Tinning, Robert Dinen and Peter Bond Seamen and Patrick Brown Private Marine were proved, therefore adjudge them to be hung by the Neck till dead, at the yard Arm of Yard Arms, of such of His Majestys Ships as the Commander in Chief on this Station shall direct –

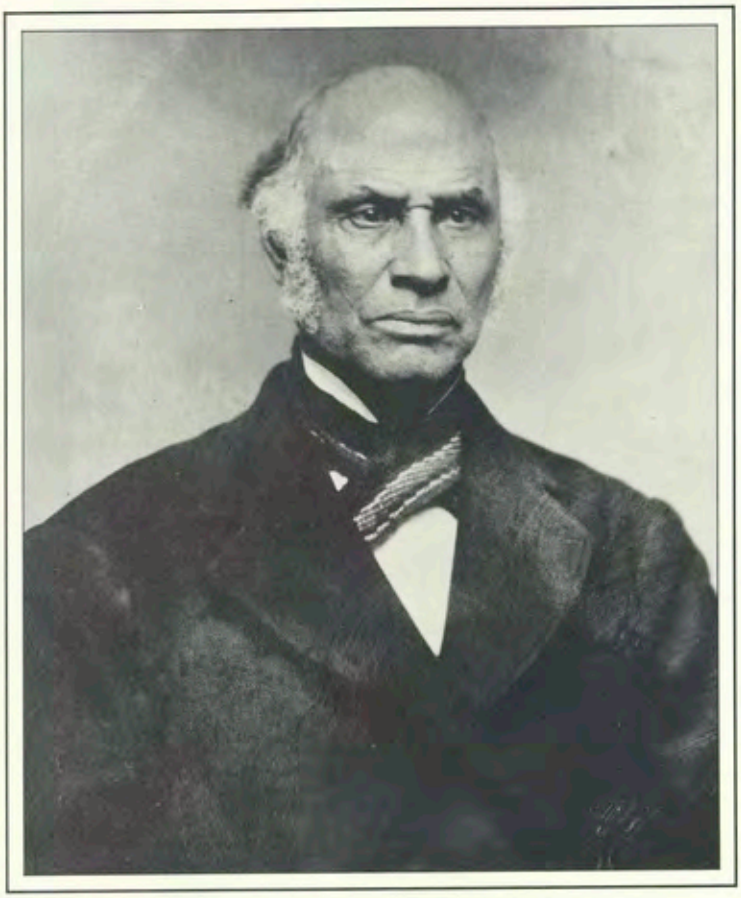
"That the charges were proved in part against John McNeil, William Lang, Edward Milton, Joseph Malence and Thomas Martin and adjudge them to suffer death in the like Manner, but in consideration of circumstances the Court most humbly recommend them to His Majesty's Royal Mercy – The Court were further of opinion that the charges *were not* proved against [lists the balance of the accused]," ADM1/5383, PRO (underlining original).

32. Bradshaw to Gelston, 7 September 1807, Gelston Papers.

33. Log of brig *Columbine*, 8 September 1807, PRO.

34. Jefferson To R. Smith, 18 September 1807, quoted in Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *The Works of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), 10:497.

The Picture of Antoine DeSant



Focusing on New London's Black Maritime History

FRED CALABRETTA

For Antoine DeSant (ca. 1815–1886), a Yankee whaleship offered an escape from harsh living conditions in the Cape Verde Islands. From his start as a youthful greenhand about 1830, he became a veteran whaleman and a successful New London property owner and businessman.
Tintype photograph by Bolles & Frisbee, New London, ca. 1880. (M.S.M. 92.119.1)

As a young girl, Anna Bush recalls that her father's New London home contained photographs, documents, a whale's tooth, sea chests, and other evidence of the family's ties to the sea. She inherited several of those items, along with a strong interest in her family's maritime tradition. She remembers too that her parents encouraged her to eventually donate a logbook and other items to Mystic Seaport. In response to that parental request, and her own concerns about the preservation of her family's maritime history, she visited Mystic Seaport this past summer.

Although some of things she observed as a child had disappeared over the years, a logbook, a volume on New London history, and three photographs were subsequently donated and added to the Museum's collections. She also shared useful information pertaining to her family's history. This information, the result of her own research and family oral tradition, has given us a glimpse of the participation of blacks within the realm of New London's nineteenth-century maritime enterprise. The experiences of her ancestors serve as a reminder that blacks and members of other racial and ethnic groups took part in whaling and other maritime activity, and that they contributed significantly to the economic and cultural fabric of the region.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, New England's whalers often stopped at the Cape Verde Islands, owned by Portugal and located 385 miles off the west coast of Africa. Then, as now, a large percentage of the islands' residents were racially mixed, many of them descended from African slaves imported to work Portuguese plantations. The



John DeSant (1863–?) was the son of Antoine DeSant. Details of his life remain a mystery.
Tintype photograph by Bolles & Frisbee, New London, ca. 1880. (M.S.M. 92.119.3)

Cape Verde Islands, and other Atlantic island groups such as the Azores, were appealing ports of call for whaling captains. The islands offered stores, provisions, and services at relatively low cost. Additionally, the remoteness and isolation of the islands made them unappealing to crewmembers thinking of desertion.

The Cape Verde Islands were also visited for the purpose of taking on additional crewmembers. Eager to escape from poor living conditions, natives of the Islands viewed a whaling voyage as a chance for improvement. And the captains were glad to have them. They had a reputation as good workers and could be shipped at less cost than American citizens. One man who made his way from the Cape Verde Islands to the United States in this manner was Antoine DeSant, the great-grandfather of Anna Bush.

Born about 1815, he arrived in New London as a young man, sometime prior to 1832. He made at least four whaling voyages on the ship *Tuscarora* out of New London between 1832 and 1837, and made subsequent voyages on the whalers *Clematis*, *Georgia*, and *Superior*. There is evidence that he sailed on at least seven whaling voyages, and there were probably others.

This information is derived from crew lists which were filed with the United States customhouse in New London. Nineteenth-century crew lists and shipping articles, although valuable primary source material, are frustrating documents to work with when tracing the maritime careers of Cape Verdeans and members of other ethnic groups. Entries on these documents for recent immigrants and non-United States citizens are likely to be incomplete. Names of specific individuals are difficult to identify in their anglicized, and often varying, spellings. First names and surnames were often arbitrarily "assigned" at the whim or convenience of shipping agents, customs officials, or masters of vessels. Such problems pose a challenge for those seeking to document ethnic aspects of maritime history. (Original records of the New London customhouse are located at the Northeast Regional Branch of the National Archives, in Waltham, Massachusetts. The G.W. Blunt White Library recently acquired microfilm copies of the bulk of the collection, including crew lists.)

The logbook that Anna Bush donated was apparently kept by Antoine DeSant, and suggests that he had moved up through the ranks and become an officer. It is a record of a voyage of the bark *Portland*, bound from Boston to San Francisco in 1850. It was not a whaling voyage, but rather is an example of the maritime aspect of the great gold rush, during which numerous voyages were made from eastern ports, carrying passengers and goods to California. The log ends with the bark passing a considerable amount of time at anchor in San Francisco. The logbook raises intriguing questions about the next movements of both Antoine DeSant and the *Portland*. Numerous vessels were abandoned in San Francisco at that time, officers and crew joining the exodus to the goldfields.

Although DeSant may have been among the minority who actually found a fortune in California, more likely his success was linked to the sea. He must have been good at his work and wise in planning for his future, for by 1860 he was able to establish a business in New London's waterfront district as a barber and grocer. He acquired property on Bank Street, including two buildings which still stand. He married and was the father of six children, four of whom lived to maturity. In 1872 he became a naturalized U.S. citizen. He died in New London in 1886 at the age of 71.

In 1887, Antoine's daughter Julia married William H. Bush. The Bush family also had connections to New London's maritime past. Anson Bush, grandfather of William, had worked as a boss rigger for prominent whaling agents Williams & Haven. The ownership structure and name of this firm changed on several occasions, but throughout most of the nineteenth century it remained the city's most important and innovative whaling concern.

There is significance, beyond family history, to the fact that Anson Bush held a supervisory position for Williams & Haven, and that Antoine Desant was successful enough as a whaleman to subsequently establish a business. New London's maritime establishment seems to have afforded good opportunities for the economic advancement of blacks and other minorities, perhaps more so than other areas of business and industry.

Anson Bush and Antoine DeSant were not unique in their success. Crew lists and shipping articles, for example, reveal that officers on whaling voyages were often of Cape Verdean or other non-white descent. For some of these men, their reputations as skilled and reliable mariners even extended outside of New London. One such individual was Frank Rogers, who, like Antoine DeSant, hailed from the Cape Verde Islands. Rogers sailed from New London on a number of Arctic whaling voyages in the years before and during the Civil War. He was highly praised in the writings of Arctic explorer Charles Francis Hall, who benefitted greatly from the experience of Rogers and other New London veterans of the Eastern Arctic branch of the whale fishery. Opportunities for advance-



Julia DeSant (1865–1954), the daughter of Antoine DeSant, sat for this portrait by an unidentified photographer, ca. 1880. Her slight smile is a pleasant exception to the usual serious expressions typical of photographs of the day. Julia was the grandmother of Anna Bush, who recently presented these photographs to the Museum and shared the history of her family.
Albumen photograph. (M.S.M. 92.131.1)

ment existed for men such as Rogers and DeSant, but there were limits. Of the hundreds of whaling voyages originating from New London, those under the command of blacks or other men of color were a rarity.

Along with the photographs and logbook, Anna Bush also gave the Museum a copy of the *Biographical Review* for New London County, published in 1898 and "Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens." She noted that the volume included an entry for the Bush family, and also mentioned Julia DeSant. This was a useful bit of information, since there is no indication or even a hint in the entry that these individuals were black.

The photographs reproduced here depict Antoine DeSant and two of his children, John and Julia. John was born in 1863, and little else is known about him. It is unlikely that he followed his father's course in pursuit of whales. The whaling industry declined rapidly after the Civil War, and by the time John would have reached maturity there were only two or three voyages annually out of New London. Julia DeSant, who was born in 1865 and lived until 1954, was the grandmother of Anna Bush. The images were probably taken in the late 1870s or early 1880s. The photographs of the two men are of a format known as tintypes or ferrotypes, a process in which the image is created on a sheet of japanned, or lacquered, metal rather than the more familiar paper. These images are of particular interest because formal portraits of nineteenth-century blacks are uncommon, as are tintypes of this size, known as full-plate images. A label inside one of the original frames suggests that the images were taken by photographers Bolles and Frisbee of New London. The photograph of Julia Desant was produced on paper, yet it too is somewhat unusual. Relatively long exposure times, during which the subject had to remain perfectly still, plus the fact that nineteenth-century photo sessions were relatively formal occasions, usually resulted in serious facial expressions. Despite these considerations, Julia seems to have taken a certain amount of delight in the process. Her portrait reveals a faint smile.

Blacks, and individuals representing other racial and ethnic groups, participated to a significant extent in whaling and probably other maritime activities in New London. Yet their role has been poorly documented. Photographs, documents, and bits of information from oral tradition, such as those associated with the Bush and DeSant families, help us to establish a more balanced and accurate record of New England's nineteenth-century maritime heritage, and the ethnic diversity of that heritage. ■

Going 'Beyond the Pale'

Maritime History Recognizes the African American

LESLIE GIFFORD

The name Paul Cuffe is hardly a household institution. And yet this man was a central figure in the nation's maritime heritage, having carved for himself an international reputation as sea captain, shipowner, landowner, civil rights proponent, and respected community leader.

Born in 1759 on Cuttyhunk Island, Massachusetts, Cuffe was the son of a Wampanoag Indian mother and a former slave father. He was a determined man, resolute in his mission to ensure the application of his young country's democratic creed to all Americans, regardless of color. A black captain sailing with exclusively African-American crews, Cuffe was respected by blacks and whites alike. And though he indisputably earned his way in the white man's world, he somehow did not make it into the white man's history books.

The Paul Cuffe Memorial Fellowship program was established at Mystic Seaport to help correct this and similar historical oversights. Thanks to the generosity and concern of a small private foundation, the program – which encourages research into the participation of Native and African Americans in the maritime activities of Southeastern New England – was established in 1989. To date, fourteen fellowships – which currently cap at $2400 – have been awarded for research into a variety of topics (See accompanying listing).

Paul Cuffe was exceptional in his determination and in his acquired station. He was by no means, however, an anomaly in his role as a black seaman: he lived in an era in which the seafaring life offered African-Americans steady work, the opportunity to earn wages equal to those of their white peers, and an escape from the more sharply drawn racial barriers ashore.

As 1989 Cuffe Fellowship recipient W. Jeffrey Bolster writes – in "To Feel Like a Man:

Black Seamen in the Northern States, 1800–1860" – ships were substantially more integrated than most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century workplaces: "While by no means either color-blind or without internal frictions, Atlantic maritime culture created its own institutions and its own stratifications, which could work to the relative advantage of black men."

The Cuffe fellowship was established to learn more about these men, and to date, the program's benefactors and administrators have been satisfied with its achievements. "We never expected we'd be swamped with applicants," notes Benjamin W. Labaree, director of the Munson Institute and academic coordinator of the fellowship. "But the response has been strong.

"The topic is fairly narrowly defined," he continues. "There is some ongoing research into ethnic history, a little less into ethnic maritime history, and a little less again into ethnic maritime history related to Southeastern New England."

Though it is widely regarded that research into maritime history in general has taken a low priority among American academics, past recipient Bolster disagrees, "with a huge caveat." It is his impression that, while in Canada academic programs abound under the aegis of "maritime history," in the United States it is more the nomenclature than the actual pursuit that has shunned our seafaring past. A few years ago, he says, academics used the term "maritime history" much more freely. Today, the topic is considered somewhat antiquarian. Maritime history *per se* is out of vogue.

"But," he says, "look at the books and articles being published now. There's a tremendous amount of maritime history." He cites recently published and widely recognized works on such topics as privateering, race and seafaring labor, maritime unions, and pirating.

