

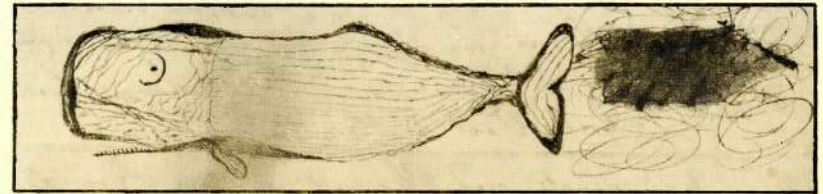
Journal of History of Martha's Vineyard and the Elizabeth Islands



THE DUKES COUNTY INTELLIGENCER

VOL. 41, NOS. 1 & 2

AUGUST/NOVEMBER 1999



Most artistic work by log keeper Sprague is this sketch of a sperm whale.

Whaling: The Vineyard Connection

“Remarks on Awhaling Voyage” In the Far East by the *Rambler* in 1823

By EDWIN R. AMBROSE

The Fergusons, Spragues, Crowells and Browns:
Six Generations of Master Mariners

The Rambler Log

The First Forty Years (1602 -- 1642): Setting the Stage for the Mayhews

By ARTHUR R. RAILTON

**A Running Account
Of Matters & Things**

By HENRY BAYLIES

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the cost of *The Intelligencer*.

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"Remarks on Awhailing Voyage" In the Far East by the *Rambler* in 1823

by EDWIN R. AMBROSE

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Whaling logs are not rare – scarce, yes, but not rare. After all, there were thousands of American whaling voyages and on each a log was kept. The miracle is that so many logs have survived. The survival of the *Rambler's* log, as you will see, was truly miraculous.

At the Historical Society we have nearly 140 whaling logs, each stored in an acid-free box inside a vault -- not an impressive number compared with such larger depositories as New Bedford or Nantucket. But then those two seaport towns were far more active in whaling than the Vineyard.

Each log is unique. Usually two logs, or more, were kept on the same voyage, one for the ship's owner (kept by the captain or 1st mate), the other by one of the other mates. Each was different – in slight ways, to be sure, but different nonetheless. Log keepers view events differently, bringing a difference in emphasis. All logs have one thing in common: monotony – pages and pages when little occurred. Whaling, as one professional flyer remarked, must have been like flying: long periods of boredom, interrupted by rare moments of terror. However, it must be added that though whalers were often bored for long stretches, they did much more physical labor, over long hours, than an aviator does.

It is those rare moments of terror that whaling historians cherish. Unfortunately, when logs are securely stored in vaults, unseen and unread, those moments may remain undiscovered.

Here, at the Society we are trying to correct that by a project headed by Ed Ambrose, our volunteer whaling specialist and author of this article. He and others are reading and abstracting each of our logs.¹ From these abstracts we will determine which

¹ Members who are interested in helping Ed on this project should let us know or call him directly at 508 627 4160.

EDWIN R. AMBROSE, a member of the Society and a resident of Edgartown, has found a new career in retirement as an amateur historian, specializing in maritime history.

contain enough interest to warrant publication in this series entitled "Whaling – The Vineyard Connection."

The first log to be described in the series is one of the oldest in our collection. Its unusual discovery makes it an intriguing opening to what we hope will be an interesting series.

The log records "Awhailing voyage"² by the ship *Rambler* in the far eastern Pacific Ocean north of the equator. *Rambler* left Nantucket in 1822, returning more than two years later. This was one of the early voyages to that part of the Pacific. Until about 1820, most Pacific whaling was done below the equator and close to South America. This log is notable not only for its age, but for its survival for more than 175 years under mysterious conditions.

The Vineyard connection is that it was kept by Joseph Sprague of Edgartown and Chilmark. (A.R.R.)

TWO teen-age girls, Kristen Hurley and her friend, Jessica, walked into the Society's Huntington Library in the summer of 1997 carrying an old document in a paper bag. They were not certain what it was. All they knew was that Kristen's father, Fred Hurley, had found it some months earlier jammed behind a wall that enclosed a chimney in the Ashley Inn on Main Street, Edgartown. Kristen convinced her father that its history should be uncovered.

Mr. Hurley, who owns the inn, was remodeling one of the upstairs rooms and had taken down the wall. Jammed between it and the chimney was the old logbook. He recognized it as a whaling log and sent Kristen off on her quest.

The present writer, a volunteer in the library, was asked to do the research. Doing it, I became very interested in the history of whaling and decided to become more involved in the subject. I told Mr. Hurley what my research on the *Rambler* disclosed and he decided to donate the log to the Society. As a result, after being hidden behind that wall for many years, it is now available to historians – and some of the events recorded in it are being reported here.

The 1822 log of the ship *Rambler* is the second oldest log in our collection. Research disclosed that she was fairly new, having been built in 1818. This was her second voyage. The full-rigged ship of 318 tons made a total of ten whaling voyages before being condemned in Western Samoa in 1855.

This article will bring highlights of her second voyage during the period from June 1, 1822, until March 22, 1824, when she returned to Nantucket with a full load of sperm oil. The five months from her departure in January until June were not included in this log (for unknown reasons) so we consulted other sources to fill in the details of that portion of her voyage.

On January 9, 1822, *Rambler* left Nantucket for the Pacific Ocean, stopping in Edgartown to pick up some crew and provisions.³ She was one of 40 whaling ships that sailed out of Nantucket that year – 26 of them bound for the Pacific. Whaling in the eastern Pacific Ocean north of the Equator had begun only two years earlier after a merchant-ship master sailing from China to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) told some Nantucket friends "he had seen large numbers of sperm whales" on the coast of Japan.⁴ That was all the whalers needed to know.

The *Rambler's* master was William Worth 2nd of Nantucket. When the ship stopped at Edgartown, Joseph Sprague, 23, joined the crew. It was Joseph who kept the log we now have. We don't know what Joseph's rank was, but a log was normally kept by one of the officers so we assume he was one, perhaps the third mate. This log was certainly not the "official" log that was usually kept by the captain or first mate for the owner and turned over to him at the end of the voyage. Given its style and subsequent history, it may be Joseph's personal journal of his trip to the other side of the world, a journal he treasured for the rest of his life.⁵

³ Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, privately published, Waltham, Mass., 1878.

⁴ Starbuck, p. 96.

⁵ Sprague's heading for each page, "Remarks on Board the Ship *Rambler* on Awhailing Voyage" does not sound like that of an official log. For whatever reason Joseph kept the log, it obviously was a record that he and Harriet were proud of.

² Each page is headed: "Remarks on Board of the ship *Rambler* on Awhailing Voyage."

On the title page, badly eroded by time, Joseph wrote his name proudly, as though it was his personal journal. We compared the handwriting in the log with a signature in an account book in our archives that we know was kept by Joseph Sprague. The signatures in the two books are identical, as is the other writing in the log and account book.

The account book in our archives tells us that in 1832, eight years after the *Rambler* voyage ended, Joseph Sprague was between voyages and at home in Chilmark where he served on the committee that built a schoolhouse on the North Road.⁶ The school, the account book records, was paid for by contributions from 15 Chilmark residents, one of whom was Joseph Sprague who gave \$10. The total cost of the school was \$120.48.

The *Rambler* log, which somehow managed to survive when the Sprague family moved from Edgartown to Chilmark and later back to Edgartown, is difficult to read. Extensive damage was done to it by water and insects, particularly on the first pages. Adding to the difficulty in reading is Sprague's mostly Gothic handwriting with sparse punctuation, frequent misspellings (often spelled phonetically), the absence of verbs, with phrases replacing sentences, and the irregular capitalization of many nouns and verbs that was common in the writing during this period.

The log begins on June 1, 1822, when the *Rambler* arrived at the island of "Owyhee" (Hawaii) after having been at sea for more than five months on her way from Nantucket. The ship was met by "Several of the Natives," Joseph noted. After a brief stop, she proceeded to "Wahoo" (Oahu) where the crew was given several days of shore leave before the *Rambler* left in company with other whalers on June 9th, sailing west toward the Philippine Islands under strong trade winds and, Sprague wrote, "Clowday" skies.

Twelve days after leaving Oahu, they had yet to see a whale. Boredom and idleness often came as a surprise to new

crewmen – along with initial seasickness. The long sail down the Atlantic, rounding the Horn and reaching Hawaii had taken more than five months. The crew's routine had been established and duties were now unwelcome chores. The new sailors had gotten through the terror of climbing aloft on reefing sessions. Now an insufferable boredom was setting in, sapping morale. To have cruised 12 days without even spotting a whale was wearing down their patience. Time was occupied with games, wrestling, telling stories, quarreling, mending clothes, scrimshawing and just staring at the sea.

The ordinary sailor's living conditions in the forecabin were squalid, "less amenable than prison cells, with respect to roominess, light, ventilation, and possibility of privacy," according to one writer.⁷ Whaling historian Hohman claimed that the "vulgar and obscene companionship," together with the "brutal driving. . . and unutterable monotony," fostered desperation and gloom among the seamen. "Suspicion and intolerance towards each other and bitter resentment and hatred of the officers" was the norm, although such feelings were rarely, if ever, recorded in logs. The officers were housed in comparative luxury in "the after-cabin, which often resembled a compact Victorian home." It was no wonder that desertions among seamen ran as high as 50 percent.

The boredom was broken on June 22 when the lookout in the crow's nest spotted whales:

"Thar she blows! Thar she blows! Man the boats! For nothing stay! Such a prize we must not lose! Lay to your oars! Away! Away!"⁸

That exciting first day of whaling brought them two sperm whales. On the next day, four more. Often in log-keeping, a silhouette of a whale, by type, was drawn alongside the entry reporting the kill. Sprague did not follow that routine, but instead sketched only a tail in silhouette for each kill (four tails, for instance, on June 23). To denote whales that

⁶ We are not certain of the site of the schoolhouse. It is possible that it was where the old schoolhouse on North Road, now a private residence, still stands. It seems unlikely that it was the same structure.

⁷ James M. Lindgren, "Let Us Idealize Old Types of Manhood," *The New England Quarterly*, June 1999, p. 194. Logs, kept by officers who lived in relative luxury, tell us little about the living conditions and personal behavior of crew members except as criticism.

⁸ Anon., quoted in Foster Rhea Dulles, *Lowered Boats*, 1933, p. 160.

got away, he drew the tails in outline form only.⁹



Before continuing with the *Rambler's* log, it will be useful to describe how the killing of whales was accomplished. There was an orderly routine procedure, made essential by the dangerous conditions under which it was carried out. Ships the size of *Rambler* had four whaleboats hanging on the davits at the ready for rapid lowering. These were the boats used to harpoon the whales while the large whale ship stood by. Each would be crewed by six men: a boatheader (normally an officer) and five oarsmen, one of whom was the harpooner¹⁰ who pulled the bow oar so he would be in place for his most important task, the kill.

At the cry, "There she blows!" from the crow's nest, whaleboats were quickly lowered, the crews tumbling into them. The mates (and often the captain¹¹) were the boat-headers, handling the steering oar and giving the orders. The oarsmen had the job of getting the boat to the whale, which could be some distance away. If the whale was to leeward (downwind), a small sail was set to speed things up and save the crew's energies.

As a whaleboat approached the whale, the harpooner took his striking position, standing at the bow. The oarsmen, facing aft, were not allowed to look forward to see what was happening, but were obeying the commands from the boat-header. When the boat was close to the quarry, the harpoon (and usually a second) was thrust into the whale. The oarsmen back-paddled to avoid the wounded animal which usually sounded (dove down into the deep) as the line to the harpoon was payed out, often smoking from the friction as it ran around the loggerhead.