He notes as well the work of Lisa Norling, the first recipient of the Seaport's Robert G. Albion Fellowship in American Maritime History, whose research emphasis is on women in American history and whose dissertation was entitled "Captain Ahab had a Wife: Ideology and Experience in the Lives of New England Maritime Women, 1790 to 1860." Norling, who taught maritime history during the 1991–92 academic year at the Williams College-Mystic Seaport Program in American Maritime Studies, supports Bolster's theory in her teaching philosophy as well as in her research: she is a student of the New Social History of Seafaring, which attempts to place maritime history within the broader context of the American story. The maritime element is no longer studied in a vacuum.

"I think maritime history is alive and well," says Bolster. "It's just gone incognito."

Bolster notes that when he first began discussing his plans for a dissertation, he met with such snide remarks as, "well, that's going to be a short work." But, he argues, "there's a lot of material out there." And he believes the interest is growing. He says he has talked with the Public Broadcasting System about a film version of his work, and has worked with PBS separately on its "American Experience" series, a segment of which he says will be devoted to Africans in America. The focus, he says, will be on people of color nationwide, during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. His sense of the documentary is that it will have a strong maritime disposition. Unlike many newly emerging areas of historical exploration, says Bolster, "this is one field that will have a public as well as a professional constituency."

One of the original objectives of the Cuffe Fellowship, according to Labaree, was to encourage new research into ethnic involvement in the maritime experience. Such an ambitious aim is difficult to achieve, especially in such a short period of time. But, Labaree says, "the fellowships do make it possible for scholars already pursuing these topics to continue their research, and at the same time draws attention to the fact that ethnic minorities have long played a considerable role in this nation's maritime history."

It is an important program, and unique. Although a variety of fellowships are offered for research into people of color, Bolster says, he has not yet come across any other grant program that couples maritime history with minority studies. And it's not that he hasn't looked for other such programs: "I'm pretty tuned in to that area."

Bolster, whose work has focused on African American involvement in seafaring, expressed his gratitude for the Cuffe Fellowship. He refers to it as the "foundation stone" for his research, which has since earned additional fellowships and honors, and appeared in the March 1990 issue of *The Journal of American History*. "It's a cumulative thing," he says. "The Cuffe Fellowship gave me a semester to work on New England sources for my dissertation." He considers himself fortunate in this regard because, as he says, so many graduate students of American history in particular are forced to put off their research to take teaching posts to support that research. "It's a vicious cycle," he says.

Lamont Thomas, another previous fellowship recipient and author of *Paul Cuffe: Black Entrepreneur and Pan-Africanist*, also alludes to the lack of funding available for new historical research, and applauds the Cuffe Fellowship for its focus. "Young people out of universities need to be enticed," he says, indicating that such grant programs offer the needed enticement. The University of Bridgeport history professor says he has encouraged his students to learn more about multicultural participation in maritime history, which he says is a "wide open field of investigation."

And one that is beginning to gain recognition as well. Thomas has written pieces for two pending publications featuring research into African American involvement in seafaring: *The Encyclopedia of African American Culture and History*, to be published by Columbia University; and *The American National Biography*, due imminently from the Oxford University Press.

As the Cuffe Fellowship continues to support increased understanding of our multicultural maritime heritage, the Seaport will incorporate this growing awareness into Museum programming and interpretation. Already, Bolster's findings on black seamen have been incorporated into the handbook for interpreters of at-sea exhibits, including the *Charles W. Morgan*, the *L.A. Dunton*, and the *Joseph Conrad*.

It is hoped that the number of applications – and the range of research topics – will increase as time goes on. Bolster and others say they would like to see the field of applicable research expanded geographically. By including nationwide or Atlantic region involvement of ethnic seafarers, says Bolster, the fellowship "would be swamped with applications," and would over time attract broader and increasingly sophisticated work, which might incorporate such groups as West Indians, Carolinians, and Black Americans in Canada.

For its part, Mystic Seaport is committed to strengthening the infrastructure through which the ongoing research can be channeled into Museum programming. This month, the Seaport hosts a planning session – in which Cuffe fellows and other scholars have agreed to participate – that will set the stage for a February 1994 colloquium, the goal of which will be to gather scholars in the field, to explore further the multicultural nature of this nation's maritime heritage, and to determine appropriate methods for incorporating new information into the Museum program.

The deadline for fellowship proposals is 1 July. Applications are judged on the merits of the proposed research project, the applicant's qualifications, and the use to be made of the scholarly resources of Southeastern New England. For more information, please contact the Munson Institute of American Maritime Studies at Mystic Seaport, 50 Greenmanville Avenue, Box 6000, Mystic, CT 06355-0990, or call (203) 572-5359. ■



During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the seafaring life offered African Americans steady work, the opportunity to earn wages equal to those of their white peers, and an escape from the more sharply drawn racial barriers ashore.
(M.S.M. 60.465)

Paul Cuffe Fellowship Recipients

1989

W. Jeffrey Bolster, Johns Hopkins, researching Minority Mariners on American Ships, 1750–1900.

Marilyn Richardson, Curator, Museum of Afro-American History, researching The History of Nantucket's African-American Community with Particular Reference to the Founding Members of the African Baptist Church.

Richard C. Kugler, Senior Curator, Old Dartmouth Historical Society (now called New Bedford Whaling Museum), researching The African-American Shipwright John Mashow.

1990

George D. Bryant, Provincetown, MA, researching Capt. Colin Stevenson and the Black Whalemen of Provincetown.

Waltraud B. Coli, Rhode Island College, researching Cape Verdean Americans and the Cape Verdean Packet Trade.

Mixashawn Rozie and *Maisa L. Tisdale*, Ocean Classroom, researching The Contribution of Native Americans to the Boatbuilding Tradition of Southeastern New England Beginning in 1640.

Julie Winch, Department of Black Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston, researching The Biography of James Forten, Entrepreneur, Social Reformer, and Associate of Paul Cuffe.

Earl F. Mulderink, History, University of Wisconsin, researching a Comparison of African-American and Irish-American Community Life in New Bedford, 1840–1880.

Carolyn Paczkowski, Brown University, researching The Maritime Community of New Bedford in the Nineteenth Century.

1991

Lamont Thomas, Tolland, CT, researching Pre-Twentieth-Century African American Seafaring in the Northeast.

Waltraud B. Coli (second grant), researching Cape Verdean Americans and the Cape Verdean Packet Trade.

1992

Reverend Joy Elizabeth Brown, researching Black Involvement in the Longshoremen's Union, Seafarer Involvement in Either Pan-African Movements or as Subversives in the Various Independence Movements of Africa and the Caribbean.

James C. Garman, researching African-Americans and the Economies of Newport, Rhode Island, 1760–1870.

Clark Eldridge White, researching The Participation of African-American Mariners in Anti-Slavery and Underground Railroad Activities in New England.

"She Was a Sister Sailor"

Mary Brewster, True Woman, Whaling Wife

I have made up my mind now to be a sailor's wife
To have a purseful of money and a very easy life
For a clever sailor husband is so seldom at his home
That his wife can spend the dollars with a will that's all her own.

Then I'll haste to wed a sailor and send him off to sea
For a life of independence, is the pleasant life for me.[1]

JOAN DRUETT

Thus runs the first verse of an old ditty known as the "Nantucket Girl's Song." Its theme is ironic (for very few whalemen earned the "purseful of money" that could be squandered so freely), but seems sensible, nevertheless. What kind of woman would decide to live two or more years on a windjammer whaler, at the mercy of the tides and the turbulent waves, with just a few planks between herself and a watery eternity, when she could enjoy the pleasant "life of independence" at home instead?

A rare kind of woman, most certainly. Creating a home on a nineteenth-century whaleship would be no small challenge. Without our modern cleaning, cooking, and washing aids, keeping house was hard enough on shore; the sheer difficulty of constructing a scene of domestic tranquility on a wooden whaleship baffles the imagination. By today's standards the ships were very small, and yet they were overcrowded, with a crew of about 30 rough men. Whaling was a bloody and brutal business, fraught with great dangers, and at times, by necessity, the ships ran with filth.

And – as if that wasn't sufficient disincentive – the few brave women who took on this daunting task met not with public praise, but disapprobation instead. Going to sea with husbands on whaleships was not considered "right"; it was in conflict with the popular concept of the female role at that time; it did not jibe with the current "Cult of True Womanhood." The married woman's bounden duty was to stop on shore and look after house and hearth; according to popular philosophy, any woman who decided to go to sea with her husband instead, was shirking her allotted life's task.[2]

There were good reasons for this. The family was the major social institution of nineteenth-century America: it gave stability to a culture that was outstandingly dynamic. American men were entrepreneurial, competitive, opportunistic, always on the move, hunting fortunes in plains and mountains as well as on the restless seas. They crop up in innumerable contemporary travelers' accounts, as consuls in New Zealand, as commercial agents in Hawaii, collectors in the East Indies, chandlers in Chile and Peru. It was an exciting business, which yielded some of them a great deal of money; the wonder is that they ever came back. The major factor that kept them from straying away permanently was the concept of home – and a house could never be a home without the female caretaker.

Consequently, the upbringing of an American girl, poor, urban, rural, or wealthy, was designed to prepare her for the all-important homemaking task. The role she would play was described very precisely, and promoted in popular women's periodicals. "By divine ordinance, it is a woman's duty to 'guide the house'; if she do so faithfully, and in the fear of God, will 'her children rise up and call her blessed,'" exhorted one writer – Sophia Caulfield – in the English *Girl's Own Paper*, and American readers of *Godey's Lady's Book* read much the same kind of didactic sentiment.[3]

A "true woman" was expected to remain peaceable and pious, serene and submissive, whatever the challenge. While men might stray, both physically and morally (for the male was the more sensual and passionate sex), the female was morally and emotionally strong – and because of this difference in the two genders, the "true woman" was the guardian of decent society; she was the focusing heart of the idealized family; the future of the great American (or British) nation was cradled safely in her hands. But, if this great task was to be accomplished, it was essential that she stop at home.

In view of this, it does not seem at all surprising that over the first four and a half decades of the century, when thousands of whaleships departed American ports, only about two dozen New England wives accompanied their men to sea.[4] Nor does it seem amazing that in the year 1845 only seven whaling vessels – out of a departing fleet of 298 – quit the ports of New England with a woman on board.[5] Then, about the middle of the century, a most remarkable sea-change in sentiment arrived: it became not only enterprising but also respectable to set up house on a whaleship at sea. Decent matrons packed their trunks, and embarked on voyages that might last five years, without endangering their reputations in the slightest (though their lives, most certainly, were still at risk) – and it seems very likely that this change came about partly because at least one of those seven women who sailed in 1845 proved,

Wind Rose®
A MYSTIC SEAPORT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sail Training: It's Not Just for Kids Anymore

When most people think about learning to sail, they think about starting small and sheltered and taking on bigger boats and bigger seas as they gain confidence in their abilities. That's one method, and it typically develops single-handed proficiency.

The *Brilliant* sail education program takes a different tack. It starts big—*Brilliant* is a 61-foot schooner—and it starts at sea. And while it produces competent seafarers, it engenders as well cooperative shipmates.

"It's a great experience, because you have to get along with people," says David G. Black, Jr., former *Brilliant* Fund Committee Chair and recurrent crew member. This same call for cooperation holds true, of course, for *Brilliant* teens. But there's something special about the adult excursions.

"The adults are there because they really want to be there, to learn, and to sail," notes Linda Prior, self-proclaimed *Brilliant* "addict." She has sailed aboard the schooner some 37 times, including her several voyages as a Girl Scout. Having worked her way through the Seaport's *Joseph Conrad* youth sail training, she advanced to the *Brilliant* teen program. She has sailed as a Girl Scout leader and as a group leader for the teen trips. And she has made both Mystic-to-Mystic and offshore passages with the adults. She is well-qualified to make sail training comparisons. And she enthusiastically endorses *Brilliant*'s adult expeditions.

The adult participants, she says, "tend to come together more as a crew than do the teens, who are typically more interested in the personalities of their various crew mates. The adults," she says, "are sparked with the spirit of camaraderie—in the evenings the adult crew is more likely to sit around the table and talk and get to know one another, where the teens typically want to go ashore." This tacit alliance, she says, engenders a satisfying and effective at-sea experience.

The program's educational intent is broad-based. Asked what he aspires for the adult participants, Captain George Moffett says, "I hope they leave with a sense of what it means to go to sea in a seamanlike manner, to gain an understanding of whether going to sea is something they'd do again, to gain a heightened appreciation of nature, in a saltwater environment with a low-damage impact on that environment, and to gain some useful tips on various aspects of sailing."



The well-found **Brilliant** *is a natural for sail training. Designed for racing, she is an active vessel, and requires considerable fine-tuning. There's never a dull moment.* **(Photo by Mary Anne Stets)**

This year marks the yacht's fortieth at Mystic Seaport. Her seagoing program is the oldest of its kind in the country, and few vessels are better designed for sail education. Her construction was commissioned and fastidiously overseen by businessman and sailor Walter Barnum. Designed by Olin Stephens and built at the Henry B. Nevins yard, *Brilliant* was launched in 1932, and is among the last of her kind. Schooners peaked in popularity in the 1920s, giving way on the racing circuit to sloops and cutters, which Moffett says were favored for their weatherly performance.

Designed for racing, *Brilliant* is a "very active" craft, according to Prior. "There's always minor adjustments needed to the sail—lots of fine-tuning. It's great for sail training," she says. "I've been on lots of other boats, and many of them—once the sails are up and you're off, there's not a lot left to do. *Brilliant* is different."

The *Brilliant* program thrusts expert and novice together in a mutually rewarding relationship. Many participants sign on having never set foot on a boat of any kind, and they can lend valuable insight and perspective to the seasoned sailor. And it is thanks to the expertise and encouragement of those more seasoned crew members that the novice learns quickly in a comfortable setting. Prior cites in particular the ability—and patience—of the mate, who is always at the ready to assist. Currently serving in this capacity is Pat Cassidy.

"George gives us a safety talk before we leave the dock, and the mate runs us through various exercises, like how to handle the line, how to coil it, how to put it on a cleat," says Prior. "You have a chance to practice these basics before you leave the dock, and then the mate is always there, so if you didn't quite get something, then you just tell him and he'll run you through it again."

(continued on page D)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Winter Hours continue. All exhibits are open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., through 5 April.