Occasionally, the whale, instead of sounding, would

⁹ In the early years, these symbols were drawn by hand; later, hand stamps were used. Logs with personal artistry of this kind are more desirable to collectors. Many logs are entirely without such decorations. It obviously depended upon the log keeper's talents.

¹⁰ Harpooners, along with other skilled craftsmen such as carpenters and coopers, did not live in the forecabin with the ordinary seamen, but midships, in roomier quarters.

¹¹ Some owners frowned on the captain going out on these small boats. He was too valuable to take such a risk.

take off along the surface at full speed. Then, the line would be made fast at the bow, taking the boat on a famed "Nantucket sleigh ride."

As the animal tired, the line slackened and was quickly hauled in. The objective was to get the boat close enough to the harpooned whale so that the boatheader, who now had switched places with the harpooner at the bow, could drive a long lance deep into the whale to kill it. If the kill was routine, the whale would soon die and its body was towed to the ship. Rarely, but often enough to be intimidating, the whaleboat was stove in, men were tossed into the sea and sometimes lost, killed or wounded, as the angry whale attacked the small boat, smashing it with its powerful tail or jaws. If there were other whales nearby, a "waif pole," with an identification flag attached, was stuck into the dead whale so the whaleboats could leave to hunt another. No whaler would take a whale carrying another ship's waif pole.

When the whale's body had been towed back and lashed securely to the ship, the first step was the "cutting in." An open rectangular platform was lowered over the carcass. The captain and first mate used long, sharp cutting spades to separate the head from the body. The head of a sperm whale would weigh 20 tons or more and was hoisted aboard with chains and a capstan or windlass. This was the most valuable part of the sperm whale and the oil in its upper part, called the "case," was carefully bailed out. Then the spermaceti, a white waxy substance of great value in candle making, was removed from the lower part of the head, called the "junk." The long slender lower jaw containing rows of teeth was set aside, the teeth to be used for scrimshawing and trading with islanders.

Another treasure sought in the whale was ambergris, used in perfume making and worth hundreds of dollars a pound. Found only in sick whales, it was rare, but whalers always searched, hoping to find some.

Once the whale's huge head was on deck (a laborious lifting job by block and tackle), the second mate took over standing on the cutting platform and began cutting the blubber into long strips. These strips, known as "blankets," were

hauled up on the deck, the body of the whale rolling around and around, as the blanket unwound in a fashion not unlike peeling an orange. Lifting the heavy blubber required great physical effort at the windlass:

... the windlass travels almost continuously until four hundred and fifty or five hundred feet of blanket, from four feet eight to eighteen inches in thickness, have passed from the symmetrical form of the whale into the confused, disagreeable mass in the blubber room.¹²

Before being lowered into the blubber room, the strips were cut into "blanket pieces," weighing about one ton each. Below deck, they were again cut, this time into more manageable blocks, called "horse pieces," small enough for boiling in the try pots.

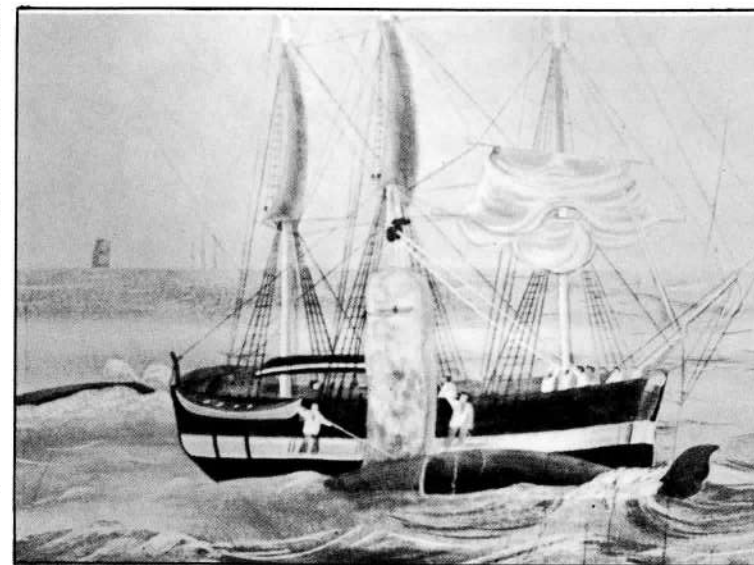
As the men took turns eating and sleeping in short snatches, the strenuous and dangerous cutting in continued through the night:

Even dead, the whale was dangerous. . . Oil, blood and grease were everywhere, on the deck, on the men, on their hands, on their clothes, on their bodies. The sea around was stained. And in the stain a crowd of sharks snapped and fought for chunks of the whale. . . Its juices made the deck and cutting stage slippery. A man could easily fall overboard to the sharks. Or he could be slashed by the sharp edge of a cutting spade, or crushed by a blanket swung through the air. The ship itself, rolling on the waves, swayed and creaked with the weight of the huge beast.¹³

When all the blubber had been stripped away, the carcass was cut loose and allowed to drift away, the sharks voraciously following. Now, the dirtiest task of all began: trying-out, or boiling, the blubber to extract the oil from it. Each whaleship had a camboose (sometimes called a caboose) on deck, housing a try-works consisting of two or three large cast-iron pots resting on layers of bricks. Fires were built on the bricks under the pots and the bricks had to be kept wet with sea water to prevent the deck from catching fire. Blocks of blubber, the horse pieces, were hauled from below deck and tossed into the try pots after being partially sliced, resulting in what were called "Bible leaves," to speed the oil extraction:

As the fires roared in the try-works, continually stoked by the harpooners with the fibrous residue of previous boilings called "cracklings," the

From Benjamin Russell's Panorama, Old Dartmouth Whaling Museum.



Cutting in the whale. The thick, heavy blubber is peeled away from the rotating carcass and hoisted onto deck to be cut into "blankets" prior to being boiled down.

whaleship was transfigured. The murderous appearance of the blood-stained deck with great masses of flesh and blubber scattered about, the leaping flames of the try-pots when the hissing oil itself caught fire and almost threatened to set ablaze the entire ship, the dense clouds of sooty smoke pouring from the furnaces, made a fearsome scene. Especially was this true at night. Here was all the paraphernalia "of a scene in the lower regions," or as one more outspoken whaleman put it: "If this warn't hell on a small scale, he didn't know what to call it."¹⁴

Herman Melville in his classic whaling novel, *Moby Dick*, immortalized the activity in these words:

By midnight the works were in full operation. We were clear from the carcass; sail had been made; the wind was freshening; the wild ocean darkness was intense. But that darkness was licked up by the fierce flames, which at intervals forked forth from the sooty flues, and illuminated every lofty rope in the rigging, as with the famed Greek fire. The burning ship drove on, as if remorselessly commissioned to some vengeful deed. . . the pagan harpooners, always the whaleship's stokers. . . with huge pronged poles they pitched hissing masses of blubber into the scalding pots, or stirred the fires beneath, till the snaky flames darted, curling, out of the doors to catch them by their feet. . . Opposite the mouth of the works. . . was the windlass. This served for a sea sofa. Here lounged the watch, when not otherwise employed, looking into the red heat of the fire, till their eyes

¹² William M. Davis, *Nimrod of the Sea*, Harper & Bros., New York, 1874, p. 81.

¹³ Foster Rhea Dulles, *Lowered Boats*, 1933

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

felt scorched in their heads. Their tawny features, now all begrimed with smoke and sweat, their matted beards, and the contrasting barbaric brilliancy of their teeth, all these were strangely revealed in the capricious emblazonings of the works. . . the harpooners wildly gesticulated with their huge pronged forks and dippers. . . the ship groaned and dived, and yet steadfastly shot her red hell further and further into the blackness of the sea and night . . . the rushing *Pequod*, freighted with savages, laden with fire, and burning a corpse, and plunging into that blackness of darkness, seemed the material counterpart of her monomaniac commander's soul.¹⁵



After that brief summary of life aboard a whaleship, we return to our story of the *Rambler*. Having caught six whales in two days after months of inactivity, her crew must have been worn out, but there was no time to rest. For the following three days, Sprague records: "All hands employed in Working at oil." On the third day, he added: "One of the Boatsteerers on his duty Cut his ankle With an iron." The fourth day: "finish Boiling."

The log makes no mention of cleaning up, but normal procedure would require that after all the blubber had been boiled, the oil cooled and ladled into barrels and stored below, the men would scrub the ship clean of the slippery, oily residue. The sails and rigging (and much personal clothing no doubt) remained sooty and smelly. The log contains no mention of the men scrubbing themselves or their clothing.¹⁶

Their good luck continued. The day after they finished boiling, four more sperm whales were killed, but not before Sprague wrote this partly illegible entry:

Complaint Came to the Capt that one of the foremast ----- man he's stole their ----. Took him up to the Rigen give him about thirty Lashes.¹⁷

Shortly after Captain Worth had taken care of the discipline problem, the four whales were spotted and the boats were lowered. This time it took four days to cut in, boil and store the oil below decks. On the third day, there was an futile interruption:

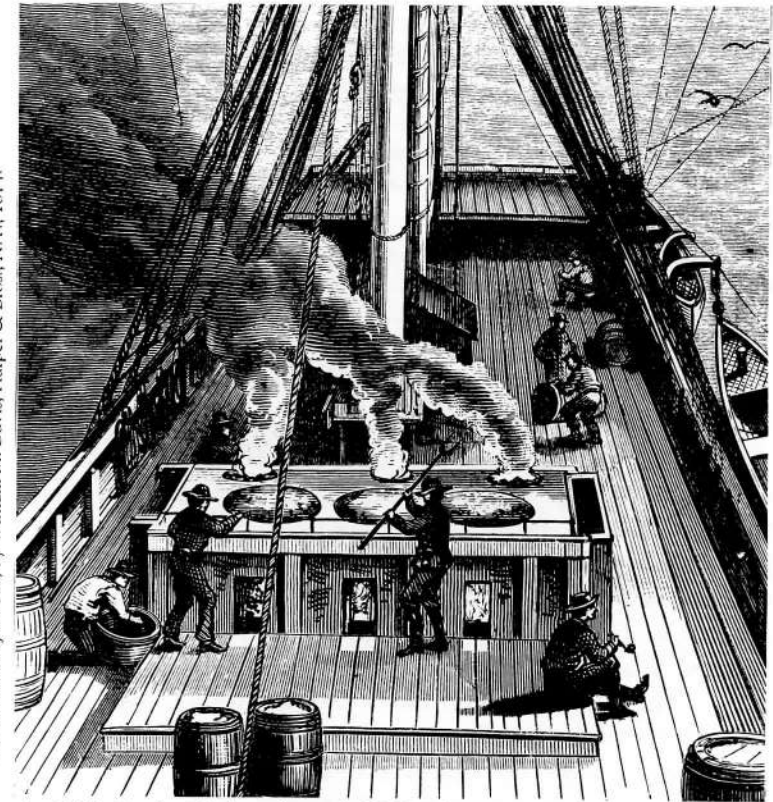
Raised along Whales Going quick to Windward. Load the Boats. Soon

¹⁵ Herman Melville, *Moby Dick; or The Whale*, Harper & Bros., New York, 1851, pp. 470-71.

¹⁶ Logs rarely mention the life style of the crew. After all, they are written for the owners who were not deeply concerned about the seamen, at least not about their personal comfort.

¹⁷ This is an example of a log entry about a crewman. Hardly sympathetic.

From *Nimrod of the Sea*, by William M. Davis, Harper & Bros., N.Y., 1874.