Maritime Mystic Insight Tours continue. Special tours – free with the price of admission – take visitors behind the scenes and back to a time when Mystic was a major shipbuilding port. Weekday tours leave the Visitor Reception Center at 11 A.M., 1 P.M., and 3 P.M. Weekend tours begin at 10:30 A.M. and run every fifteen minutes until 3 P.M. No tours 12 to 22 February.

A . . . B . . . Sea: An Illustrated Dictionary of the Sailors' Own Language continues in the R.J. Schaefer Building. The letters A to Z are all represented – some more than once – with objects, images, and activities. Come explore the mysterious lingo of the sea – the exhibit will be here through the winter – and discover the meanings and origins of such salty expressions as "scuttlebutt," "monkey's fist," and "baggywrinkle."

1 ***February Frame Sale*** at the Mystic Maritime Gallery, Mystic Seaport Museum Stores, throughout the month.

2 ***Basic Celestial Navigation.*** Class meets twelve consecutive Tuesday evenings, from 7:30 to 9:30, at Seaport Planetarium. Cost is $135 ($150 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for information and registration.*

12-22 ***Liberty Days.*** Special activities for vacationing kids and their families. (See page 110.) Please call 572-5315 for details.

23 ***Spring Boatbuilding Classes*** begin. Classes, which run through the end of April, include instruction and hands-on application of a variety of skills basic to traditional wooden boatbuilding. Seaport boatbuilder Barry Thomas demonstrates and assists learners in the work of planking, cutting a stem rabbet, steam bending, solid spar making, tool sharpening, caulking, and more. The two weekly classes meet on Tuesdays or Thursdays, from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M. Participants may also opt to attend one of two day-long lofting classes, either Friday, 26 February, or Saturday, 27 February. These classes are hugely popular, and may be sold out. For information on these or future classes, please call ext. 5028.

23 ***Morning Fun for Kids.*** Activity hour for pre-schoolers and parents, runs six Tuesdays or Thursdays from 9 to 10. Cost is $35, and a second child can attend for just $14 more. Please call 572-5322 for information.

MARCH

1 ***Advanced Smithing Class*** begins. Eight sessions, held Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30. The course is geared to those with some blacksmithing skills and will focus on advanced forge work, decorative techniques, and the production of useful items. Cost is $205 ($225 for nonmembers), and all materials and tools are provided. Please call 572-5356 for information and to secure your place in the course.

1 ***Introduction to LORAN-C North Star 800.*** An introduction to basic theory and use, with hands-on instruction using students' own North Star 800. Classes will be held three consecutive Monday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 at the Planetarium. Cost is $67 ($75 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for information and registration.*

4 ***Introduction to NavStar GPS.*** One session, from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M., at the Planetarium. Cost is $22 ($25 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for information and registration.*

4 ***Adventure Series.*** Brian Hancock – one of the most experienced offshore sailors in the United States today, presents "The Whitbread Round-the-World Race," one of the world's most gruelling sports events. The Whitbread is colossally demanding, with competitors having to endure severe cold, baking heat, cramped quarters, lack of sleep, broken bones, seasickness, homesickness, boredom, and danger. They frequently are wet, and often scared. This humorous presentation will offer insight into the type of person willing to compete in such an event, and the incredible photography will draw you immediately to the beauty of the course. Fifth of six presentations, held at the Seamen's Inne at 7:30 P.M. Cost is $6 ($8 for nonmembers). For information and reservations please call the Membership Office at 572-5339.

6 ***Introduction to Radar.*** Basic theory and use, including antenna operation and radar navigation. One Saturday afternoon seminar, from 1:00 to 5:00, at Dockside Electronics in Noank. Cost is $45 ($50 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for information and registration.*

11 ***Introduction to Differential GPS Navigation.*** One session, from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M., at the Seaport Planetarium. Cost is $22 ($25 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for details.*

13 ***Introduction to LORAN-C.*** One Saturday afternoon seminar, from 1:00 to 5:00, at the Planetarium. Cost is $45 ($50 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for details.*

13 ***Eleventh Annual Victorian Yankee Symposium.*** This year's program – titled "Leisure in the Victorian Age" – highlights the advent of a whole new way of life in America. Please see back wrap, or call 572-5356 for details.

18 ***LORAN-C Raytheon Receivers.*** Classes to be held on two consecutive Thursday evenings, from 7:30 to 9:30, at the Planetarium. Cost is $45 ($50 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for details.*

19 ***Members' Excursion*** to the Hillstead Museum and the Wadsworth Atheneum. Please see inside front wrap, or call 572-5339, for details.

19-21 ***Yachting History Symposium.*** Sixth annual lecture and workshop weekend on this interesting and important part of our maritime heritage. Please see page D for details.

20 ***Introduction to Radar.*** One Saturday afternoon seminar, from 1:00 to 5:00. Cost is $45 ($50 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for information and registration.*

20 ***Spring Sailing Classes*** begin. Members may choose from a menu of classes, including Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Learn to Race, a Racing Seminar, and the Spring Racing Series. Nine-week sessions are offered to Adults 15 and older; seven-week sessions are available to Juniors aged 10 to 15. For details and enrollment, please call 572-5323.

APRIL

1 ***Adventure Series.*** Dom Degnon wears many hats: English teacher in Cambridge, England, Coast Guard officer, author, professional sailor, and well-respected lecturer. Dom will entertain his audience recounting his leisurely seven-year circumnavigation, showing

spectacular slides of his worldwide ports of call. Join Degnon on *Taku*, his 41-foot ketch, as he sets sail from his New England home on this nautical adventure. Final of six presentations, will take place at 7:30 P.M. at the Seamen's Inne. Cost is $6 ($8 for nonmembers). For information and reservations please call the Membership Office at 572-5339.

5 ***Spring Schedule*** begins. Museum hours are extended – the Seaport will be open from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. – with outdoor demonstrations scheduled throughout the day. Through 27 June.

16-18 ***Celestial Navigation Seminar.*** Intensive three-day introductory course. Cost is $220 ($245 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for details.*

24 ***Members' Excursion*** to the House of the Seven Gables and the Peabody Museum of Salem. Please see inside front wrap, or call 572-5339, for details.

25 ***Fourth Annual Mystic One Hundred*** show opens in the Mystic Maritime Gallery, to run through 19 September. Please call (800) 344-0675 or 572-8524 for details.

28 ***Weather: Reading Natural Signs, Instruments & Forecast Information.*** Classes will be held five consecutive Wednesday evenings, from 7:30 to 9:30 in the Planetarium. Cost is $54 ($60 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5355 for information and registration.*

MAY

1 ***Summer Intern application deadline.*** Please call ext. 5089 for information.

8-9 ***Spring Plant Sale,*** sponsored by the Greenhouse Gang. Come stock up on all sorts of annuals and perennials. If you're a geranium lover, this sale should be your first stop. Help yourself, and help the Gang's work toward a new Seaport greenhouse. The sale will be held from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. both days, at the Greenhouse.

15-16 ***Pilots' Weekend.*** A working weekend for membership volunteer group.

21 **Sabino *begins '93 season,*** with half-hour cruses daily on the hour from 11 A.M. to 4P.M. Through 11 October. Please call 572-5331 for information.

22 ***Boathouse*** opens for the season, weekends only, from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

28-31 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** Please call 572-5323 for details.

29-31 ***Lobsterfest Weekend.*** Enjoy lobster in the rough prepared by the Mystic Rotary Club, from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. daily throughout Memorial Day Weekend. Food is purchased separately. Please call 572-5315 for details.

31 ***Decoration Day.*** Special historic reenactment on grounds recalls the "Decoration Day" of the 1870s. A parade and wreath ceremony are highlighted, and active Military are admitted free. For details please call 572-5315.

JUNE

4-7 **Brilliant *Weekend Sail for Adults***. Please call 572-5323 for details.

5-6 ***Twenty-fourth Annual Small Craft Workshop Weekend.*** Small craft enthusiasts meet to discuss and to use traditional small craft. Programs will be presented by experts in the field. For information and reservations please call ext. 5028.

10-13 **Brilliant *Weekend Sail for Adults.*** Please call 572-5323 for details.

10 ***Members' Preview Concert*** for Sea Music Festival. Look for details in the next *Log*.

11-13 ***Sea Music Festival.*** Fourteenth annual celebration of the music of the sea features concerts, symposia, and dance. This popular three-day festival brings together folk and traditional musical groups, who perform on the ships and along the grounds. Look for details in the next *Log*.

20-25 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** Please call 572-5323 for information and registration.

27-7/2 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** Please call 572-5323 for information and registration.

28 ***Summer Hours*** begin. Mystic Seaport will be open from 9 A.M. to 8 P.M., through 29 August.

28 ***"Kidstuff."*** Free drop-in activities for children on the grounds and in the Children's Museum. Consult your very own Kids' Today to locate the action. Kidstuff runs through 6 September.

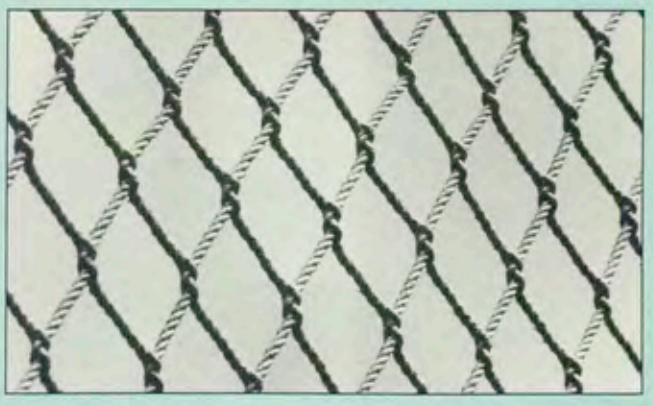
28 ***Boat Livery*** begins 7-days-a-week operation, from 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., through 29 August.

28 **Sabino *Summer Schedule*** begins, to run through 6 September. Daily half-hour excursions from 11:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. One 90-minute downriver tour at 7:00 P.M. Please call 572-5341 for information.

29 ***Livery Racing Series.*** Practice begins at 6:00 P.M. Please call 572-5341 for information.

**All Planetarium classes are limited in size, so we encourage early registration. In the event there is insufficient enrollment, we reserve the right to postpone or cancel a course. Students who withdraw after registration, but prior to one week before the course begins, will receive a refund of the tuition paid less $15.*

What Is It?



An endless field of diamonds, all tied together. They were new to the Seaport last summer. Did you see them? The first five members to identify the source of this mesmerizing pattern will receive a special prize.

(continued from page A)

The first day out, she says, the more experienced sailors (if there are any aboard) typically are asked to handle the more involved on-deck tasks. After that, she says, the process "evolves." Ultimately, every crew member takes a turn at each seamanship task, from sail handling to steering to cooking on the cast-iron stove below.

People get started on *Brilliant* for a variety of reasons. Black said he took his first turn on the vessel when he sold his own boat. He had read about *Brilliant* in *The Log of Mystic Seaport*, and contacted the Museum to learn whether she was the same vessel he had seen at the starting line off Newport, Rhode Island, in the 1946 Newport-Bermuda Race. He had determined at that time to sail aboard her, and his ambition was finally achieved. He has logged some 20 trips since.

"*Brilliant* is habit forming," he says. Says Prior: "So many of us are addicted. Once you've sailed on *Brilliant* you just want to come back."

Prior's most memorable experience aboard the vessel was during what she refers to as "the first of the reunion sails." It was a snowy, cold Columbus Day weekend, she recalls. Moffett was indisposed with a bad back, and she would be sailing with staff members she did not yet know. "Well, we got stuck at Block Island. We stayed at mooring all day, we baked, and some of us rowed over to the other boat in the harbor. We got to know one another. Dave Black was aboard with his sons . . . We had a teary goodbye, and determined to sail together again . . . So now we all sort of wait 'til Dave signs up for his fall sail, and then those of us who can sign up as well."

The adult crews, in part because of their cohesiveness, are better able to judge their strengths, she says. As a result, the itinerary can be somewhat flexible. "George sort of canvasses the crew," she says. "It may be a cold and rainy day, and we'll have a good wind. So he'll tell us our options: 'We could set out for Block and finish sailing by three, or we could sail 'til six and make it to Martha's Vineyard – what do you guys think?'" Almost invariably, the crew votes to go the distance. It is this cooperative approach to adventure that seems to characterize the *Brilliant* adult sailing experience. Black credits Moffett for his ability to "create an atmosphere among people – many of whom have never met before – that is cooperative.

"In this crazy world of ours, in which so many people are just out for themselves, it is something to be in a situation when you have to work together." It is a unique experience that engenders trust: in oneself, in the forces of wind and weather, in an exquisite vessel, and in the fellowship of others. It is *Brilliant*.

The History of Yachtbuilding Continues at Sixth Annual Yachting History Symposium

"A large theme, and a rich synthesis of technical and social histories. . . ." So began last year's Yachting History Symposium program, and it referred to the topic of boatbuilding. The theme did prove to be large, too sweeping in fact for one extended weekend of discussion. As a result, the Seaport revisits the boatbuilding theme at this the sixth annual Yachting History Symposium, slated to take place 19 to 21 March.

The program will begin on Friday afternoon, when Harold Shield will discuss the legendary launch and speedboat builders of Ontario, Canada; Stephen Bunnell will explore the boatbuilding activity of Puget Sound and nearby British Columbia; and Tom Nye will provide an overview of the yachtbuilding tradition of City Island, New York.

Highlighting the Friday evening gathering will be a presentation by Diana and David Matthews, joining us from the Windermere Steamboat Museum in Cumbria, England. The daughter of Windermere founder George Pattinson, Mrs. Matthews and her husband will show slides of the museum's unique collection of Victorian and Edwardian steam yachts and launches, and will discuss the history and conservation of the collection.

Saturday's line-up will feature the Seaport's Curator of Collections and author of *Mystic Built*, Bill Peterson, who will discuss small boats and yachts built here. Elco expert Bill Swanson will explore the history of the company that pioneered mass production of powerboats and built high-quality stock boats from the 1890s through World War II. Yacht designer, surveyor, and marine engineer Bob Wallstrom will discuss the Luders yard of Stamford, Connecticut. Sonny Hodgdon of Maine's famous Hodgdon Brothers yacht yard will talk about the family yachtbuilding tradition he and his son continue today. And Robert E. Derecktor will review a yachtbuilding career that has spanned more than 50 years.