An 1874 sketch of boiling down the blubber belies tortured descriptions by such writers as Melville, looking neat and orderly; no hellish "barbaric brilliancy" here.

gave up the chase.

Going to windward was the whale's best chance of avoiding capture and some whalers wondered if the animals had learned through experience to take advantage of the fact that whaleboats had an upwind handicap.

The next two weeks continued productive. On July 3rd they caught three sperm whales, on the 5th two more, and on the 7th another two. They had barely finished boiling these seven when they raised and caught two more, followed on July 16th by another three. Thus within two weeks they had caught 12 sperm whales – a veritable harvest.

All the while the *Rambler* had been making her way to the northwest. She was now just about on the International Date Line at 34 degrees North latitude, having covered over

20 degrees of longitude West. On July 19th, she met and her officers boarded the ship *Pernvean Head*¹⁸ for a "gam." A gam is a visit by officers (and, of course, the oarsmen who rowed them over) of one ship with those of another when two vessels met. It was a welcome relief from the monotony of seeing the same faces and hearing the same voices for months on end. In addition, it brought an exchange of information about whaling areas and, if the ship was from their home port, an exchange of news from home. For officers, it was an enjoyable chance to talk with their "equals," and for the crews, it was a holiday, with no work to do while the officers socialized.

A week later, they met another Nantucket whaler:

Spoke ship *Atlas* of Nantucket, Capt. Jay, 1400 bbls.

When a ship "spoke" another, it meant that they had come close enough to exchange greetings and quick information by shouting through a megaphone, but there was no boarding involved. In this case, with 1400 barrels already aboard, the *Atlas* would be returning to Nantucket before the *Rambler* and would relay information about her to those interested at home.

Their July luck continued and on the 27th five more sperm were taken, bringing the month's total to 17 sperm – a good month's work. On July 30th, Sprague noted:

Saw Several Schools of Popposis, Some Blackfish.¹⁹

August was less productive. Only six whales were caught. As they headed east, they were moving away from the rich whaling grounds off Japan. On August 19th, the whales again outsmarted them:

Raised Whales Put [pod?] of Whales going quick to Windward, gave up the Chase.

Once more the whales had headed upwind, a direction in which they could go outrun the boats. With no whales to process, the officers found other work for the men:

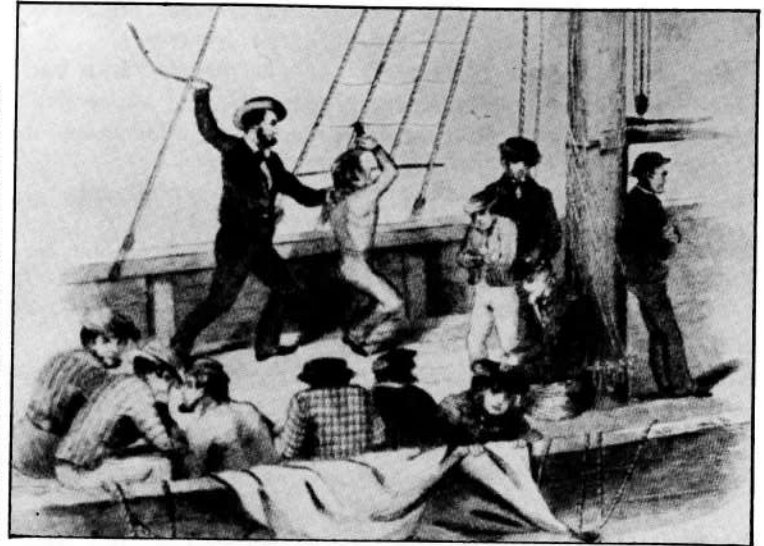
All hands Employed in mending Sails.

September, too, was slow as the *Rambler* caught only

¹⁸ We cannot find any ship of this name on record. It may not have been American.

¹⁹ "Popposis," of course, are porpoises; Blackfish are pilot whales, very small and not worth bothering with.

Etchings of a Whaling Cruise, J. Ross Brown, N.Y., 1846.



A classic flogging sketch in 1846 shows a rather disinterested crew, a second culprit being held by a mate, as the Captain leans against the mast, lost in reverie.

four whales. After the very successful July, their luck had suddenly changed. The hold was far from full. On September 9th, the Sprague's entry reads:

8 months out – 600 bbls.

The weather turned bad and gale winds from the north pushed them farther eastward with no whaling possible in the storm. When it cleared, they continued northeasterly, getting as far as 38 degrees North latitude. On October 15th, they sighted land and Sprague drew a sketch of a palm tree in the margin. Soundings were taken as the ship closed to land. In a dense fog on the 17th, a "cage [kedge] anchor" was set in 50 fathoms. Despite the fog, they managed to shoot "some foule." Then the weather improved:

October 19th: Most part of these 24 hours Calm, now and then a light are [seen] from Different points. 10 PM saw a light on the Shore. 7 AM more clear, zugid [judged] the Land to be about 8 or 10 miles. Took the Cage on 2 of the Boats ahead and loard of [off] at C. Meridian. All hands aboard to Diner. So Ends. Calm and Sun observed.

With the weather clearing, the next morning they set sail and caught one whale. The following day:

Finished Cutting. Commence boiling. ship under Short Sail drifting of [off] Land – Sounded 35 fathoms. Raised Several large Whales, loard the

Boats, got one to the Waste [waist] B. took him Long Side. So Ends. All hands employed in Working at Oil. Latt. 36 degrees 55 minutes N.²¹

Again, a spell of poor weather with heavy winds and thick fog. They were approaching North America:

Saw the Land and breakers on the Shore thru the fog 2 Miles off[f]. . . found our Selves to the Northard of Mounteray [Monterey].

She continued heading south to the Baja peninsula:

Run down with the Lay of the Land Past our intended Poart B. Todos Santos [Ensanada in Baja California]. Did not like the harbour, Shift our Course for Bay St. francisco [possibly Bahia de San Quintin].

Then, on November 5th, they found a harbor the captain liked:

Light winds and Pleasant. 4 PM Came too in franciso Bay in 3 fathoms of Watter.²²

For the next two weeks, with *Rambler* anchored in the warm, clear waters off Baja, the crew refitted her, hauling fresh water and food on board and enjoying some shore leave. Sprague was sent ashore to supervise four of the crew who were filling the water casks. While they waited for the tide to come in, he told the four men they were free to leave and walk around to enjoy the countryside. It seems that that was not such a good idea:

Told the Crew to bee there in the course of 1 ½ hours. I was gone about 1 hour. Returned. Found two of the men there. Inquired whar the others ware. They told they were in the boat asleep they beleaved. I went to the boat and they were not their and all the provisions gone. So ends.

The two men had enjoyed the beauty of the Baja so much they decided to stay. But the local inhabitants had a different idea. Two days later:

the Spanyards had stopt them in town about 4 leagues from the harbor. Capt and Boat's crew Went and fetch them aboard and put them in irons. 5 AM Cold. All hands too, the men out of irons, tied them up to the Mizzen. Bigen Gave them 39 lashes.²³

Refitting completed and the deserters back on board, *Rambler* sailed off with the tide, continuing south past Cape St. Lucas and an island Sprague did not identify:

It is a low beach about 6 Miles Long Laying SE and NW With a large rock

by the appearance in the Middle of it. There is a grate menay fowle about it.²⁴

As they neared the Equator, they again began to spot whales. On December 25th, one was caught and they "took him Long Side, Cut in, Commence boiling." It was Christmas Day, but Sprague makes no mention of it in the log. It was just another day.²⁵ The next day, they killed three more whales and on the 28th, two more, followed by another three on the 29th, bringing long hours of hard, dirty work, lots of smoke, grease and fire – cutting in nine whales in four days!

Rambler was now just south of the Equator and sailing west. On January 2nd, 1823, the officers boarded the ship *Almira* from Edgartown, which was carrying letters from home. It was the practice of ships sailing from home to carry letters for whalers on ships that were in the grounds where they were heading. If they were fortunate enough to meet, as they were here, the mail was delivered to the delight of all.²⁶

The good luck continued. January 3rd, she took three whales, on the 5th, two more (and had to give up on a third), and the next day, another two. They had brought aboard seven whales in four days, making non-stop, six-hour shifts of exhausting work for the officers and crew. With the heat of the Equator plus that of the try-pot fires, the men must have been physically drained. And the ship must have been a real stinkpot by the time the boiling was finished.

January 9, 1823, was the first anniversary of their sailing. Sprague noted there were 1050 barrels of sperm oil stored in the hold. A good haul for the first year.

Then, their lucky streak ended. For two weeks they went without a catch. When their luck improved, it was not without a penalty. One was lost, along with the whale:

Moderate Winds and fair weather. Raised whales. Loard the Boats, Larboard boat got Stove. Lost his Whale. Got 2 to the Starboard B, 1 to the WB [waist boat], took them Long side. Shorten Sail Cut one in Long by

²¹ "So ends" are the traditional last words on each day's entry, but Sprague often added more after writing it.

²² Our guess is that this was Bahia de San Quintin. It certainly wasn't the "francisco" we know today. This was in 1822, 24 years before the City on the Bay got its present name.

²³ "All hands too" means the Captain assembled the crew on deck at 5 a.m., to watch the lashing given by Bigen, one of the mates no doubt.

²⁴ This is probably Clapperton Island.

²⁵ It was just another day on the Vineyard as well. Not until after the Civil War was Christmas celebrated (except by Roman Catholics).

²⁶ Although the *Almira* had sailed from Edgartown on February 6, only a month after *Rambler*, she had mail for that ship (and for other ships as well, no doubt).

Night. 5 AM Cold. All hands Cut in the Whales and Commence boiling and made sail.

Another streak of bad luck followed. On February 12th they encountered a fierce squall and were forced to heave to. During the storm, a tragedy:

6 PM, one of our finest [sic] men belonging to the Sandwich Islands Died With the Scurvey and Was decently Layed out. . . 2 PM [the next day] Set the foresail and took the Corps [corpse] upon the quarter deck. 4 PM by the attention of officers and men, read a chapter in the Bible and then Committed him to the Deep.

The sailor's grave was not far from his Sandwich Island home. At the time, *Rambler* was only 38 miles from "the Island of Mowee." Four days later, she arrived at Oahu, anchoring in 18 fathoms to begin a stay of seven weeks. (The rule, not always complied with, was that the crew had to be allowed to go on shore at least once every six months.) The men began making frequent recreational trips when they weren't repairing and restocking the ship.

One of them got in trouble and was put in "Double Irons." Sprague doesn't tell us what the trouble was but whalers were infamous for misbehavior:

The South Seas became the scene of drunken revels and bestial orgies of the most revolting and degrading character. . . [After 1840 there were but] two or three sober, thrifty, self-respecting men who were happily married [in the average forecastle].²⁷

Although the *Rambler* voyage was nearly 20 years before that, it is unlikely that behavior patterns were much different among men so long away from women and liquor. During their stay in Hawaii, "2 men deserted, got one, the other not found." Ten days later, three more deserted. Even our log keeper, Sprague, was fed up. On March 26th, he wrote: I made application this day to the Captain for my discharge but he declined to give. So ends.

After nearly two months of rest and refitting on Hawaii, they returned to whaling. On April 6th Captain Worth headed west, crossing the International Date Line at 19 degrees North latitude. It was not until the 27th that two whales were spotted and killed. Two days later:

Raised the Ladrões [Mariana Islands] 15 – 20 miles distant. . . [the next day] Captain and Crew went ashore took of some Coconuts and Wood.