Symposium subscribers are invited to attend a reception, from 5:30 to 7:30 Saturday evening. On Sunday morning Seaport staff members will conduct focused, behind-the-scenes tours of the Seaport's yachting-related collections.

Please call (203) 572-5378 for reservation information.



Elco's nearly 60 years of powerboat building will be among the discussions at the 1993 Yachting History Symposium. (Neg. 95469F, ©Rosenfeld Collection, Mystic Seaport Museum)

beyond doubt, that a respectable, decent, demure young woman could do it, without damage to her "true womanly" image.

This remarkable young person hailed from the small but prospering port of Stonington, Connecticut. The whaleship of her voyaging was the *Tiger*, and the woman was Mary Louisa Burtch Brewster, whose daguerreotype is in Mystic Seaport's collections.

That photograph is evocative and charming. Mary Brewster is revealed as a slim, straight young woman, dressed demurely in a light-colored, lace-trimmed dress, a dark ribboned shawl draped gracefully over sloping shoulders. She is all that is feminine, most surely the truest of women; her fine eyes gaze levelly at the viewer; her hands, sheathed in lace mittens, are folded tranquilly in her lap.

So eloquent is her pose, it is easy to imagine Mrs. Brewster in the cabin of her husband's ship, seated at a table, skirts falling modestly all the way to the deck. One lacy sleeve has slipped back to display a slender white arm as she leans her elbow on the table and her cheek on her fist. Her other hand holds a pen as she gazes down at her open journal – the diary that she kept during the voyage, and which has been held at Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library since 1948.

The subject of this intriguing picture was born in Stonington on 22 September 1822, the sixth child of Samuel and Polly Burtch. Her mother died when she was five years old, and she was probably raised by Deacon Robert S. Bottum and his wife Malvina. She married William Brewster, a man nine years her senior, on 23 March 1841. Just ten weeks later William sailed off on a two-year voyage to New Zealand, as master of the Stonington whaler *Philetus*, and Mary – as was the custom – stopped at home, counting the weeks and months until his return.

No sooner was he home than he was off again, however, departing on 12 July 1843 as master of the same ship. And, just as before, his wife Mary stayed behind. It all added up to a lot of loneliness, and Mary, separated too long and too often from the husband she adored, declared her intention to ship along next voyage. "Then did I say we will part no more," she reminisced in her journal, "but if the sea must be your home it shall be mine."[6]

Mary's pose in her daguerreotype is one of serene confidence, but one cannot help but wonder if, back in 1845, she really knew what she had taken on. As it happens, the struggle started before she had even set one foot on board. When she announced her decision to sail, her adoptive mother disowned her.



Mary Brewster (1822–1878), ca. 1854.
Daguerreotype (reverse image) by J. Gurney. (M.S.M. 48.1146)

"I feel quite at home and think I shall never regret this voyage," Mary wrote in the first page of that journal.

> *I often find myself thinking of home and kind friends . . . but have no wish to be with them at present . . . In coming my conscience tells me I was doing right and what do I care for the opinion of the world . . . She who has extended a mother's love and watchfulness over me said her consent would never be given in no way would she assist me and if I left her she thought me very ungrateful and lastly though not least Her house would never be a home for me again if I persisted in coming.*

Mary, if she had only known it, was not alone in her unpleasant situation. A New Bedford whaling wife who set sail that same year faced an almost identical problem. She was another Mary – Mary-Ann, just 19 years old and a bride of four months, when she sailed with her husband, Abner D. Sherman, on the New Bedford whaleship *Harrison*, departing on 21 May 1845. When Mary-Ann sailed the Sherman family did not just disown her: that was not enough to express their contempt. They actually declared her dead, and put up a gravestone as evidence!

Mary-Ann Sherman did not return to New Bedford to prove them wrong, for she died during the voyage. She has the odd distinction of being "buried" in two places. One grave is on the island of Rarotonga in the South Pacific seas; the headstone there bears the true date of her death, 5 January 1850. The other, in the Elm Street cemetery, Padanaram (South Dartmouth), declares her death year as 1845, the year that Mary-Ann sailed.[7]

Obviously, Mary Brewster's adoptive mother and Mary-Ann Sherman's family must have had what they felt to be good reasons for such a heartless stand. It is a telling indication of the strength of the cult of true womanhood – and it must be remembered that the romantic sentiment was practical as well as idealistic. Husbands and fathers might be garnering great fortunes in foreign lands, but in the meantime farms and stores had to be managed, money borrowed and repaid or invested, and elderly relatives cared for: it is interesting that Mary Brewster's adoptive mother called her "ungrateful" when Mary announced her decision to sail.

It is little wonder, then, that Mary commenced her voyage in a defiant frame of mind. It must have been a relief when, on 4 November 1845, the *Tiger* at last set sail. "Well thank Heaven it is all past and I am on board the good ship Tiger and with my dear husband," she wrote in that first, emphatic entry of her journal. At last she was on her way to Cape Horn and the adventures that awaited in the wide Pacific. "I have thought best to keep some account of the time as it passes," she went on; "and should I live to return my friends can see what I have been doing, where we have been and perhaps by reading this form some correct ideas as regards my feelings whilst absent."

Because of that deeply felt desire to give a "correct" picture of her voyage and justify her decision to sail, Mary's journal demands study. The picture might be "correct," but it is also self-censored, for at no stage, ever, was Mrs. Brewster about to admit that those who had so violently opposed her just might have been right. Mary was most tediously seasick whenever the ship rolled or the seas ran



Mary Brewster had her portrait done in 1856, the year William retired from the sea and they settled down in Stonington.
Pastel, 1856. (Courtesy Old Lighthouse Museum, Stonington; photo by Claire White-Peterson)

short; there were storms and calms and ructions with the widely assorted members of the crew. She was terribly frightened at times (though her courage was remarkable), but come what may, Mary was determined to be either silent (by omitting to record unpleasantness) or indomitable.

"I am with My Husband and by him will remain," she wrote on 26 December after seven weeks at sea:

> *No seas can now Divide us he can have no trouble no sorrow but what I can know and share When perplexed with the duties of the ship and those with whom he is connected I can soothe all ruffled feelings take up much of his attention and mind If sick no hand like mine can soothe sad heart and administer to his wishes I am confident.*

"Let what come I shall never regret coming on voyage with My Dear Companion's society also with the conviction in coming I did perfectly right," she went on—and one can only appreciate her determination and courage when one realizes that the doubling of dreaded Cape Horn lay directly ahead.

"The ship steering for Staten land which reminds me we are nearing Cape Horn, the only place I have dreaded to reach, having heard so much relative to the winds which prevail and storms," Mary wrote on 27 January 1846.

The days dragged, heightened by fear, worsened by sickness, made horrible by the dark and damp. "The weather cold and no stove up dead lights all closed and calked to keep the water out," wrote Mary on 30 January—and it seemed to go on forever. "This is off Cape Horn," she noted on 4 February, "here we are thumping about wind ahead and like to be, hard old place . . . A small chart of Cape Horn hangs up before me and never was a chart so often looked at as this by me. Every day the distance we made is pencilled out but instead of advancing we go backwards." Because the prevailing gales blew from the west, contrarily ahead for the ship, that passage went on . . . and on. Staring and pencilling did little good: 16 days later the old ship *Tiger* was still off the Horn, doing her utmost to double the Cape.

"But oh the sea is dreadful," wrote Mary; "keeps the ship laboring so hard trying to get along but alas we make but little progress and the motion is so bad I am sick all the time. My room dark and most of the time keep a light burning I am to sick to read think or do anything save roll from one side to the other."

However—as she wrote another time—all things come to an end, and so did Cape Horn passages. William Brewster steered north to reprovision before sailing to the right whaling grounds off the Northwest Coast of America, and—like the weather—Mary's shipboard life settled into a daily routine.

This routine was dictated by the ship and her husband, not by Mary herself; William Brewster made few allowances for the peculiar problems that a woman faced on board. He let her read to him and walk with him on deck in the evening, but the rest of the time he seemed totally preoccupied with his ship and the whales. In March the *Tiger* touched at Juan Fernandez, an island which was considered very romantic then, because of its *Robinson Crusoe* connotations. Captain Brewster went with some boats on shore and took on peaches, "which was very nice," as Mary commented. Her tone was dry, for she had wanted to go on shore as well, but "was doomed to be disappointed": William had "thought best for me not to go . . . accordingly I was left [on board] and amused myself by looking at a distance to the desired land."

Then, at the end of the day, the ship "filled away and with a good wind" and Mary "cast a last look to the land and bid Juan Fernandez good bye." Then with dutiful stoicism she looked forward to landing on the Island of Hawaii instead.

This set the tone of the voyage: William, as captain of the ship and master of the marriage, made the decisions, and, as wife, helpmeet and "true woman," Mary obeyed without question. After all, current American law was on his side, for—or so it was decreed—"marriage makes the husband and wife one person, and that person is the husband." Mary was allowed to accompany him to the Northwest Coast for the right whaling season of 1846, and to the coast of Lower California for grey whales that winter, but in March the following year he decided, very much against her wishes, to leave her on shore at Lahaina, Maui. "Oh, what is there which will fill this aching void?" she sadly wrote as the *Tiger* sailed off, and proceeded to pass the lonely months as best she could.

She found Lahaina a dull experience. "The contrast is great here to what it is at home when one visits," she wrote on 10 May 1847, after receiving a call from the missionary wife Charlotte Baldwin; "here there is nothing to talk about save when some new one arrives or something new occurs with the inhabitants. At home we have everything to take up our minds and attentions and sufficient topics for our conversational powers."

However, in the Hawaiian Islands Mary did meet some of the few seagoing whaling wives of her day. She was especially pleased to call on Mrs. Slumon Gray, who had sailed aboard the Stonington whaleship *Newburyport* in 1844. "She was a sister sailor," noted Mary, emphasizing the bond she felt with these other venturesome women.

When the *Tiger* came back to Lahaina in September 1847, Mary was quite wild with excitement, and rushed to get on board again. But, "Oh dear," she wrote; "what a change, my neat pretty room given to the mates, things

William, as captain of the ship and master of the marriage, made the decisions, and as wife, helpmeet and "true woman," Mary obeyed without question.

"She was a sister sailor," noted Mary, emphasizing the bond she felt with these other venturesome women.

stowed away in the stateroom, packing in various forms. My rocking chair on deck looking as if it was no stranger to weather, on looking above there was the table in the main top!

"'What works?' says I–

"'Never mind,' is the answer, 'the ship is full.'"

And so it was–and so, being full of oil, the *Tiger* was able to steer for home. It was a blithe passage, marked by a most delightful encounter: on 18 December 1847, off Cape Horn. "At 8 this evening spoke ship *Moctezuma* of N- Bedford–Capt. Tower," wrote Mary.

> *Husband went on board but soon returned for me as Mrs Tower was on board; accordingly I was not long in preparing myself for the opportunity offered for a change of scene. So went on board and passed the evening till nearly 12 o'clock. I was happy to meet with a female acquaintance and was pleased with Mrs. Tower . . . Mrs. T. said a number of ladies were out this season with their husbands –I am glad they are following the late fashion.*

It is not surprising that Mary Brewster should feel gratified to find feminine company on the ocean: the more wives that sailed, the more vindication there would be for her own "ungrateful" decision to go off to sea. It is interesting to look for reasons for this "late fashion"; was Mary Brewster a trendsetter, or was she just one of the earliest followers of the growing fad? Mary herself provides the evidence that the former is more likely.

Back on 28 July 1846, she met Captain William Tower on the Northwest whaling ground, noting that "he was very much surprised to see a lady on board." Tower seemed embarrassed too, and "made many apologies for his dress which caused me to notice it more particularly," she wrote, "and looked well enough save a little dirt which whalemen must expect." Her tolerance could well have been the reason he concluded to carry his wife Betsy next voyage.[8]

There had been fundamental changes at home as well, however: there was a growing public realization that women could be as dynamic as men. The *Tiger* arrived in Stonington on 8 April 1848, but was in port for just three months, before departing for another voyage, again with Mary Brewster on board. Mary sailed on 13 July, just seven days prior to the landmark First Women's Rights Convention, which was held at Seneca Falls, New York. Here, Elizabeth Cady Stanton read out the "Declaration of Sentiments," saying, "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Having declaimed this, the women's rightist listed "eighteen grievances" of women against men and male-driven society: women, Mrs. Stanton stated, had no franchise, no voice in legislation, no representation in government, no legal rights, no rights of property or divorce, no place in colleges, church councils, or any governing bodies.

> *He [man] has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women. . . .*
>
> *He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign to her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.*
>
> *He has endeavoured in every way that he could to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect.*

This declaration (and the convention itself) led to terrific controversy; both men and women were forced to ponder their place in society–as, indeed, many had been doing already.[9] In view of this, it is perhaps not surprising that Mary Brewster's departure on this second voyage was not, apparently, marred by dissension. She set to writing in her journal again, but the record she kept on this second voyage is quite different in tone from the first; Mary is confident, assured, does not seem driven to justify a decision that rightfully belongs to herself and her conscience; this time she seems to feel free to pursue her own happiness, in the way that she thinks best.

Perhaps because of this sea-change in public attitude, on this second voyage that book with lined pale-blue pages becomes much more than a journal of justification; always charming, often amusing, Mary's writing becomes candid as well. Before–as we have seen–she failed to record any unpleasant happenings on board, for such descriptions would not further her case in the slightest. Now, if she is having a horrible time, she informs her reader exactly what she thinks and how she feels about the unhappy situation. The second journal, like the first, is filled with descriptions of exotic ports and intriguing people, but it now also offers a rare, frank insight into life on board a whaler. Her comments, always crisp, become immensely entertaining and often devastating as well.

"A real Yankee in looks and manners," she decided about Captain Cyrus Manter of the *Ocmulgee*, when he called on board the *Tiger* on 9 July 1849. The old salt smoked a pipe, which he had "in his mouth when he came and at eleven when he left." Manter informed Mrs. Brewster in jovial fashion that he was addicted to the habit. "I had come to the same conclusion," she dryly remarked, "but methinks that I would leave my pipe at home–or take a cleaner one next time."

Captain William E. Brewster (1813–1893), Mary's "Dear Companion," rose through the ranks to command Stonington whaleships on four voyages before finishing his seagoing career as master of the clipper ship **Contest.**
Oil on canvas. (Courtesy Old Lighthouse Museum, Stonington; photo by Claire White-Peterson)



Few diarists could convey the sounds and motions of the sea so well; the reader can almost hear the slap and rattle of canvas, and the creak as the ship wears round. "The weather so hot and sultry that one can hardly move," she wrote on 19 January 1849, in the torrid zone about the Navigator's Islands (Samoa). "No wind, no shade, all are annoyed with the heat and all work suspended on deck. Then these long tedious calms are enough to vex the most patient. Roll roll slap goes the sails round comes the ship everybody looks cross and dear husband is sighing but all in vain for a wind."

That "dear husband," obviously, could do no wrong, no matter what the women's rightists might mutter. Mary was prepared to put up with a great deal more than contrary weather to be at his side – but even she could scarcely expect to be hauled off to the Arctic.

"NEW WHALING GROUND," ran a banner headline in the New Bedford *Whalemen's Shipping List* for 6 February 1849. "The whaling bark *Superior*, Capt. Royce [Roys], of Sagharbor, arrived at Honolulu on the 4th of September last," the correspondent reported, "with 1800 bbls of whale oil, which she took in the Arctic Seas." Since 1835 whalemen had been hunting right whales off the Northwest Coast, and from the year 1843 whaling vessels had been cruising the Russian coasts of the Kamchatka Peninsula and into the Okhotsk Sea. However, whaling beyond the Bering Strait was a new prospect altogether, and most certainly very dangerous.

But the venture was profitable, for Roys found a new kind of whale there, the "Bowhead," an immense and sluggish species, which was wonderful news for all those skippers who were starved for oil. However, the last thing Roys would have prophesied, surely, was that a woman should follow in his wake. Yet – considering the slow way news got about then – Mary Brewster did it with remarkable speed.[10]

William informed her on 29 April 1849 that he was steering for the Arctic Ocean. He had what probably seemed to him to be a very good reason: he was doing very badly in the Sea of Japan. "The Arctic seems a long look," Mary mused, "but from all accounts there are plenty of whale so perhaps we shall get the ship full and I am willing to go anywhere if it will only shorten the voyage."

"Anywhere" she went indeed, and, while she might have relished the glamour of being the first American woman in the Western Arctic later on, at the time she did not enjoy the experience. On the night of 26 June she and William "had just got to sleep when the fourth officer came and said the indians was coming . . . "

> *[As] a former visitor to these regions had given them a hard name our officers and crew was far from being pleased with the sound when Mr Cook went below and gave the alarm* – The bloody indians *are coming.' Neither was I pleased I had in a measure got use to the ice . . . but the indians was a new subject & very unexpected* – *I asked husband what he should do, [he] said he should not allow them to come on board till he could see something of them [by daylight]* – *a few spades was got down* – *four old muskets loaded neither of them though would go off* – *or not more than one.*

As it happened, the natives were even more surprised than the people on board the *Tiger* (particularly when they laid eyes on Mary), and rather hurt at receiving such a suspicious reception, but nonetheless it was quite a fright. However, William kept his course north, and on Thursday 12 July the *Tiger* ghosted along in a "fog so thick dare not run . . . At 5 PM cleared up . . . found we were close to land – and in Beering's Strait,"



Mary Brewster was the first western woman to pass through the Bering Strait, seen here with East Cape (Cape Dezhnev), Siberia, at left and the Diomedes Islands at center.
Chromolithograph by Benjamin Russell, 1871. (M.S.M. 62.1313)

wrote Mary. "Saw the Diomedes islands high rocky land covered with snow also both continents *Asia & America* and I thought I was the first civilized female who had passed through the straits and probably shall be the only one this season."

This statement was prophetic. Mary might have been the only "civilized" female in that sea that season, but just one year later other women followed in her dangerous wake – for "the late fashion" was growing apace. "By reference to our shipping list of the past and present week," wrote the editor of the *Polynesian* of Honolulu, in the issue for 19 October 1850,

> *it will be seen that the harbors of Honolulu and Lahaina are well filled with whalers from their summer cruise in the northern seas in this longitude. . . . In fact, a cruise in the Arctic Ocean has got to be but a Summer pastime, as is proved by the fact that the wives of some half a dozen of the Captains accompanied their husbands in the last cruise, with the same willingness that they would have gone to Saratoga or Newport.*[11]

Again, it is tempting to speculate about Mary Brewster's part in the growth of this "late" fad: how many of those wives, one wonders, undertook "a cruise in the Arctic Ocean" because of Mary Brewster's lead?

There is evidence that many of the men who gammed with the *Tiger* were as charmed to see Mrs. Brewster on board as Captain William Tower had been, back in July 1846. At least eight of them went on to take their own wives to sea.

Captain Wanton Shearman of the *Nimrod*, who gammed with the Brewsters on the Northwest ground in the same month that Tower did, carried his wife Marianna on his next, 1848, voyage – which is quite an indication of how public opinion had altered in the meantime, since his family had declared his sister-in-law Mary-Ann dead, when she sailed with his brother Abner on the *Harrison* in May 1845. In that same month of July 1846 Captain Daniel Taber of the *Copia* met Mary Brewster too, and so he carried his wife Sarah along on the next voyage of the *Copia*.[12]

And so the list goes on. Mrs. Brewster met Captain Henry S. Howland of the *Marcia*, on 18 September 1846. The good captain had recently heard that his wife at home was dead, but did not appear "inconsoleable for his loss." Perhaps he scarcely knew his dead spouse. In any event, within a month he married the daughter of a Honolulu settler, Miss Deborah M. Dowsett. Then he carried not only his bride "next cruise," but took along her young sister as well.[13]

> ***. . . it is an indication of how successful Mary had been in establishing a scene of domestic tranquility on board her husband's ship.***

Then there was Captain William Chappell of the *Black Warrior*, whom she met on 28 May 1846, and again, in command of another ship, on 4 August 1849. Her opinion was unflattering: "had he been educated," she opined, "he would have made rather of a brighter man than he appeared to be." Nevertheless, he was sufficiently beguiled to conclude to carry his wife, which he did on the 1850 voyage of the *John & Elizabeth*.

Captain Ellery Nash of the *Prudent* of Stonington gammed with the Brewsters in the Arctic, on 31 July 1849, noting "it made me Home sick to sea Capt Brewsters Wife with him she is a verry hansom Woman and apears verry agreable."[14] Any woman, perhaps, would have seemed "verry hansom" in such circumstances. Nevertheless, it is an indication of how successful Mary had been in establishing a scene of domestic tranquility on board her husband's ship. It is easy to understand that a whaling master, on viewing this, would feel very tempted to follow William Brewster's example, for so many of the men were so very lonely. The months and years of the voyage dragged, and then, when the men did get home, there was much inevitable disillusionment, for the romantic memories of home would be wrong in many respects. Women aged, fortunes fluctuated, children grew up. The temptation to transfer the sentimental image of a wife at home to the reality of a wife on board ship must have been very powerful, once they saw that it could be successfully done.

Ironically enough, Mary Brewster did not consider her second voyage successful. As early as Christmas 1848 she was writing, "look where I will, the blue clouds and sea and faces so that they seem as familiar as old Ocean itself. 6 long months have I beheld them and if spared they will haunt me much longer. surely I would not remain long could I help it but would be on land, by my own fireside" – and almost exactly one year later she abandoned her journal in disgust. It had been an unhappy, unlucky voyage; the vessel was leaky and the crews were particularly surly, but nevertheless it seems evident that Mary Brewster had become the exemplar of a wife on board ship.

What she had accomplished cannot be overrated. As we have seen, the typical whaleship of the time was comparatively small, overcrowded with a "league of nations" of rough and ready sailors. Mary was often most miserably seasick. The ideal "true woman" had an appropriately delicate and petal-like appearance, but shipboard life weathered skin, dried hair, cracked lips, and reddened features. Her daguerreotype is evidence that she enjoyed pretty clothes, but grease and salt and try-smoke ruined the nice things she took along on voyage. She went months without letters from home, and was understandably morbid: the fear of disease and death was constant, for life was obviously precarious. She missed the "privileges" of worship in her own church at Stonington. Yet, despite it all, she managed to practice true womanly skills on board ship *Tiger*: she entertained visitors who were not accustomed to ladylike manners at sea; she nursed the sick and hurt among the crews; she sewed, knitted, crocheted, and mended; she counselled and comforted her husband, and accepted his decisions without rebellion.

"A few years ago it was exceedingly rare for a whaling captain to be accompanied by his wife and children, but it is now very common," wrote the Reverend Samuel Damon of Honolulu, in the 8 November 1858 issue of his paper, *The Friend*. "An examination of the list of whalers shows that no less than forty-two are now in the Pacific. Just one half that number are now in Honolulu. The happy influence of the goodly number of ladies is apparent to the most careless observer," he declared.

Then he added, "We hope to witness in years to come, a still larger representation." And that is exactly what happened. Before the sailing whaling industry died in the 1920s, at least 440 women ventured to sea, making more than 660 voyages. As small a percentage of the total of American whaling voyages as this may be, it signifies a trend, for both maritime history and American social history. This was the legacy of Mary Brewster and the "sister sailors" of her day. By strength of will and charming example, they proved that a "true woman" could create a home in that most undomestic place, a windjammer whaleship on the high seas. ■

NOTES

1. The song was copied by one of the Nantucket whaling wives, Eliza Brock, into the back of the journal she kept on board her husband's command *Lexington*, from 1853 to 1856. Nantucket Historical Association (hereafter cited as NHA).

2. Benjamin Morrell, the Stonington explorer, took his wife to sea in 1829, because of her tears and pleas, and despite his strongly stated "fear of slanderous tongues," Benjamin Morrell, *Narrative of Four Voyages* . . . (1832; reprint, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Gregg Press, 1970), p. 338.

Similarly, when Henrietta Deblois refused to sail to join her husband on the *Merlin* in 1860, the reason she gave was that, "Many say to me when the Capt gets home he will be glad you did not come out and leave the house to strangers to be destroyed but have a comfortable home for him to come home to." John replied, "you may ask what shall be don with the house and things at home all I can say is to do just what you mind to do with them it will please me if you will only *come to me*." The italics are his, a sure sign of his desperate loneliness, but this normally dutiful wife felt justified in not bending to his wishes. Deblois correspondence, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island (hereafter cited as NHS).

This social phenomenon of distinctly expressed sex roles has been amply described by Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," in Michael Gordon, ed., *The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), pp. 313-33. For contributory details, see the introductory chapter of Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience 1800–1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1982), particularly p. 6ff. Since first publication of Welter's landmark study in 1966, there has been some criticism from social historians, questioning her utilization of popular contemporary reading as the basis of her findings, and her use of the "pejorative" word "cult" (see, for example, Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75:1 (June 1988): 11-12). However, when the books and periodicals the whaling wives read are perused, Welter's arguments seem extremely persuasive.

For instance, when Mary Brewster read a currently popular "improving" work called *Woman's Mission* during the voyage, she found it so "good and well worth treasuring up" that she felt inspired to quote the message in her journal (26 July 1846): "One sentence in particular," she wrote, "All women had a mission to perform and in all circumstances in life it should be their aim to establish peace and love and unselfishness, to be achieved by any means and at any cost to themselves in the cultivation first of themselves then in all over whom they have any influence of an unselfish and unworldly spirit – In any way in every way in which *God* and man can be served it is theirs to sense, gracefully, peacefully, unostentatiously."

3. The cult was not short-lived, despite women's rightists and female accomplishment: the article quoted, called "The Duties of Wives and Mothers," appeared in the *Girls' Own Paper*, 24 January 1885, p. 252.

4. The round figure "two dozen" is empirical, of course, my catalog of whaling wives being based on shipping reports in New Bedford and Hawaiian newspapers, arrivals and departures from Hobart and Sydney, and mentions in logs, letters, and catalog cards as I came across them. According to my researches, documented whaling voyages of American women previous to 1845 (and sources) are:

Louisa Fearing (Mrs. Stephen) Gibbs, *Arab*, 1821 (Nantucket *Evening Standard*, 5 December 1903); Mary Hayden (Mrs. Laban) Russell, *Emily*, 1823 (NHA); Mrs. Gardner, *Dawn* of New York, 1826 (Will Latimer, journal, Whaling Museum Society, Cold Spring Harbor, New York); Hannah (Mrs. John Potter) Rice, *Mentor* of New London, 1832 (log, *Chelsea*, 1831–34); Caroline (Mrs. William) Mayhew, *Warren*, 1834, *Luminary*, 1837, *Powhattan*, 1846 (Ruby Holmes manuscript, Dukes County Historical Society, Edgartown, Massachusetts); Mrs. Edward Howland, *Robert Edwards*, 1838 (card at New Bedford Free Public Library); Eliza Anthony (Mrs. Allen) Brownell, *Juno*, 1838, *Mars*, 1841 (Barbara Johnson Collection); Mary Caroline (Mrs. Franklin F.) Smith, *Chelsea* of New London, 1838, 1839 (log, *Chelsea*, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport, hereafter cited as GWBWL); her sister-in-law Nancy (Mrs. Parker Hempstead) Smith, *Nantasket* of New London, 1843 (John States, journal, GWBWL); Mrs. Parker, *Midas*, 1842 (log, Old Dartmouth Historical Society, New Bedford, hereafter cited as ODHS); Susannah Holden (Mrs. Abraham) Russell, *Bartholomew Gosnold*, 1843 (journal, Nicholson Whaling Collection, Providence Public Library, hereafter cited as PPL); Mrs. Christopher Pendleton, *Benjamin Morgan* of New London, 1843 (*Whalemen's Shipping List*, 2 September 1845); Mrs. Slumon Gray, *Newburyport* of Stonington, 1844 (*Whalemen's Shipping List*, 2 September 1845); Mrs. John S. Barnum, *Warsaw* of Stonington, 1844 (Baldwin letters, 20 February 1846, Mission Houses Museum Library, Honolulu, hereafter cited as MHML); Mrs. Asa Hoxie, *Pacific*, 1844 (Susan Veeder journal, IMA-ODHS); Mrs. William B. Gardner, *South Carolina*, 1844 (Baldwin letters, 23 September 1845, MHML).