Once back on ship, they resumed the boiling of the two whales caught earlier:

Run under the lee of the Island of Pagan. Capt. and Crew Went ashore – brought back Boat load of Coconuts and Wood – finish Boiling. [the next day, after picking up more coconuts and wood, they left] . . . Past the Island of Sarigan, Leaving several of Islands on the laboard Lang.

This was the most western point the *Rambler* reached (see map in this issue). She was almost exactly on the opposite side of the world from Edgartown, about as far west as central Australia. It was, the captain decided, time to start heading back in the direction of home. They began sailing steadily to the north, reaching 23 degrees North latitude, passing eastward of the Bonin Island, then heading northeasterly, getting as far north as 36 degrees North latitude. Almost the full width of the Pacific was between them and San Francisco, one quarter of the globe's circumference.

While heading generally eastward, whaling was slow. On May 18th, they got one, the next day, one more – the last to be caught for three weeks. June began with a lucky find:

Found a dead Whale, took him Long Side and cut him, so commence boiling – 6 AM finish Boiling, Whale made 22 bbls.

Another accident on June 8th when the "starboard boat got stove." Continuing northeasterly, on June 19th, *Rambler* got three whales, one by each boat; two days later, two more were killed. On July 4th, another. Then on July 6th, "Saw a grate Number bunches of Clams and Rock weed. Caught a turtle. The Water very filthy."

Log keeper Sprague summarized their progress: July 9th: 19 Months out, 1730 bbls of oil.

Two more whales were caught on July 11th and the next day another piece of misfortune:

Raised Whales, Loard & struck to all 3 Boats. Captain's [boat] got stove and one man hurt badly. Larboard B line parted. Got one to the W Boat, took him Long Side. So Ends this. . . 22 hours [10 PM] all hands Employed at Whales.

As they sailed due east, another week passed without a catch. On July 27th, they killed one whale and three days later, another. In the first nine days of August, they caught

²⁷ *The New England Quarterly*, June 1999, p. 196, quoting Hohman, *The American Whaleman*.

two more. Then on August 9th, a confusing entry:

3 PM Raised Whales, Loard, fastened to the WB, Whale Stove in one, Struck, cut the line, gave it to the mate, he notted on but – Not Ironed and Whale went of.²⁸

The rest of August was not very profitable. On August 10th, they caught one whale, but there were no more during the rest of the month. They came upon some "Wild" whales that kept swimming away as a boat neared:

August 11, Raised Whales but overtook us, gave up the Chase. . . [the next day] fresh Winds With Squals of rain – Raised Whales, Loard in rain, Whales Wild, Night overtook us, gave up the Chase.

Their poor luck continued. On September 6th, one whale, but no more for the rest of the month. On September 9th, another progress report:

20 Months out to Day With 1950 bbls.

Captain Worth decided that he had a "full" load and they would head for Monterey on their way home. Land was sighted on October 1st and they anchored on the 3rd. Shore leave for the crew followed and during the next two weeks, they repaired and provisioned the ship for the trip back to New England:

Employed to Rafting of Watter and Stowing it away; Took of a Raft of Watter and 3 Boat Load of Wood.

Provisioning over, they continued on their way home, hoping to raise a few more whales. On October 22nd, they caught three, then two weeks later, two more. Just below the Equator on December 1st, two whales were caught, the last caught on the voyage.

Her oil safely stored below decks, *Rambler* headed straight south, passing west of Easter Island. As she approached Cape Horn on January 1, 1823, a major storm:

. . . heavy gale and Squally from the SSW. . . [January 2] Strong Gale and Squally from the SSE.

The storm ended when the wind, still strong, switched to the northwest, taking them to Cape Horn. On January 9th, exactly two years after leaving New England, Sprague wrote:

²⁸ This sentence, confused though it is, perhaps describes these events: the harpooner struck the whale and when his boat was "stove" he tossed the line to the mate on a second boat who knotted it to his line coiled in a drum to be payed out as the whale sounded.

Latt 57° 22" Longit 69° 22". Off Cape Horn Bound Home With 2100 bbls of Sp. Oil.

Rounding Cape Horn, *Rambler* sailed northeast, passing to the east of the Falkland Islands where they saw large icebergs (Sprague called them "islands of ice" and drew sketches of them in the log). More ice islands were passed the next day:

Judged this to be 200 feet high Above the water.

Continuing home, on January 20th they had a bit of bad luck when a line parted while chasing right whales²⁹:

Saw a grate number of Rite [Right] Whales. Loard 2 Boats, Struck, Line Parted. Came aboard and Made Sail.

Nearly two weeks later, for the first time in almost two years, they met a vessel that was not a whaler. She had an unusual passenger list:

Spoke and Boarded the Ship *Branthing* from London 57 days out, With 151 Women Convicts and Pasengers Bound to Botany Bay (Australia).³⁰

Except for routine course headings and soundings as the *Rambler* neared Nantucket, Sprague made only one more entry:

Past and Spoke A Danish Brig from New York Bound to Montevideo.

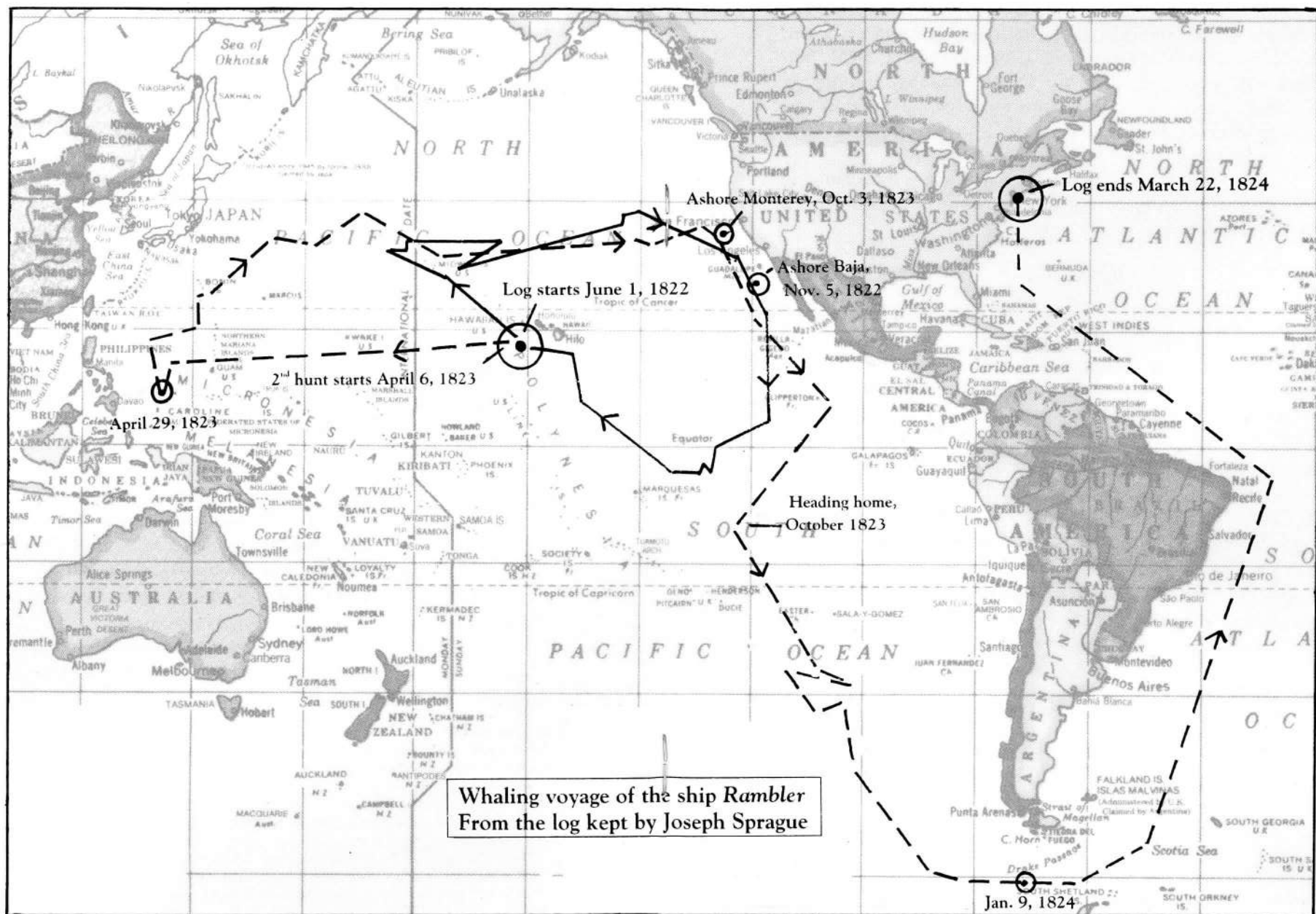
On March 22, 1824, Sprague ended the log when the *Rambler* arrived in Nantucket, her hold packed with 2100 barrels of sperm oil. She had been away 26½ months and had averaged 80 barrels of oil a month. It had been a profitable voyage.³¹

As sperm whales became scarce, whale ships had to

²⁹ Right whales, once common in the Atlantic, were not as valuable as sperm whales. They were the whales that provided baleen. More docile and trusting, they were easy victims, hence were known as the "right" whales to catch and, being easily killed, soon were becoming scarce just as sperm whales were discovered in the Pacific.

³⁰ With America no longer a colony, England had to find a new place to send convicts. In 1788, she began sending them to Australia. By 1840, when the last shipload of convicts arrived, between 60,000 and 75,000 convicts had been sent to that continent. Botany Bay is near Sydney, in New South Wales.

³¹ The amount of oil on board was worth \$53,000, of which the captain would receive about \$3200 – the price of a fine house. The ordinary seaman's lay would amount to \$300, less what he had spent in purchases from the ship's slop chest for clothing, tobacco, etc. He probably netted about \$100 for two years' work. Working on land would have paid perhaps 50 cents a day, but he would have had to pay for food and lodging.



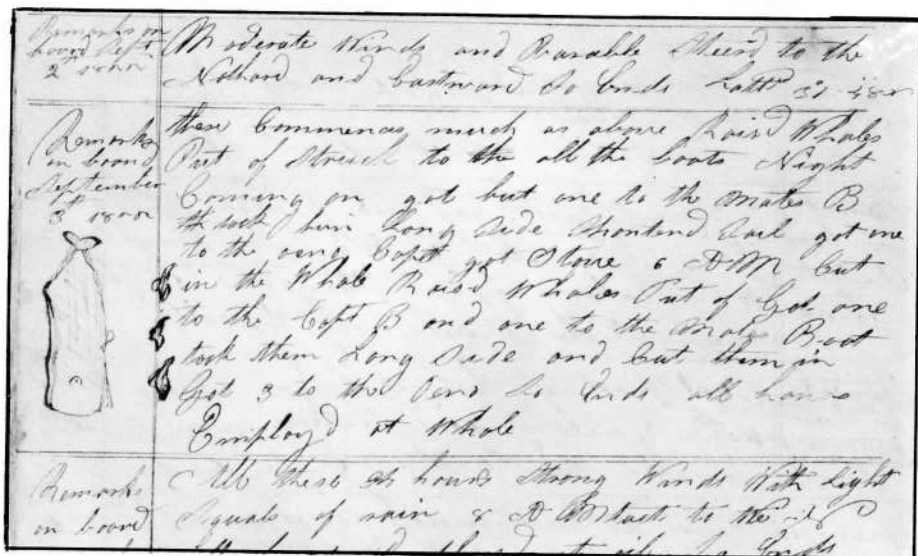
The *Rambler* made two trips out of the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands on her "Awhailing voyage": the first is shown by a solid line; the second by a dashed line.

remain out longer to fill their holds. By the 1840s, a New England whaler would be at sea for four years or more. Then, in a drastic shift of operations beginning about 1850, San Francisco became the base for Pacific whaling, eliminating the long voyage around the Horn to the whale grounds and making New England whaling ports like New Bedford obsolete except as providers of officers and crews.