5. The figure "seven" (Mary Brewster plus six other women) – for sailings in 1845 – is as subject to revision as the round figure of two dozen. However, the stories of the six other women who definitely sailed in 1845 illustrate the courage (or foolhardiness) of the women who accompanied their husbands on voyage. The women were, firstly, Mary-Ann Sherman, who sailed on the *Harrison* to the Indian Ocean and the Northwest Coast in May, and who died of unknown causes in the fourth year of the voyage.

Mrs. Nathaniel Burgess sailed from New Bedford on 14 June, on the ship *Robert Edwards*; within two months she was so ill that her husband had to put into Pernambuco for medical advice. That received, he sailed again immediately – as the *Whalemen's Shipping List* for 7 October 1845 reported. Despite this bad start Mrs. Burgess sailed again, on the same ship in 1849.

And then there was Mrs. Gurdon Allyn, who sailed from New London on 15 July, on the ship *Charles Henry*. On 11 August 1847 the *Charles Henry* was wrecked in a fog, on Montauk Point, Long Island, almost home. The Allyn family was saved, along with the crew, but the vessel that had carried them so far was lost. Gurdon L. Allyn, *The Old Sailor's Story* (Norwich, Connecticut: Gurdon Wilcox, 1879), pp. 63-72.

Another was Hannah Beck of Stonington, who sailed on the whaleship *Atlantic* of New London, on 4 August. Her voyage was doomed: her husband William expired in October 1846, and she committed suicide on the homeward-bound ship. Mary Brewster herself was an unwilling witness to Capt. Beck's final days (Mary Brewster, journal, 21, 22 October 1846, GWBWL).

Mrs. Barney R. Green left Sag Harbor in the ship *Ontario 2* on 13 August, headed for New Zealand. Then Captain Green steered for Honolulu; the Honolulu paper *The Friend*, 14 March 1846, reported the arrival of the *Ontario*, saying, "Passengers – in the *Ontario*, Mrs. Green and child." Mrs. Green was left on shore there, while the ship whaled in the Northwest.

The sixth wife-carrying whaler, the *Saratoga*, sailed from New Bedford on 22 October, with Mrs. John R.L. Smith on board. Captain Smith (no relation of the New London Smiths) had been in command of the *Harrison* the previous voyage, and was a favorite with the Hawaiian missionaries. *The Friend*, 15 February 1847, reported the arrival of the *Saratoga*, "Mrs. Smith, Capt's lady" on board. The preachers and their wives were equally delighted with Mrs. Smith: "a very agreeable and pious woman," decided Dwight Baldwin when he met her in March 1846 (Baldwin papers, MHML).

6. Mary Brewster, journal, 31 December 1845, GWBWL.

7. Genealogical details come from Roy V. Sherman, *Some of the Descendants of Philip Sherman* (Akron, Ohio: University of Akron, 1968), pp. 496-505.

8. Betsy Tower, like Mary Brewster, kept a seagoing journal, beginning 16 August 1847 and ending 13 December 1849, book full (the voyage ended 11 May 1850). She did not mention this meeting. Betsy Tower, journal, ship *Moctezuma* of New Bedford, ODHS.

9. The First Women's Rights Convention, its inception and its aftermath, is all, of course, very well documented and thoroughly discussed. A most readable account is, Charles N. Gattey, *The Bloomer Girls* (London: Femina Books, 1967).

10. For an authoritative account, see John R. Bockstoce, *Whales, Ice & Men, The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), pp. 21-26.

11. *The Friend*, 15 October 1850, identified the "half-dozen" women as "Mrs. Skinner, on board the *Jefferson*; Mrs. Smith – *Sheffield*; Mrs. [Wanton] Sherman – *Nimrod*; Mrs. Tower – *Moctezuma*; Mrs. Edwards – *Uncas*; All passengers from Arctic Ocean." The list also included "Mrs. Young, on board the *Abigail*, from the Japan Ground." Although she, too, was at sea, Mary Brewster was not mentioned.

12. Marianna Sherman also kept a journal, from 23 September 1848 to 3 December 1849, on passage and in Hawaii, PPL; Sarah Taber's journals are at The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.

13. The notice of Henry Howland's marriage was published in *The Friend* of Honolulu, 15 October 1846. Interestingly, the marriage was performed not by one of the resident missionaries, but by the chaplain of the British frigate *Juno*. Evidently the match caused some gossip, for, as Mary rather tartly remarked (15 October), it was "the all-absorbing topic of this farfamed place." Howland, bride, and new sister-in-law sailed immediately after the ceremony. The *Whalemen's Shipping List* noted the arrival of the Howlands and the *Marcia* on 16 March 1847. Mrs. Howland sailed at least one more voyage, for Marianna Sherman met her in Honolulu on 7 May 1849.

14. Ellery Nash, log, *Prudent*, GWBWL.

Mary Brewster's journals of her two voyages have just been published by the Museum as "*She Was a Sister Sailor*": *The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster, 1845-1851*. Editor Joan Druett has provided introductory essays, copious notes quoting Mary's "sister sailors," a list of 443 women who sailed aboard whaleships, and an annotated bibliography of female journals in public collections. This 494-page book, containing 63 illustrations, is available for $39.95. Take advantage of your Member's discount and call either (800) 331-2665 or (203) 572-5347 to order your copy of "*She Was a Sister Sailor*" for just $35.95 (plus tax and shipping).

MAL DE MER

SANDRA L. OLIVER

Thomas Larkin Turner set sail from Boston to Batavia on board the brig *Palestine* in February of 1832. He gleefully reported on his first meal at sea: beef broth followed by a leg of roasted mutton, beef steak, onion and potatoes, mince pie, and port wine to top it off. It was "substantial fare" and " . . . a better [meal] no English man I think would wish for with the exception of a plum pudding. Well if this is not a good one then dang my buttons!"

Two days later it was a different story. Struck by bad weather while at anchor in Boston Roads, the *Palestine* was pitching and rolling. Larkin tried manfully to get up out of his bunk for a while, but gave up, went back to bed, and optimistically asked the steward to bring his meal in to him: "a piece of that mutton pie – a large part crust, by the way I like crust . . . A large plate full comes, pooking [*sic*] its savouriness into my nasal organ, . . . I tasted one morsel of potatoes and another of the much loved crust – enough for me was this." Larkin was obliged to "wait till all was calm aboard me" to eat another bite.[1]

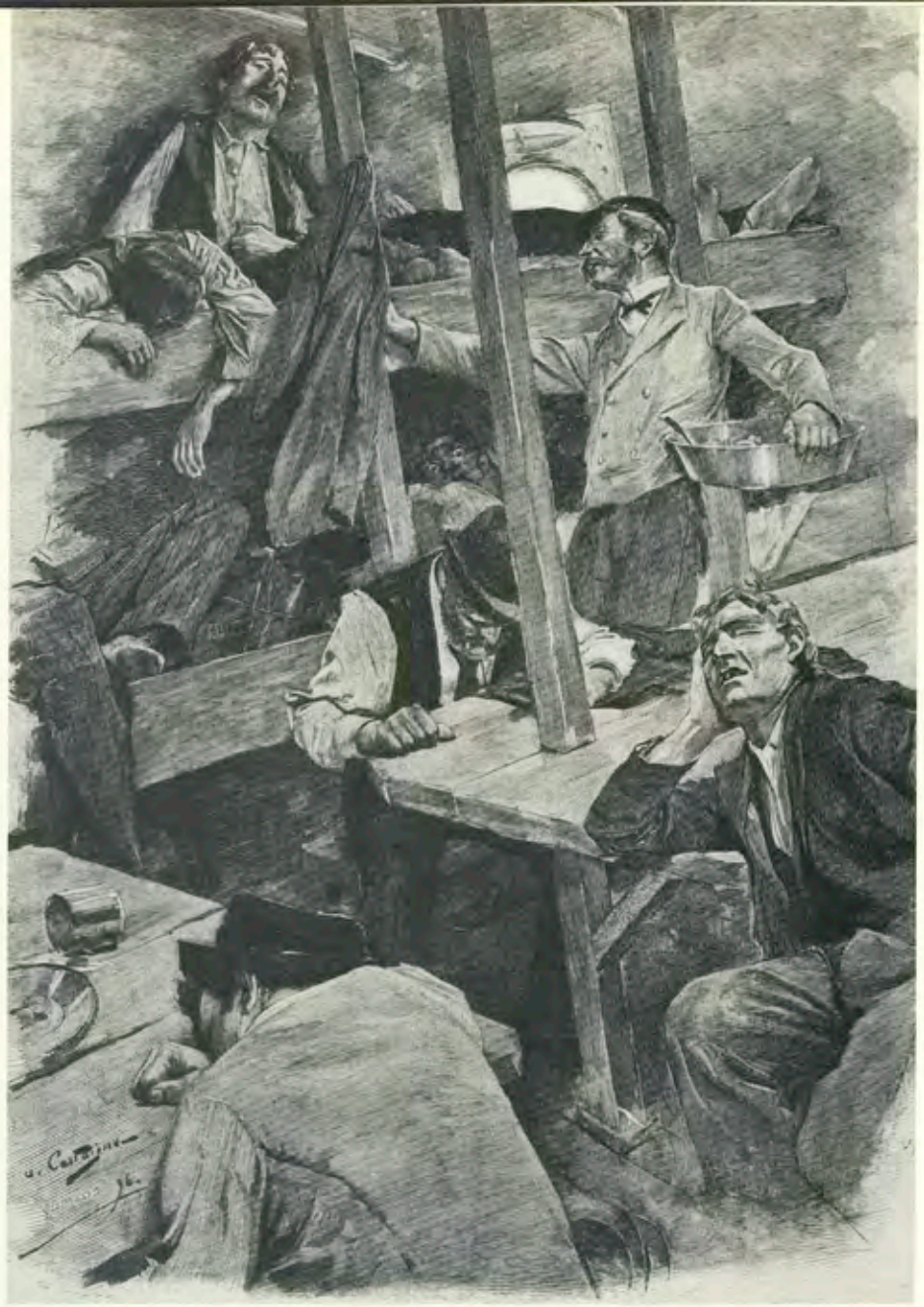
Seasickness had claimed another victim.

Nowadays we tuck a little medicated patch behind our ear, climb aboard, and have a lovely sail, confident we will not spend most of the time leaning over the rail. But with the exception of a few iron constituted sorts like George Bishop, who could claim "As for being sea sick [it] were something I never were troubled with all the time,"[2] most seafarers' journals refer to mal de mer. It was the scourge of greenhands, many passengers, and, if the weather got bad enough, nearly everyone else. Besides suffering, what did they do about it?

The simplest strategy was waiting it out. Charles Abbey felt unwell at the start of most of his trips, but since he never liked sailor food, it is hard to tell whether he resumed eating out of desperation or adjustment.[3] John Perkins said at the start of his trip on the whaleship *Tiger* in 1845, "I have learned that a man that works must eat or he feels weak even from the effects of losing one meal."[4]

Richard Henry Dana, Jr., recovered from seasickness after his fourth day at sea in the brig *Pilgrim*. The best advice Dana received came from the black cook, who told him: "Now . . . my lad, you are well cleaned out; you haven't got a drop of your 'long-shore swash aboard of you. You must begin on a new tack, – pitch all your sweetmeats overboard, and turn-to upon good hearty salt beef and sea bread." Promised that he would be as fit as any seafarer by the time they reached the Horn, Dana downed his half pound of salt beef and a piece of hardtack, reporting, "I was a new being."[5]

The cook's advice, according to Dana, would be good for passengers "when they speak of little niceties they have laid in, in case of seasickness." An article in *Scribner's Monthly*, titled "Ladies at Sea," gives us an idea of what the "little niceties" might have been: grapes "are always nice" or a box of prunes, fresh lemons, good brandy in case of extreme exhaustion, and a small quantity of champagne to help one keep down food. But the editors allowed that the niceties might not help, and advised: "do not expect any pleasure at sea. Prepare your minds for the worst, for ten or eleven miserable days, and



Andre Castaigne captured the agony of seasickness in this view of immigrant steerage passengers making the North Atlantic trek to America. Small vessel or large, the constant and unpredictable motion plays havoc with the equilibrium center in the inner ear, especially if the eye has no steady horizon to fix on.
(*Century Magazine*, February 1898)

go resolved to endure all with patience. Then each day free from illness, each meal swallowed with relish, each calm morning or smooth moonlighted evening will assume the aspect of an agreeable surprise."[6]

Mary Brewster had few niceties when she set out on the 1845 voyage of the *Tiger* described by John Perkins. It took her nearly a month to recover enough from seasickness to begin keeping her journal. One of Mrs. Brewster's "sister sailors," Desire Fisher, never did get over the effects. Aboard the *Navigator* in 1858, she felt no better after six months so her husband had to leave her at St. Helena to take passage home.[7]

When G.G. Pierce departed Boston for Australia aboard the bark *Enrique* in 1868, he was accompanied by his wife Elizabeth and their daughter Isabella–"Belle." Pierce escaped seasickness, and Belle recovered within a few days, but Elizabeth suffered for nearly two weeks. For days she could keep nothing down and lay in her berth, weak and racked with a feverish thirst. The cook killed a chicken to make her a broth but she could not eat it. Gruel stayed down a little better. After ten days she "Took some boild Tappaoca and a baked potatoe for breakfast. relished it well and did not make her sick." The next morning "she took hasty pudding and molasses for breakfast." Feeling better, on the thirteenth day "Elizabeth took gruel as usual for breakfast, felt quite smart all of the forenoon. Took some beef pie and duff for dinner, but it made her sick and towards night she vomited and soon felt relieved." The fourteenth day brought both physical and mental recovery. She had "a very good breakfast of mackerel & potatoes and hasty pudding and molasses. She has concluded to eat sick or not sick and I think it is best for her." Mrs. Pierce had finally discovered what seemed to be an antidote for seasickness: "The first thing that seemed to do her any good was composition powders. She took some for the first time night before last[.] every thing that she had taken before made her sick even water but that settled her stomach and she has not vomited since."[8]

Even seasoned travelers experienced occasional discomfort. Georgia Maria Blanchard of Searsport, Maine, who grew up on Down Easters in the 1880s and 1890s, wrote in the journal of her honeymoon trip aboard the *Bangalore* in 1906, "I did not feel well during the first few days out and the going was slow."[9] Twenty years after his first seafaring experiences, Dana had moments, too. In 1856, two days out en route from Boston to England on the steamer *America*, he wrote in his journal, "Dinner at 4–very good–great appetites–how we all eat!–that is, all those who are well." It was his turn next; three days later he wrote "I have got over my qualms and eat a hearty breakfast of ham and eggs."[10]

Aboard the ship *Clytie* in 1866, the captain's wife, Annie Dow, with two youngsters, one not yet weaned, experienced several days of bad weather on a trip between the North Sea and Gibraltar: "Vessel rolling heavily . . . all sea sick today." Four days later with "seas running mountains high," she and the children "were in the berth all day."[11]

Sailors kept working regardless of how they felt. Samuel Samuels shipped as cook aboard a coasting schooner at age 11. On his first passage, from Philadelphia to New York, young Sam was so seasick that "I became careless of what I did. I filled the fresh water kettle with salt-water and of course the coffee and mush were spoiled that morning."[12] By another trip, this time on the schooner *Rio* from Newport to Mobile, still as cook, he had learned at least one cure. He reported that "I was so dreadfully sea sick; but a few quarts of warm salt-water brought me around all right."[13]

A couple of medical manuals, carried aboard with a ship's medicine chest, did not include seasickness in the indexes, and the texts barely mentioned it. Rather, they addressed vomiting generally as a symptom. For this, in 1869 Thomas Ritter recommended sulphuric ether mixed with syrup or flaxseed tea to relieve asthma, seasickness, neuralgia, fever and ague.[14] Another manual, by James Folsom, recommended for vomiting, "if it arises from a disordered state of the stomach, improper diet, etc. assist it by giving an emetic of Ipecac with copious draughts of warm water."[15] Ritter further offered a mixture of tartaric acid with bicarbonate of soda in water to check vomiting, or strong green tea, Peruvian Bark, or common salt and water[16]–the antidote "Bully" Samuels had used several decades earlier.