Future articles in this series will show the changing character of whaling during those years as recorded on the pages of whaling logs in our archives.

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On September 3, 1822, Sprague drew a sperm whale in the margin, the only time he did that. They killed three whales on that date, indicated by the three crude tails at left. He was not an artist.



Fergusons, Spragues, Crowells and Browns: Six Generations of Master Mariners

WE ARE all familiar with the Vineyard's most famous whaling families: the Jerne-gans, the Osborns, the Morses and the Cottles, among many others. But the discovery of the *Rambler* log behind the wall of an Edgartown inn¹ adds four "forgotten" names to the list: Ferguson, Sprague, Crowell and Brown.

These names are rarely mentioned in maritime histories, yet the families were all headed by seafaring men in a line of mariners covering six generations, maybe more.² Its start was in the first half of the 1700s, about 250 years ago, when John Ferguson, a coastal captain from Kittery, Maine, stopped off in Holmes Hole, as was the custom, to await a fair tide and wind. There, he met Hannah Chase³ and they fell in love. His Holmes Hole anchorages became more frequent. In about 1745 they were married. He moved from Maine to Chilmark so she could be near her family while he was away. Their first child, John, born in 1746, following his father, grew up to become a master mariner. Daniel, the second child, also went to sea as a whaleman and while still a young man was killed by a whale.

John married Mary Coffin of Chilmark. Their first born, William, also became a master mariner. John, their second child, died at age eleven under tragic circumstances, be-

¹ See article beginning on page 3, this issue.

² Capt. Horace O. Hillman, as skipper of one of the Island's last swordfishing schooners, the *B. T. Hillman*, might be considered an additional generation, but he is not a Sprague descendant, although his grandfather was Capt. George W. Brown. His line is through Captain Brown's first wife, Elizabeth Merry. Mary H. Crowell from the Sprague line was Brown's second wife. Horace's mother, Elizabeth G. Brown, stepdaughter of Mary, seems to have inherited the house (now the Ashley Inn). When she married Arthur B. Hillman, Captain Horace's brother, it became the Hillman family home, where the late Olive Hillman, their daughter, grew up. So the Ferguson line of mariners ended at the sixth generation.

³ Hannah was also from a seafaring family. Her father, Abraham Chase, was one of the Island's earliest ferrymen. Her uncles were also mariners.

coming famous for the epitaph on his grave in West Tisbury:

The oil of Vitriol he did taste
Which caused his vitals for to waste
And forced him to return again
Unto the earth from whence he came.⁴

William Ferguson's daughter Harriet married Joseph Sprague, who was the keeper of the *Rambler* log that is featured elsewhere in this issue in 1821. Six months later, he sailed away for the Pacific Ocean hunting whales. At the time they were married, they lived in Edgartown, but after Joseph went whaling, Harriet moved to Chilmark to be with her family.

Joseph Sprague, like Harriet, came from a seafaring family. He was the youngest child of Capt. John Sprague. His mother was the former Mary Mayhew of Edgartown. Joseph was only seven years old in 1804 when his father died at sea. His widowed mother, Mary, soon married Capt. John Ferguson of Chilmark, grandfather of Harriet.

Eleven years after Mary remarried, son Joseph married Harriet, bring about a confusing genealogical relationship not untypical of those times. Harriet's grandfather became her husband's stepfather and her step-grandmother became her mother-in-law. Harriet and Joseph had two sons, both whalemens, and two daughters who married mariners. It was truly a seafaring family, despite its genealogical confusion.

Their first child was a girl, Mary, who followed family tradition by marrying Capt. William H. Crowell of Edgartown. It was her marriage that brings us to the *Rambler* log that was found behind a wall in the Ashley Inn in 1998. That building on Edgartown's Main Street was built in the 1860s by Mary's husband, Captain Crowell, as their home.

Their second daughter, Margaret, also married a mariner, Capt. John Cottle of Chilmark, keeping up the tradition.

Joseph continued his whaling career and by 1839 he was a whaling master, commanding several Edgartown whalers in Atlantic Ocean voyages. Between voyages, he had time to serve as head of the committee that built Chilmark's North

Road School (see p. 6). His last whaling voyage was in 1845 when he "left the ship [bark *Milton*] and came home sick."⁵

We don't know what the illness was, but it kept him ashore after that. He and Harriet, with their two youngest sons, moved back to Edgartown, renting rooms in the Ellis Lewis house on Maple Street (now School Street). Also living in the large house were daughter Mary and her husband, Captain Crowell, who was making plans to build what is now the Ashley Inn. Daughter Margaret and her husband, Captain Cottle, also lived there. The house was filled with whaling families, all related.

Joseph's granddaughter, Mary Crowell, married Capt. George W. Brown of Tisbury in 1887, making the sixth generation of mariners in the family. She was his second wife; his first wife, Elizabeth Merry, had died the year before.

When Joseph died in 1852 at age 55, the *Rambler* log, which he had treasured, was carefully saved by his widow. Captain Crowell finished building the family home (today's Ashley Inn) about 1860 and she moved in with them, taking the log, now nearly 30 years old. After her death in 1878, the log, along with her other possessions, was moved up into the attic. Some years later, it apparently slipped down between the chimney and a second floor wall, where it remained for more than 100 years until discovered in 1998 by Fred Hurley, the present owner of the inn.

Harriet lived 26 years after Joseph's death. Both are buried in the Edgartown cemetery, where we come upon an interesting sidelight. The grave stone for them is clearly not the original. It is much too new to have been placed there when Joseph died in 1852. On the elegant red granite stone:

JOSEPH SPRAGUE

1797 - 1852

HIS WIFE

HARRIET B. FERGUSON

1798 - 1878

Alongside it is another red granite stone, identical ex-

⁴ Charles E. Banks, *History of Martha's Vineyard*, v. 1, p. 503.

⁵ Alexander Starbuck, *History of American Whale Fishery*, Argosy, N.Y., 1964, v. 11, p. 413.

cept that it is slightly smaller. The two stones were obviously placed there at the same time. On the second stone:

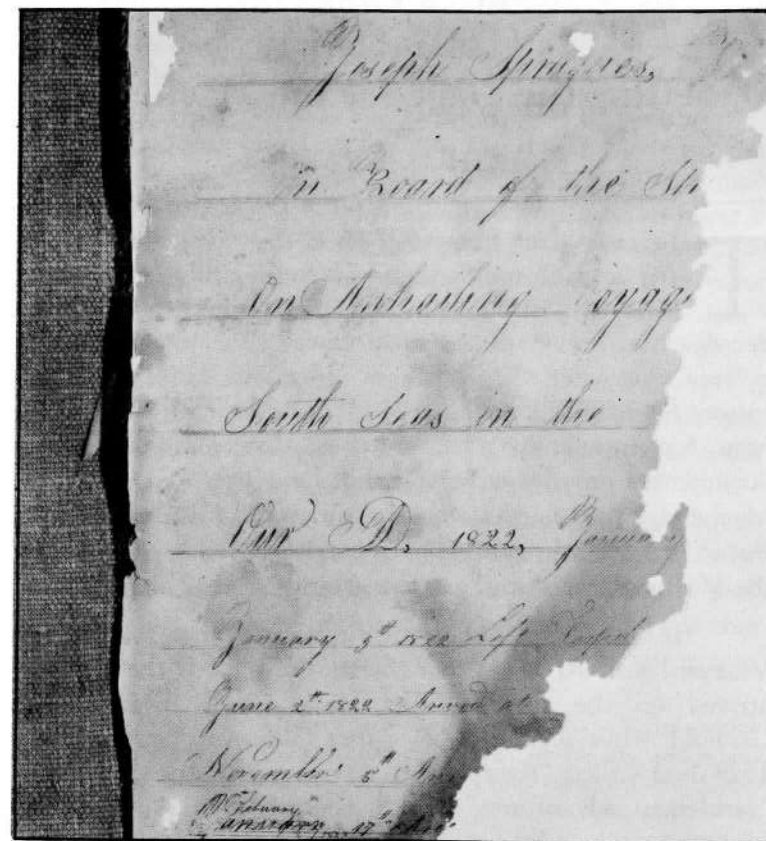
MARY H. CROWELL
WIFE OF
CAPT. GEORGE W. BROWN
JULY 7, 1860
SEPT. 23, 1933

How this came about is another story.⁶



⁶ According to Mrs. Walter Wrigley, her granduncle, Charles W. Crowell, son of Capt. William H. Crowell and Mary Sprague, was a stone mason, living next door to his parents whose house is now the Ashley Inn. As a child, Mrs. Wrigley was told that stone mason Charles had replaced Joseph Sprague's tombstone after it had been broken in the cemetery and that he kept the original stone (Joseph was his grandfather) as a step outside his kitchen door. When the kitchen was enlarged, the stone was moved to the back of the lot where it created a controversy years later. The lot was being subdivided and neighbor Bob Jackson obtained a cease-and-desist order in an attempt to block it, claiming that the stone marked a grave that could not be disturbed. The court ruled it was not a grave, but just a discarded tombstone. The original stone is now in the possession of Michael and Kit Smith of Edgartown, former owners of the house. It is once again a door step. Incidentally, Captain Brown, Mary's husband, is buried in Vineyard Haven, probably with his first wife, Elizabeth Merry.

The Log Itself



The title page and several that follow are the most eroded in the Rambler log. Darkened areas are water stains. At left is a section of the sturdy burlap cover.

AFTER having spent years jammed between a chimney and a wall with rain dripping on it, the Rambler log understandably is in very poor condition. Its pages of heavy, coarse paper are now water-stained and brittle with age. They were bound inside a brown burlap cover about 175 years ago with hand-stitched twine, probably by log-keeper Joseph Sprague. It is remarkable that the handwriting is still readable.

The burlap cover is very durable and seems undamaged, but inside pages have eroded on the outside edges, especially the first few. At the top of each page Sprague wrote: "Remarks on Board of the Ship Rambler on Awhailing Voyage." (His spelling is poor throughout.)

The log measures approximately 12½ inches high, 8½ inches wide and has 142 pages. Of the final 28 pages, some are blank, some have been torn out and others have notations unrelated to the Rambler voyage.



The Vineyard's First Forty Years (1602-1642)

Setting the Stage for the Mayhews

By ARTHUR R. RAILTON

THE forty years from 1602 to 1642 are a mere blink of the eyes of millennium watchers. Easily overlooked. And that is what has happened. Those four historic decades have fallen through the cracks. We are content to believe that when the Mayhews arrived in 1642, Vineyard history began. (Of course, native Americans had been living here for thousands of years, but that's another story, documented only by archeology not by written records.) The Mayhews, we are taught, were the Vineyard's first Englishmen. But in fact Englishmen had been coming here for years before the Mayhews, preparing the ground for their 1642 arrival.

It was in 1602 that the first Englishmen walked on Vineyard soil. At least, that's what the records show. They arrived on the ship *Concord* under Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold, while seeking a place that Giovanni Verrazzano in 1524 had called "Refugio." It was there, Gosnold and his "gentlemen adventurers" hoped, that they would get rich, swapping trinkets for furs from the Indians. These men were not seeking religious freedom or freedom of any kind. They were seeking profit. When the *Concord* anchored off Cape Poge on a late April day in 1602, spring was in full blossom. The Island was at its loveliest.

Rev. John Brereton, one of two journal keepers aboard, went ashore with Captain Gosnold and others. They all liked what they saw. Brereton went back to the ship and wrote the first of the thousands of flowery descriptions of this wondrous Island that have been written since then:

Strawberries, red and white, as sweet and much bigger than ours in England; Rasberies, Gooseberies, Hurtleberies, and such an incredible store

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of Vines . . . Deere, which we saw and divers fowles as Cranes, Hernshawes, Bitters, Geese, Mallards, Teales in great plenty; also, a great store of Pease.

The men who had stayed aboard the *Concord* spent their time fishing. It was time well spent:

. . . wee tooke great store of Cod, as before at Cape Cod, but much better.

Gosnold, who had been so impressed with the fish caught in Massachusetts Bay a few days before that he named the peninsula Cape Cod, may have been tempted to make a change and name our Island, Isle of Cod, but fortunately he had other plans – much more poetic plans. So delighted was he with what he had seen that he named the place Marthaes* Vineyard, in honor of his young daughter.

For that, we must all be grateful. So it was that on that lovely April 22nd in the year 1602, this Island, called Capawack by the Indians and Texel by the Dutch, was given the lovely name Martha's Vineyard, the name we cherish.

Like the millions of tourists who would follow, these first English visitors didn't stay long. The next day, they sailed westward, anchoring at Lambert's Cove. Again, Gosnold took a party ashore, eager to decide if this was the place. On that lovely white sand beach, they were met by "fast running thirteene Savages":

. . . tall, big boned men . . . they gave us of their fish readie boiled (which they carried in a basket made of twiggess) whereof we did eat, and judged them to be fresh water fish; they gave us also of their tabacco. . . much better than any I have tasted in England. . . We gave unto them certeine trifles, as knives, points, and such like, which they much esteemed.

For reasons it is hard for Vineyard lovers to comprehend, Gosnold left that beautiful Lambert's Cove and sailed off. Still heading west, the ship entered what the second journal keeper, Gabriel Archer, called "one of the stateliest Sounds that ever I was in." We now call it Buzzards Bay. They anchored in eight fathoms, a quarter mile from an island that Gosnold named Elizabeth's Ile, after his sister. Today it is Cuttyhunk, one of the Elizabeth Islands.

Again, they went ashore. Behind a barrier beach was a fresh water pond, "full of small Tortoises," in which there was a small island. On this tiny, secure isle Gosnold decided he

* This is the possessive form of that period. Today it is Martha's.

had found what he wanted. This was the place. While unpacking, they were visited by

an Indian and two women; the one we supposed to be his Wife, the other his Daughter, both cleane and strait bodied, with countenance sweet and pleasant.

It was a friendly neighborhood.

A few days later, as they worked on their fort, a canoe came up on the beach. An Indian chieftain, pointing to the sun, made them understand he would return on the morrow. The next day, 50 natives arrived in canoes. The English were fearful at first, but it became clear that the visit was peaceful. Gosnold was out on the *Concord* when they arrived and journal keeper Archer, acting in his stead, "stept forward and imbraced" the chief. Gosnold quickly came ashore and gave the chief two knives and a straw hat. The polite chief wore the hat for a few minutes, but it was the knives that "he beheld with great marvelling."

The Indians returned the next day to share food with the English. After they finished eating, four Indians stayed to help the Englishmen dig sassafras. So friendly were they that one was invited to spend the night aboard the *Concord*. Archer suspected he had been instructed spy on the group, to report what might be hidden aboard the huge vessel. When he left, some iron "Pot-hooks" were missing. Not wishing to cripple the new friendship, the English overlooked the theft.

Shockingly, a few days later, four Indians suddenly attacked two of the English who were shellfishing some distance from the others. One was wounded by an arrow. The attackers, the English were sure, were not from the band who had been so friendly.

The plan called for Gosnold and twenty men to remain at the trading post, while the ship sailed back to England, returning with supplies to carry them through the winter. But the gentlemen adventurers who had been expected to stay behind, changed their minds after seeing how few provisions had been brought for them to live on until the ship returned.

So, after only six weeks on the island, they loaded the ship with cedar and sassafras, hoping to sell them to recover

their costs, and sailed for England. As they headed out to the Atlantic, they went ashore on the south side of the Vineyard, shooting waterfowl and catching fish for their voyage home.

Except for the single surprise attack, their stay had been friendly. No doubt the Indians decided that the men in those huge ships had come with good intentions. But surely they must have wondered why they had worked so hard to build a fort, only to leave when it was completed.

One can speculate what the consequences would have been for this nation had they stayed and created the first permanent English settlement in America. The tiny island of Cuttyhunk at the southern tip of the Elizabeths would today be a national shrine. Plymouth Rock would be just another boulder on a beach in Massachusetts Bay. Our national portrait would not be a Norman Rockwell painting of sober-faced Pilgrims seeking religious freedom, but of businessmen seeking a quick buck. What an opportunity to make a statement (perhaps a more accurate statement) Gosnold missed!

Other Englishmen followed. Ten years later, another ship arrived at the Vineyard. Her captain, Edward Harlow, sent a party ashore. The Vineyard Indians welcomed them as they had Gosnold. But Harlow's intentions were less honorable. His men captured two Indians, Coneconam and Epenow, and sailed off, intending to sell them (along with others Harlow had captured on Cape Cod) as slaves.

But when he got back to Europe, he was unable to sell his captives. Americans were not in demand on the slave market; they were too independent, it seemed. So he opened a sideshow in London, charging curious Englishmen a few pence to see a few "savages" from America. Epenow became the star exhibit. His "brave aspect, stout and sober demeanor" so impressed Sir Ferdinando Gorges, a promoter of the colonization of America, that he took him home as a servant.

The clever Epenow had learned enough about the English to discover what motivated men like Gorges. It was money, and especially gold. He dropped a few comments about a gold mine on Capawack, as he called his home island. Gorges was not a stupid man so he moved one of his trusted

Indian servants in with Epenow to make sure that the Vineyarder's story was true. Epenow convinced his new roommate that there indeed was a gold mine on the Island.

That was all Gorges needed. Quickly, he signed up investors, fitted out a ship and hired a Captain Hobson, who was so eager to make a fortune that he invested 100 pounds of his own money in the venture. "Eldorado, we are coming!" was the cry.

When the ship anchored off the Vineyard, several canoes of natives came out to greet it. They recognized their long-lost relation, Epenow, standing at the rail. He talked to them, inviting them to return the next day to come aboard and meet the captain. At least that's what he told Captain Hobson he said. The next day, an armada of canoes arrived and in a surprise attack the Indians unleashed such a barrage of arrows that the English were forced to duck behind the rail. In the confusion, Epenow slipped overboard and was picked up by his friends unharmed, despite the shots of "all the Musquet-teers aboard, who were for the number as good as our nation did afford," as Sir Ferdinando described the incident.

Disappointed, Hobson sailed back to London. He had lost his one hundred pounds. On the Vineyard, there was celebration. With Epenow back, the Indians had a valuable asset: a man who had lived in London, who knew the ways of the English and could talk their language. Epenow became most useful as more English visits occurred.

On one such visit a ship under the command of Thomas Dermer came seeking information about a missing Capt. Edward Rowcroft. Epenow met with Dermer, who wrote that the Indian

had lived in England and speaks indifferent good English. With him I had much conference, he gave me very good satisfaction in everything almost I could demand.

Epenow told him they knew nothing about Rowcroft, so Dermer continued on to Virginia, where he learned that Rowcroft had been killed during a quarrel with another Englishman. On his way back to London, Dermer again stopped at the Vineyard to meet with Epenow. It was the wrong time for

a friendly visit. An English ship had just carried off 24 Indians from Cape Cod to be sold as slaves. The Vineyard Indians were after revenge. A violent confrontation took place. Several of Dermer's men were killed. The captain was seriously wounded, but managed to get back to his ship. He died soon after.

In the early 1630s, another English ship anchored off Edgartown. Like most ships at the time, she was Virginia bound. The crossing had been long, delayed by violent storms. Several passengers had died. A party went ashore to find fresh water and fruit. Among them was John Pease.

So the story goes. What you have read so far is recorded, written in contemporaneous accounts. But the next story has no such documentation. It is based on "local tradition." Some conspiracy believers say the story had been recorded in a "black book," but that the book was deliberately destroyed by the Mayhew interests to hide the facts. That's pure conjecture, but the story, known as "The Pease Tradition," refuses to die.

When John Pease returned to the ship loaded with goodies, he announced he would stay here. Virginia couldn't be any better than this. A few of the others agreed, some with names that have been part of Island history ever since: Vincent, Trapp and Norton, among them. Where they landed in Edgartown is now called Pease's Point. Not far away is Trapp's Pond. When their ship left them on the beach, they turned and walked south, creating Pease's Point Way. They were looking for a sheltered spot to make their settlement. In a pleasant glen half way down Edgartown harbor, they found it. There, protected from the north wind, they dug caves under the high bluffs and their settlement was born. Today, the place is known as Green Hollow.

Tradition tells us they quickly made friends with the Indians, among them was perhaps one named Hiacoomes. Experience Mayhew, many years later, wrote in his *Indian Converts* that Hiacoomes had been visited in his wigwam by unnamed English, who were "courteously entertained by him [and] in a little Time [he] began to pay them Visits, going frequently to some of their Houses." Experience doesn't date this

event or say that the visitors were from Green Hollow, but he doesn't say they were from the Mayhew settlement either. Nobody knows who they were, so you must decide. What is known is that when Hiacoomes first met Thomas Mayhew Jr., he had already been disowned by his family for being too "English." That sounds as though he had been fraternizing with the Pease crowd.

When the junior Thomas Mayhew assumed the role of minister and began holding services for the English in 1643 or 1644, Hiacoomes came to listen, standing in the back of the room. He must have understood English. Within a year, he had been converted to Christianity and soon formed the Island's first Indian church under Thomas Junior.

For things to have happened that quickly, it would seem that Hiacoomes must have known English. Perhaps he had learned it from the Pease crowd at Green Hollow who had been here, the story goes, for nearly ten years. Let us be honest: that is conjecture. However, the present writer believes there must have been English in Edgartown before the Mayhews. Others also have believed that. Rev. Joseph Thaxter, long-time religious leader of the Island's established church, was a believer. In 1814, he wrote to Dr. Freeman in Boston who was preparing a history of Massachusetts:

It is beyond doubt that several years before the Mayhews had a grant to Martha's Vineyard, there were a number of families settled on the island.

Through the years that was accepted as fact. It was not until Charles E. Banks published his renowned history in 1903 that doubts were raised. Banks, perhaps because of his friendship with the Mayhews, was intent on demolishing "The Pease Tradition." It would seem that he did so.

But it would also seem that somebody must have prepared the way for the Mayhews. When they arrived in 1642 (some say 1643), Hiacoomes and probably other Indians understood English well enough to join their religious services. Within a few years after arriving, Thomas Mayhew Jr., the missionary, had five Indians preaching in Indian churches, paid by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London. All this happened amazingly fast and the explanation

may be that there were, as Thaxter claimed, English families here earlier, preparing the way.

It is recorded that Mayhew wasn't the first missionary to the Indians. In the late 1630s, soon after his banishment from Massachusetts, Roger Williams of Rhode Island came to the Island to preach to the Indians. In a book published in London in 1643, he wrote of converting "the Indians of Martins vineyard, at my late being amongst them." Williams sailed from Providence and no doubt came ashore at Gay Head, the first Vineyard landfall from Narragansett Bay, to spread his Baptist belief.