It is pretty plain that nineteenth-century medicine considered seasickness to be in the category of nuisance, but barely worth the attention of science. Those who analyzed it thought it might result from the ship's motion creating a combination of mental confusion and physical pressure of the intestines on the diaphragm and stomach,[17] never realizing that the culprit was actually the inner ear, learning to maintain balance in a world that would not stand still. So folk cures and conventional wisdom filled the gap with advice for relief, at least sometimes. Here is one method circulated on some ships:

> *Go to the Doctor [cook] and ask him for a piece of salt pork. Tie a rope-yarn to it and hold it in your hand. Stand by for a rush of guts to your head and when you feel it surge, swallow the pork, but hold onto the lanyard. The pork will drive it back and with everything quiet below pull the the pork with the lanyard.*[18]

Horace Beck, in his study of maritime folklore, attributed this cure to a practical joke played on greenhands. He noted, "salt water, dry biscuits, tea, pickles, and dried fish are all suggested remedies, and the sufferer is always advised to steer clear of sweets."[19]

So what to do about seasickness? Climb in a bunk with some crackers and champagne, wait it out, and don't swallow any advice about salt pork on a string. ■

NOTES

1. Thomas Larkin Turner, Diary, Coll. 95, vol. 14, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport (hereafter cited as GWBWL).
2. George H. Bishop, Diary, 1869–1871, VFM 1050, GWBWL.
3. Harpur Allen Gosnell, *Before the Mast in Clippers Composed in Large Part of the Diaries of Charles A. Abbey Kept While at Sea in the Years 1856–1860* (New York: Derrydale Press, 1937).
4. John T. Perkins, *John T. Perkins' Journal at Sea, 1845* (Mystic: Marine Historical Association, 1934), p. 120.
5. Richard Henry Dana, Jr., *Two Years Before the Mast*, (1840), 20 August 1834.
6. "Ladies at Sea," Home and Society Column, *Scribner's Monthly* 5:5 (March 1873): 642-43.
7. See Joan Druett, ed., *"She Was a Sister Sailor": The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster, 1845-1851* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1992), p. 12; Desire Fisher's plight is described in Joan Druett, *Petticoat Whalers* (Auckland: HarperCollins New Zealand, 1991), p. 89.
8. G.G. Pierce, Journal, 1868, Log 342, GWBWL.
9. Georgia Maria Blanchard, "Our Wedding Trip Around Cape Horn," Penobscot Marine Museum, Searsport, Maine (hereafter cited as PMM).
10. Richard Henry Dana, Jr., *The Journal of Richard Henry Dana, Jr.*, 3 vols., ed. by Robert F. Lucid, (Cambridge: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1969), 2: 694.
11. Scott J. Dow, "The Story of Capt. Jonathan Dow," typescript, 1948, p. 14, PMM.
12. Samuel Samuels, *From the Forecastle to the Cabin* (Boston: Charles Lauriat & Company, 1924), p. 25.
13. Ibid., p. 7.
14. Thomas Ritter, MD., *The Medical Manual and Medicine Chest Companion for Popular Use in Families and on Ship-Board . . .* (New York: S.W. Green, 1869), p. 28.
15. James Folsom, *The Mariner's Medical Guide . . .* (Boston: George C. Rand & Avery, 1855), p. 60.
16. Ritter, *Medical Manual*, p. 9.
17. Knut Weibust, *Deep Sea Sailors . . .* (Stockholm: Nordiska Museets Handlingar 71, 1969), p. 101; "Seasickness," *Scribner's Monthly* 5:5 (March 1873): 654.
18. Horace Beck, *Folklore and the Sea* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1973), p. 307.

Interpreting the Interpreters

People with hearing impairments will now be able to appreciate Mystic Seaport even more, thanks to the generosity of Anna-Marie Pollard, a professional sign-language interpreter who has volunteered to come to the Seaport one Saturday each month, to interpret the Museum interpreters for deaf visitors.

Pollard brought her idea to Rob Richter, Supervisor of Special Visitor Services and Chairman of the Mystic Seaport Museum Access Committee. Richter has been trying to establish some kind of signing service for some time. Pollard, who has volunteered at Sea Music Festivals here, got the idea one weekend while visiting the Seaport with a group of hearing impaired friends, who were relying on her signing abilities to appreciate the Seaport interpreters' messages. Another group of deaf visitors asked if they could join Pollard and her friends, and later tagged along with the group when they left the grounds and headed for the nearby Mystic Marinelife Aquarium.

Pollard will be at the Seaport the second Saturday of each month. She was to begin her service by interpreting the Mystic Insight Tours, which begin at 10:30 A.M. Saturdays and leave the Visitor Reception Center every fifteen minutes until 3:00 P.M. She will be available a few tours each day, and her schedule will be posted at the Center. Richter said he hopes the program will evolve into one in which the hearing impaired visitor can engage Pollard to interpret exhibits of his or her own choice.

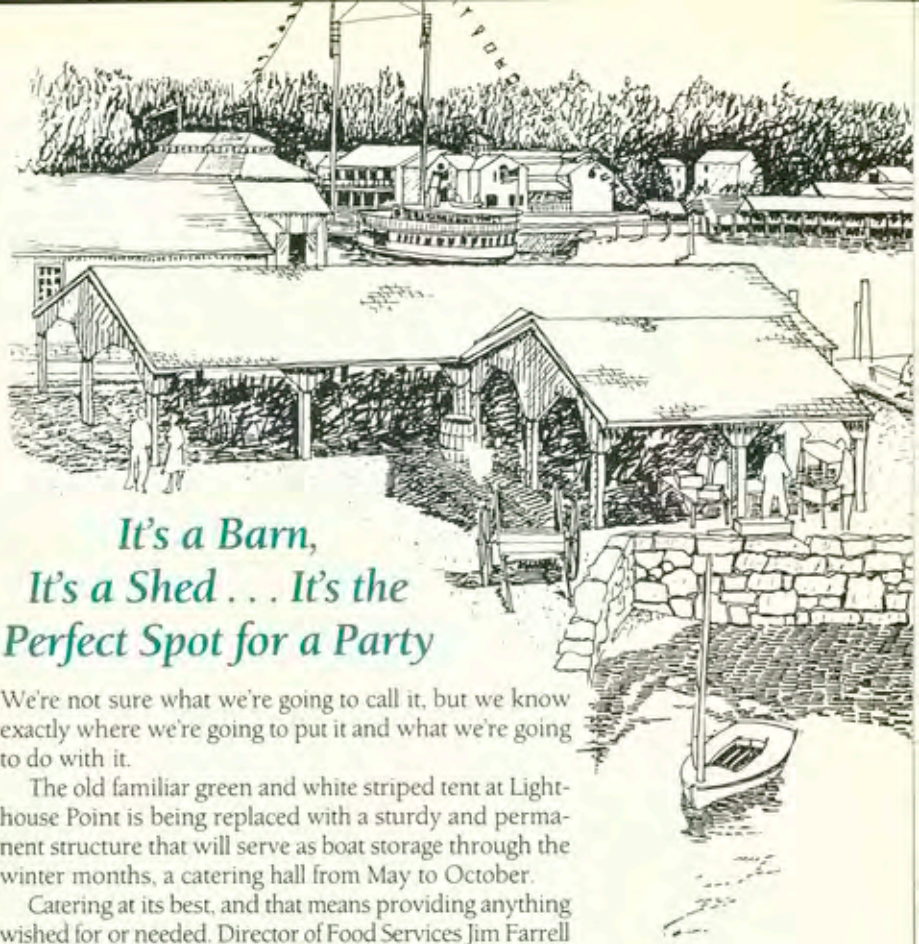


A Sea Musical Forecast

Plans are well underway for the fourteenth annual Sea Music Festival, which will be here before you know it. From Thursday night through Sunday afternoon, 10 to 13 June, members will want to be on the Seaport grounds, for singing, dancing, and learning about the songs of the sea.

Among this year's performers will be The Boarding Party, the Washington, D.C. trio widely recognized to be among the finest researchers of maritime musical traditions, and capable weavers of this lore into fine performances packed with energy and harmony. We welcome David Parry, in a return engagement; last year he delighted audiences with his traditional songs and recitations, and this year he will be joined by Ian Robb, one of the shining lights of Canadian folk music. Marek Siurawski comes to us from Poland; he is considered to be a leader of the significant chantey movement that has taken shape there recently.

Last year's Sea Music offerings for children were extremely popular with young and old alike, and we are planning to expand on grade-school participation this year, with a friendly choral competition on Friday. More news of this, and the rest of this year's roster, in the next issue of *The Log*.



It's a Barn, It's a Shed . . . It's the Perfect Spot for a Party

We're not sure what we're going to call it, but we know exactly where we're going to put it and what we're going to do with it.

The old familiar green and white striped tent at Lighthouse Point is being replaced with a sturdy and permanent structure that will serve as boat storage through the winter months, a catering hall from May to October.

Catering at its best, and that means providing anything wished for or needed. Director of Food Services Jim Farrell said his staff is ready for anything: they offer a full menu and bar service. Although outdoor catering – served amid the fresh scents, sights, and sounds of the Mystic River – was established originally to provide an alternative to the more formal accommodations at the Seamen's Inne, says Farrell, his staff is happy to accommodate the sit-down dinner as well as the casual buffet. And the menu is up to you.

Mystic Seaport is famous for its New England Clambake, the traditional meal of celebration learned by New England settlers from the Indians they met here. Cooked over open wood fires, the clambake serves up sweet and tender corn, plump steamers and mussels, piping hot lobster, and chowder packed with clams, boiled red-skin potatoes, and sumptuous New England sausages. Just watching the preparation is half the fun.

Of course, the Seaport catering crew is by no means limited to clambakes. The Ditty Box Lunch, Chicken Breast Plate, Mystic Lobster Salad, Lobster Feast, and Hors D'Oeuvres are regulars on the catering menu, and you are invited as well to design your own custom-catered function.

Farrell says his crew has hosted a broad range of private social functions, including formal sit-down wedding receptions, awards parties, yacht club rendezvous, and corporate meetings. The new shelter will accommodate about 300 people, and the elements are no longer of concern: the structure comes equipped with clear window walls that can be called into action at a sudden turn in the weather.

So think of the Seaport as you plan your next gathering, business or pleasure. For details, please call 572-5331.

Calling All Campers

Seaport Summer Camp has a whole new look this year, and it's all thanks to you! We've taken your suggestions to heart, and have designed some brand new camp sessions for the summer of 1993. Each day-camp session will be geared to a specific age group, and each will have a theme, around which daily activities will be planned.

Camp themes will include "A Seaport Girl's Life of Long Ago," "A Sailor's Life of Long Ago," and "A Seaport Sampler," for younger campers. A fourth theme, which has yet to be named, will feature activities that involve science and nature along the shore.

An "On the Water Week," for kids ages nine through eleven, is planned for 26 through 30 July. This new program will build a "bridge" between day camp and the summer *Joseph Conrad* program for 12- to 16-year-olds. Youngsters will spend most of their days on the water – sailing, rowing, "steamboating," and learning about ships and boats. Ropemaking, splicing, and other skills will fill campers' land time.

We'll offer eight one-week sessions, beginning 5 July and ending 20 August. Camp starts at 9:00 A.M. and finishes at 3:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. The cost is $100 for all sessions except the "On the Water Week," which costs $150. Payment is due with your application.

There's no time to waste! Members' applications will be given preference until March 15, and enrollment is limited. So make your plans now. For a complete program description and an application, please call Lou Ellen Scheer in the Education Department, at 572-5322.

Can You Help Us?

The Shipyard needs a power vessel – 40-feet or larger – for use in its evolving Power-Vessel Seamanship Training Program. Craft must be in reasonable condition, and can be single- or twin-engined, wood, steel, or fiberglass. If you can help, please call Dick Lotz at (203) 572-5390.

Bulletin Board

In the winter issue of *The Log of Mystic Seaport*, we told you about a new videocassette, entitled "On Board the *Morgan*: America's Last Wooden Whaler." If you'd like to purchase the video, you may do so at the Seaport Stores, or through Seaport Videos, at 1-800-445-9236. The price is $14.95, to which members may apply their 10 percent discount. If ordering by phone, please plan to pay an additional $3 shipping charge, and – for Connecticut residents only – a 6 percent sales tax.

Liberty! Freedom! Fun!