It may be that that is why the Mayhews never wrote about preaching at Gay Head or about converting the Indians there. The Gay Head Indians were the Island's first Baptists. In 1702, Judge Samuel Sewall, agent for the missionary society in London, wrote in his diary about going to Gay Head to try to convince [the Indian] Stephen of his Anabaptistical Errors, Jonas and he have a Church of about 30. Experience Mayhew proposes a short Treatise be drawn up and translated into Indian to prevent the spreading of the Anabaptistical Notions.

Congregationalist Sewall didn't want Baptist notions to spread to Edgartown where his church was established.

Today, the church at Gay Head [now Aquinnah] is Baptist, further evidence of Roger Williams's visits. He, like Gosnold, Dermer, John Pease and untold others, had been on the Vineyard before the Mayhews, acquainting the Indians with the ways of the English, for better or worse.

Those forty years from 1602 until 1642 were among the most important in our history. The men who came here before the Mayhews deserve more credit than they have been given.

Perhaps in the next millennium they will get it.

Documents

A Running Account Of Matters & Things

by HENRY BAYLIES

REV. HENRY BAYLIES is running out of patience. His high hopes of finding a position as teacher, or preferably as principal, in the South are diminishing. His wife, Harriet, seems not to have improved under the southern skies (which was their purpose in moving south). Things are not going their way.

They have moved from Mobile, Alabama, to the "booming" Columbus, Mississippi, and he has connected with the Methodist minister in town as a way to get introduced to the community. In return, he is regularly called upon to serve as an unpaid substitute preacher. Although he never says it directly, the diary does provide hints that he feels he is being taken advantage of -- and he is.

This installment opens with a sad happening. The young son of Reverend Neely, the minister Henry is relying upon for help, has died and Henry is called upon to perform the burial service, a real tribute, it would seem, to his ability to become part of the congregation.

A few days later, Henry has a great opportunity presented. He will be principal and co-owner of an academy for boys. Life suddenly has become brighter.

Sabbath Feb. 16th. This has been a Sabbath of great solemnity. Before breakfast, Bro. Mayhew called in behalf of Bro. Neely to request me to preach & to inform me of the death of his darling son. The little sufferer went home at 5 o'clock this morning. . . . Called at Bro. N.'s previous to

Church but did not see him. He was greatly broken down with grief & such was the peculiar state of his nervous system the Dr. forbade anyone seeing him.

In the Pulpit I did not enjoy that freedom & liberty in reading that I expected. One reason was the awkward arrangement of the desk -- so high that I had no use of my arms, & another, the feeling that some at least of the hearers were feeling disappointed in not hearing Bro. N., as they had come with the expectation of hearing him. Bro. Schooler sat with me in the pulpit & concluded the exercises. However I may have felt or succeeded, there were many bathed in tears.

While at dinner I received a note of request from Bro. Mayhew in behalf of Bro. N. that I should conduct the funeral exercises of his son. I consented . . . The family remained at home during the services at the church. Quite a large congregation was present all of which were very much affected during the exercises. I stood in the altar behind the little coffin covered with pure white Satin. I read the Scripture account of the death of David's child & Christ blessing children recorded in Mark. I then followed with appropriate remarks in which I had great freedom. . . . Bro. Billups invited me to ride with him to the graveyard. The little satin coffin was then enclosed in a plain wooden box & placed in a vault above ground just large enough for it. It is the intention of Bro. Neely to have the child re-interred soon in Mobile, Ala. At the grave (tomb) I read the burial service of our Disciples. Just as Bro. & Sister N. turned to their carriage, Sister N. exclaimed, "Go back & get my child!"

I returned to my room with sad

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heart. Little thought I a few days ago when I saw that interesting little boy in his Father's study I should be called to bury him. . .

Hattie has suffered somewhat today in consequence of the cold but has passed a comfortable day.

Monday Feb. 17. A pleasant but rather cold day. Some ice in the streets. Soon after breakfast & various sundries attended to, I took a walk to the River where I waited till near noon in company with various gentlemen watching the Steamer *Romeo* in her endeavour to get below the Bridge. She finally effected her purpose at the loss (temporarily) of her Pilot's house & wheelhouse. The river is at its highest high-water mark & presents almost the appearance of the Hudson except for her lofty banks. . .

This P.M. called at Bro. Neely's. Was very much encouraged to find Bro. & Sister N. quite calm & composed. . . The Lord bless them.

Saturday, Feb. 22. Really it seems that the past week has flown. I can hardly credit my Journal that my last entry was as long ago as last Monday. The transactions of the week just closing have been to me, to us, exceedingly important. Through the very kind offices of Bro. George Harris, arrangements have been made with Mr. C. S. Brown by which I assume the Principalship of a male school & he becomes my assistant. Mr. Brown has now a school of 42 boys & the reason of his acquiescing in this arrangement is his conscious inability to govern & desire to avoid the labor & responsibility of government. His health is poor . . . It is arranged & advertised that our Session will commence on the 3rd of

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March & continue five months. I have christened our school, "The Columbus Male Seminary, Rev. Henry Baylies, A.M. Principal, C. S. Brown, A.M., Associate Teacher."

Mr. Brown & myself divide profits. I had about determined to attempt a school in this place & proposed to associate Mr. B. with me since he has a reputation of an excellent teacher. The result of our co-partnership remains to be seen, yet I hope a favourable enterprize.

I have rented the City Hall for \$75 per year. This is a spacious room so defective that it is entirely useless for public speaking on account of its excessive resonance. I have taken the room with the provision that out of the \$75 I may fence the grounds & make such alterations in the room as will destroy the reverberations. This forenoon I had a carpenter to cut two large holes through the ceiling & this has materially relieved the difficulty.

I design on Monday to put in the room several pine trees, if possible, to break the regularity of the waves & destroy the resonance. If this will not do, I shall have sawdust hauled & spread over the floor two or three inches deep. All this it is certain will produce the desired effect.¹

The prospects brighten & friends encourage me that we shall have a large school. I almost fear to hope yet will trust Him who knows what is best for me. So far everything promises well.

We have been thinking about a home & during the week Bro. Neely (Rev. P. P. Neely) spoke to me relative to boarding with him as they

¹ Sawdust, three inches deep, in a classroom? Those were the days!

were lonely & would like company.² The subject there rested with an expression on my part that it would be very agreeable to me & to Mrs. Baylies. This evening Hattie rec'd a very pretty note from Sister Neely stating that they are making arrangements to have us dwell with them the remainder of this year & our room will be in readiness next Tuesday. Providence seems to smile upon us.

Last Tuesday we spent the day at Bro. N.'s very pleasantly. The carriage that took us to Bro. N.'s likewise took us around the village & afforded Hattie a fine opportunity to see it & the swollen, ocean-like river. This is the first time for more than seven months H. has been out to spend a day with friends. It is an era in her life. She was reluctantly persuaded to go, but was pleased that she went, since she passed a comparatively comfortable & happy day.

We were rejoiced to find Bro. & Sister N. much composed & cheerful. Grace will triumph.

Hattie's health has suffered greatly the past several days from the extremely unpleasant or rather changeable weather. Tonight she has had several spasms of great severity. She is patient & cheerful beyond possible conception under even the severest suffering. She looks up & God looks down & smiles into her soul. My love for her was never stronger than now & she never seemed more worthy of it. God bless the dearest of wives.

In consequence of the almost unprecedented freshet, all communication by mail has been obstructed. It is now more than a month since I heard a word from my parents & I am quite fearful they will be greatly con-

² It is clear that Henry is very well liked by the Neely's. A tribute to him.

cerned at not hearing from us. However, these disappointments will sometimes occur & must be borne.

Two instances of Southern precocity came to my notice today. At the tea table this evening, Dr. A. N. Jones asked his little son (8) eight years of age, where he had been today. He replied, "Hunting." Said the Dr., "Did you get anything?" To which he replied, "I got a dove." "What," exclaimed I, "Doctor, your little boy does not use a gun?" "Oh, yes," he replied, "he has handled a gun since he was five years old & is a pretty good marksman!"

The other was a little boy, 9 years, who too was going a hunting. Neither of these boys were full size for their ages. What would a Northern mother or father think of such huntsmen!

I must not fail to note an act of substantial kindness in the [gift] of a tray of various cakes, beautifully adorned & arranged, from Mrs. Geo. Harriss to Hattie. Likewise a bouquet from Mrs. Judge (Geo. R.) Clayton. Our new friends show themselves exceedingly friendly. Amen.

Friday, Feb. 28. Little of stirring incident has occurred during the past week. Last Sabbath morning, listened to a discourse from Bro. Neely on "What is your Life?" a very interesting & instructive sermon. I assisted him in his service. The day was excessively warm. The mercury in Thermometer standing at 81 degrees during the P.M. Till last evening, the temperature has remained very high, excessively warm. Yesterday P.M. I found a thin coat uncomfortably warm, but today I find it uncomfortably cold within doors beside a good fire, while a cold rain & once a thick snow reigned without. Peach trees and others are in full bloom.

In the arrangements of our school room little has been effected. In consequence of high waters, [I] have been unable to procure sawdust for our floor. Our carpenter has been unfindable, etc., etc. Brown speaks very discouragingly of our prospects & has almost given me the blues. Others speak encouragingly. We will see. Brown's assistant starts a school next week in opposition.

Last Tuesday afternoon we left the Bluit House & came to Rev. P. P. Neely's, D.S., where we are very comfortably situated & quite at home. As I was obliged to pay \$1.50 for my horse whether I used him ten minutes or several hours, I considered to ride round & view the region round about. I found nothing to interest & after meeting with roads impassable or nearly so I returned the horse to the stable satisfied to give up the horse to his owners & pay the \$1.50. Hattie rode only a short distance when I returned her to Bro. Neely's & in absence of Br. N. took in Rev. Bro. Mayhew¹ with whom I finished the ride.

Rec'd a letter from Rev. J. Hamilton of Mobile enquiring in behalf of P. Elder Hearn if I would go to Pensacola Navy Yard to preach & teach. Bro. Hamilton's letter was solely of a business character without one word of a friendly character. I replied to him in three lines of purely a business character & such terms that I think he will take a hint.⁴

Dr. Jordon, D.D.!! Bro. Neely said he was in a meeting of the colored members of his church when he heard some of them calling upon Dr. Jordon. He enquired of them who

¹ Has Henry ever told us whether this Mayhew was Vineyard connected?

⁴ He is surprisingly indifferent to a job offer.

they were calling "Doctor." One answered "We's cluded bein's how Brother Jordon is de olest man mongst us & de most knowiniss from de scrippers to fer on him de Doctor. So we's calls him Dr. Jordon."

It is said this colored Bro. is quite as worthy of the doctorate as many who have had it 'ferred on them by College Senatus.

Hattie has been very sick during most of the past week. Last Sabbath she was very unwell day & night. She was better on Tuesday & at eve. Felt unusually comfortable Wednesday & since she has been more unwell & today has been in great suffering, principally in consequence probably of the great & sudden change in the temperature. Before dark she was taken in a spasm lasting perhaps an hour. Bro. Neely relieved her pathologically very soon & induced a refreshing sleep.⁵ She is very feeble & exceedingly nervous.

Sabbath March 2. On Sabbath morning listened to [another] discourse from Rev. Bro. Neely from "What is your Life?" in which he showed that life is a struggle & should so be constantly considered in order to a right view of its responsibility, its disappointments, its temptations, its bereavements, etc. . .