Kids' Corner

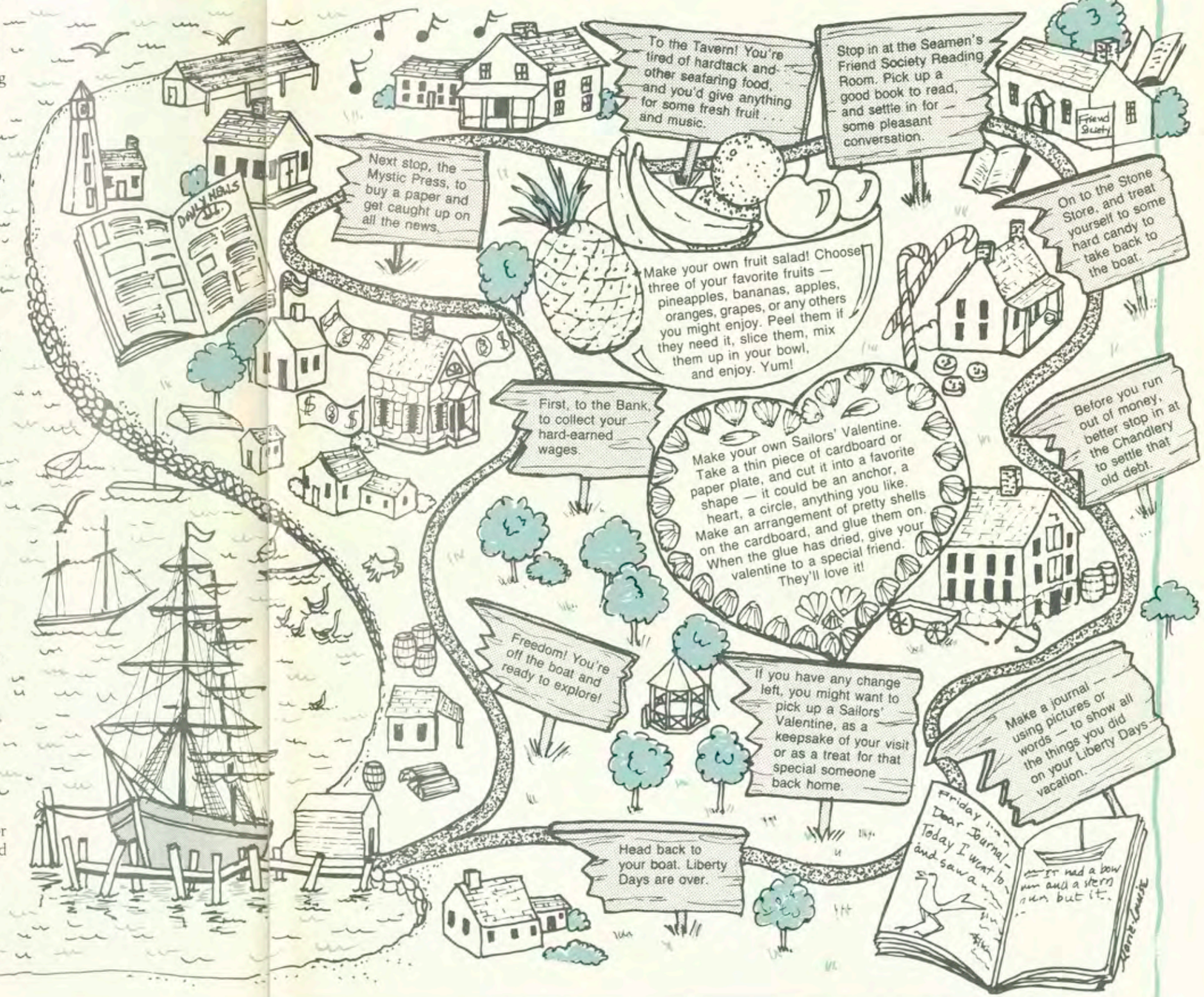
It's February. Your vacation is just around the corner. No school for a whole week! What are you going to do? Well, whatever else you do, make sure you get to the Seaport, because we're celebrating Liberty Days in the sailors' tradition, and we're going to have some fun.

Back when the *Charles W. Morgan* was a working whaleship, sailors spent anywhere from two to four years at sea. You can imagine how eager they were, when the ship put into port, to jump off and head into town. What do you think they did?

During Liberty Days, you'll find out by doing the very things the sailors did. Come to the Children's Museum between 12 and 22 February, and enjoy such free-time activities as knot-tying, music-making, and storytelling. You'll even make your own Sailors' Valentine, which you can keep for yourself or give to a special friend.

On 16, 17, and 18 February, the Seaport will host special Liberty Days Tours for kids ages 6 to 11. You will pretend you are a sailor just in from sea. What will you do? First you'll have to collect your wages, and then the village is yours. You may want to buy a paper at the Mystic Press, grab a healthy snack and enjoy some fuu fuu music at the tavern, or – be really daring – get a tattoo.

If you plan to take a Liberty Days Tour, you must call us ahead of time. Then, ask your parents to bring you to the Visitor Reception Center at 9:30 A.M., and remind them to pick you up at the same place at noon. The cost is $10 ($11 for nonmembers). Please call 572-5322 to place your reservation.



Watson Is Recipient of Prestigious Founders' Award

Mystic Seaport's Founders' Award – the greatest tribute this institution can bestow on an individual for exemplary, voluntary service – was presented at the September 1992 Annual Dinner, to Trustee Emeritus Thomas J. Watson, Jr.

A member for more than forty years, and a Trustee for more than twenty-five, Watson has given generously of his time, energy, and resources, and has broadly influenced Mystic Seaport's evolution into an internationally respected maritime museum. The Seaport was proud to acknowledge Watson's longstanding commitment before his family, friends, and fellow trustees.

The Founders' Award was first established in 1971, because, as the award reads, "Mystic Seaport was founded by volunteers – men and women who shared a common bond of pride in America's maritime heritage and an abiding love and respect for the sea. No single person brought this museum into being and no single person provided vast funds for its growth and development. Rather, it was the cooperative effort of many who gave generously of their time and tangible assets to carry into reality their dreams and their faith."

The award, in its own words, "symbolizes the vision and courage of seafaring navigators to set a course for distant ports guided by the stars – the kind of course in the minds of men who brought Mystic Seaport into being and developed her into the maritime museum she is today."

Revell Carr presented Watson with the award, a nineteenth-century octant he described as "symbolizing the vision and courage of seafaring navigators who set the course for their vessels. Through the years, Tom Watson has been a steadying influence as he has helped keep Mystic Seaport on course through fair weather and foul . . . Mystic Seaport has benefited greatly from his efforts."



Revell Carr presents Tom Watson with the Founders' Award, the most prestigious honor the Seaport can bestow on an individual for exemplary, voluntary service. (Photo by Mary Anne Stets)

CORRECTION

What Is It winner A.J. Fritzsche was incorrectly identified in the Winter Log. *He receives our Young Lookout Award for his knowledge of the Seaport.*

Government Appropriation Sets Mill Wheels in Motion

The Campaign for Mystic Seaport enjoyed a tremendous boost in October, when the Federal Government – through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – appropriated $1 million to the Museum to plan, design, and begin construction of the National Maritime Education and Research Center at the Seaport.

The grant, championed by Representative Sam Gejdenson and Senator Christopher Dodd, is a strong vote of confidence in the Seaport. It will help us begin the long-planned development of the Rossie Mill into a facility in which a large percentage of the Seaport collections – currently in storage – will be made electronically and visually accessible to the public.

It is an important step for the Seaport, both in terms of the Mill and the Museum's plans for it, and in terms of the ongoing Capital Campaign. Since the Campaign was publicly announced in July 1991, it has grown with gifts and pledges that now total $12,431,000. Of that, $9.7 million has been donated by individuals, some of whom have given $1 million or more.

As we forge ahead toward our $21.5 million goal, we appreciate the enthusiasm and commitment of the Seaport's many friends and supporters. The Development Office welcomes your comments, questions, and assistance.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

William M.P. Dunne pursued a career in business and yacht design before receiving a Ph.D. in history from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He is an adjunct professor at Long Island University. A specialist on U.S. naval history, he is writing a biography of Stephen Decatur. The Seaport will publish his biography of naval architect Thomas F. McManus.

Frederick C. Leiner is a lawyer in Baltimore. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Virginia Law School, and Cambridge, where he was a Thouron Scholar, Mr. Leiner has published several articles on the American sailing navy.

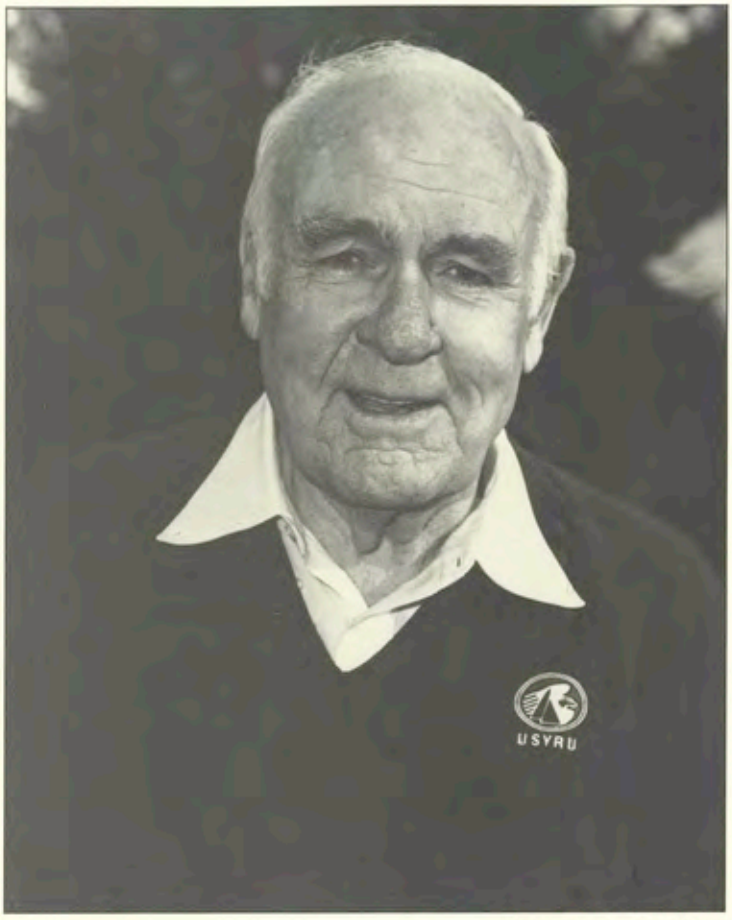
Fred Calabretta first joined the Mystic Seaport staff in 1980. He has been the Museum's Oral Historian since 1986. His special subject interests range from anthropology to New London's prominent role in Eastern Arctic whaling and exploration.

Joan Druett is a well-known journalist and novelist (and Seaport member) in New Zealand. She has been studying whaling women since finding Mary-Ann Sherman's grave on Rarotonga in 1984. Besides editing *"She was a Sister Sailor"* for Mystic Seaport, she has written *Petticoat Whalers* and the novels *Abigail, A Promise of Gold,* and *Murder at the Brian Boru.*

Sandra L. Oliver, formerly of the Seaport's Education Department, is a foodways historian and consultant living in Maine. She is preparing a book on American maritime foodways to be published by the Museum.

Leslie Gifford is associate editor of *The Log.*

★ ★ ★ A SEAPORT SALUTE ★ ★ ★



(Photo by Mary Anne Stets)

C. Thomas Clagett, Jr.

Tom Clagett is a big man, with powerful convictions and a tremendous capacity for giving. He believes in the water, as a source of strength, of pleasure, and of character.

It is his respect for the water that brought Tom to Mystic Seaport. He first became a member in 1971, and he has since bolstered the strength of this institution immeasurably.

He became a charter member of the Pilots of Mystic Seaport in 1973; today, at the age of 78, he continues to travel here from Washington, D.C., routinely signing on for the more arduous tasks asked of these weekend workers. He actively contributes to Yachting Committee pursuits, and he has allocated considerable resources to the preservation of America's maritime heritage in general, and of its yachting interests in particular.

"Mystic is about the preservation of maritime history," he says. "That's what this place does, and it does it well." He appreciates the dedication of the Yachting Committee, which functions to "document the history of America and the water. That's what it's all about. This country was started with water; it's how we got here." It is, he suggests, to be honored.

Tom believes so strongly in the ongoing mission of Mystic Seaport – and in its ability to carry out that mission – that he named the Seaport to benefit from a lead trust he established specifically for marine purposes. Each year's gift from the trust – which bears a 35-year term – is to be added to the Museum's endowment, and income generated from it is to be applied to the preservation of yachting history here.

Revell Carr's acknowledgement of this generous gift saluted Tom's ingenuity: "Your vision in establishing this Lead Trust . . . is evidence of your enlightened approach to philanthropy." Wrote then Chairman of the Board Clifford D. Mallory, Jr.: "your commitment to excellence in Mystic's portrayal of our maritime heritage is to be applauded, and my hat is off to you, Sir, for your dedication . . . [to] all that is represented at Mystic."

Philanthropy. Goodwill. A gift for the future, and a stake in it as well. Mystic Seaport proudly acknowledges Tom Clagett's confidence in this institution as the keeper of the nation's maritime heritage, today and for generations to come.



Your membership supports the work of Mystic Seaport, including the restoration of wooden watercraft, the perpetuation of maritime skills, the preservation of historic artifacts, and research on all aspects of American maritime history.

These activities deepen our understanding and appreciation of our collective heritage. With a keen sense of our past and where we came from, we can set a course for the future.

Members of Mystic Seaport not only have the satisfaction of supporting a great institution's important work, but can also join in educational activities for the whole family. The gates of the Seaport are open to members year round, so you can watch the progress of work in the Shipyard and Boat Shop, examine new exhibits, and board America's oldest existing wooden whaleship time and again.

We encourage you to share your Mystic Seaport experience with others. Tell your friends and family what you like about the Museum, invite them along the next time you plan to visit, or give them the gift of a year's membership, so they can enjoy learning about our seafaring past themselves.

Memberships begin at $30 for individuals and $50 for families. Please call the Membership Office at (203) 572-5339, or write Membership.

MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM®

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