In the P.M. attended the colored meeting. "Dr. Jordon," an old negro slave, preached or rather exhorted. I received great benefit from his exhortation & enjoyed his remarks exceedingly well. For spiritual benefit, I have not attended a meeting so well calculated. The "Dr." dealt with my heart & never once touched my

⁵ This was a period when mesmerizing was a popular treatment for the sick and is probably what Henry means by "pathologically."

head. He was highly spiritual.

After services I assisted Bro. Neely in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to quite a large communion. Most of the congregation were dressed very respectably. Several of the women -- all slaves -- were dressed in silks of no mean quality. Two were dressed equal to almost any lady I ever saw.

In the evening attended the Presbytery of Mr. Fryarson's Church but was disappointed in hearing a nobody from somewhere who, from his subject & his treatment, must have supposed he was preaching to a congregation of Jews. . .

Monday, March 3. At my school room before 9 o'clock but very few pupils presented themselves, rather to our mutual (Brown & myself) disappointment. As it was cold & we had no stove we concluded to adjourn till Tuesday A.M. & in the P.M., we obtained the stove from the Episcopal Church & had it placed in the City Hall.

Saturday, March 8. The first week of our school has passed & brought with it unexpected & severe disappointment. Mr. Brown, in his last school, had 42 pupils & many friends encouraged me our number would be increased to 50 at least. Instead of 50 we yet number less than 20 -- only 19 pupils to two teachers.

The number expected & of which there is the least hope will scarcely increase our number to 25. This with our quite heavy expenses will not begin to pay our services.

Brown is heartily discouraged & we have been consulting as to the best course to be pursued. Should Brown leave the school in my hands, probably several students who have a

long time been under his pupilage & are greatly attached to him will leave. This would be naturally & routinely expected. With the school after the reduction, I could not live with all the tuition proceeds punctually paid down. The reason of our ill success is a strong opposition which has been raised by Maj. Blewett & others in favor of Pope, Brown's former assistant, a young man of not 20 years old. Pope is a Baptist & Blewett is a Baptist. Blewett has with his family been electioneering for Pope & to aid his cause has falsely pled ill treatment from us & especially when it would answer his purpose, that I am a Northerner & a Preacher & perhaps -- doubtless -- a Methodist Preacher. Everything that would answer their purpose has been done so that Pope has a school of perhaps 16 pupils, formerly Brown's, enough to run us. The fact is the day before Brown was spoken to relative making an arrangement with me, Mr. Pope complained to B. of being sick & said it was doubtful if he should be able to remain through the session & if his friends knew how sick he was they would not permit him to remain another day, etc.

It has been falsely reported that I went into Brown's school a fortnight before his session closed & turned Pope out. The true statement is I am a Methodist Preacher of the Church North & but lately arrived from the North, hence the opposition.

Dined today at Geo. R. Clayton Esqr's, otherwise generally known as Judge Clayton. Did not much enjoy the visit as I was hurried away after dinner to relieve Bro. Neely by attending a Bible Class. I consulted with Col. Geo. Harriss & Judge Clayton & Rev. Bro. Neely relative to our

present school prospects & their opinions coinciding with mine, I concluded to abandon the "Columbus Male Seminary" & leave it in Brown's hands. If on no other grounds, I should do it on moral grounds -- Brown's prior claim, his being settled here, etc., etc. Accordingly, I saw Brown just before night & made known to him my conclusion. He had said to me on Friday P.M. "If you stay, I shall leave." He accepted the school & assumed all the debts & liabilities of the Seminary so that I am free from all obligations. Brown appeared very honorable & said that when I leave he would give me \$10 or \$25. Thus, I am no longer Principal of this august Seminary but am again thrown out upon the wide world to look for hope & find disappointment. Deep & mysterious Providence these which overshadow me! Yet the Lord is my trust & my shield.

Rec'd a letter from Parents a day or two since, the first for about 2 months. Another was written but is not received. . .

Last evening Hattie suffered severe pain spasms consequent probably upon excessive anxiety relative our prospects. I had Dr. Malone called in who inquired into her case & prescribed certain remedies. She was however quite easy when he arrived.

Monday, March 10. Yesterday & today have been delightful days. . .

This morning wrote a letter to my Parents, informing them of the change in our circumstances & my intention immediately to return North. . .

Bro. Neely very kindly said to me this P.M. that we should be welcome to remain here with him as long as

we choose or till Hattie gets well. This is certainly very kind of my dear Brother. Lord reward him for his Kindnesses.

Am today fully confirmed that our ill success is distinctly traceable to my being a Northern man & a Northern Methodist Preacher-Abolitionism suspected, etc. I did not go to the Seminary this morning till the close of the session when I made a few remarks. . .

Little of interest has occurred the past week & I have been gentleman at leisure having retired from public life. Reading Hawthorne & Poe or rather looking over & through them together with writing a couple or more letters & a couple of walks of limited extent. . .

Hattie's health was comparatively comfortable till Wednesday when she had a periodical attack. She has suffered greatly since. . .

A few things I wish to rescue from forgetfulness relative to the colored population. Speaking with Rev. Bro. Neely relative to their religious characters, he remarked many are consistent Christians & as with whites many are not. The great obstacle in way of their religion is their strong propensity to sexual intercourse. One old negro said in a Baptist church trial to Maj. Bluette, "Massa, when God convert de negro he convert every ting but dat," referring to this propensity.

Bro. N., who has been brought up & lived among negroes & paid great attention to their improvement, estimates that (7/10) seven tenths of the unmarried negroes are habitually licentious! Astounding fact!

A young woman I saw in the congregation who was very light with straight & smooth black hair, was

converted last summer. She is the niece of her master by his brother & resides in her master's family & has a room & has the care of his children assigned to her. Before joining the church, she had a private conversation with Bro. N. in which she made known to him that a young white man, a clerk in the place, had been her paramour & still was; that she loved him & believed he loved her but that in the present state of society, she would not ask him to marry her, neither would she expect it. She stated this & asked what she should do. It was a difficult question for Bro. N. to solve. All things considered, fearing if she broke away from him whom she loved, she might possibly become a common prostitute, he advised her to keep him, provided she would prove faithful to him. She promised and was admitted to the church. This is a question in casuistry which one only intimately acquainted with negroes - slaves as they are - can solve.

There are several slaves in his congregation, nearly white. One, a man of perhaps 25 years, is so white I mistook him for a white man. His hair is as light & straight as mine. He has no negro features & so far as I could judge not an indication in features, complexion, hair, eyes or anything else of negro origin. As his mother was a slave, he is a slave by birth. The upper "ten thousand" of the negroes will have no intercourse (sexual) with their own kind but admit to their persons only white gentry. Mulattoes are considered superior to blacks by the "colored population."⁶

⁶ Henry's remarks are based on hearsay, not on personal knowledge, that is certain.

In these days of Ethnological discussion, whatever testifies to negro intelligence - superior intelligence, intellectual acquisitions - is of value. Dr. Nott of Mobile denies pure negroes the ability of becoming educated but begs the question in face of facts by denying that there exists any pure negro in America.

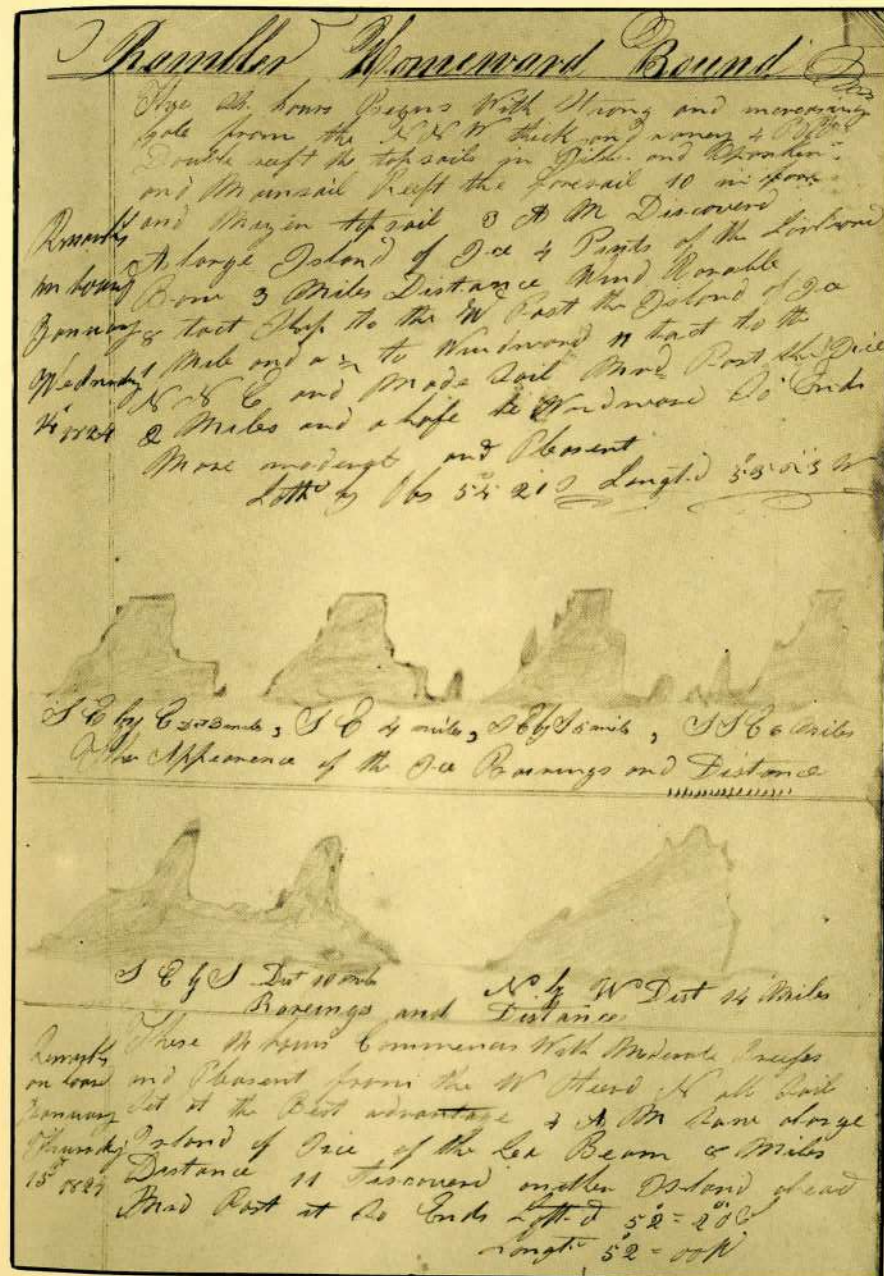
Rev. Dr. Pennington of the Congregational Church in Hartford, I think, is a man of superior attainments. With Latin, Greek & Hebrew at least he is familiar. When he rec'd his D.D., in Germany I think, he pronounced a discourse in Latin. He is, if my recollection serves me, a pure negro.

Dr. ----- [Henry's omission] of Forkland, Greene Co., Ala., informed me that he was acquainted with President Robberts of Liberia while a slave in Virginia. Pres't. R. is a man of decided intellect, as his messages & dispatches show & yet I am confident, Dr. ----- assured me, he is a black negro.

A slave in North Ala. or Georgia, the property of a Clergyman, became well acquainted with the Latin, Greek & Hebrew Languages & was at length bought by American Board of Foreign Missions & sent to Africa as a Missionary. He too was a flat nosed, thick lipped, curly headed negro, according to Col. W. A. Glover of Forkland, Ala. So much for Dr. Nott's impudent assertions. . . .

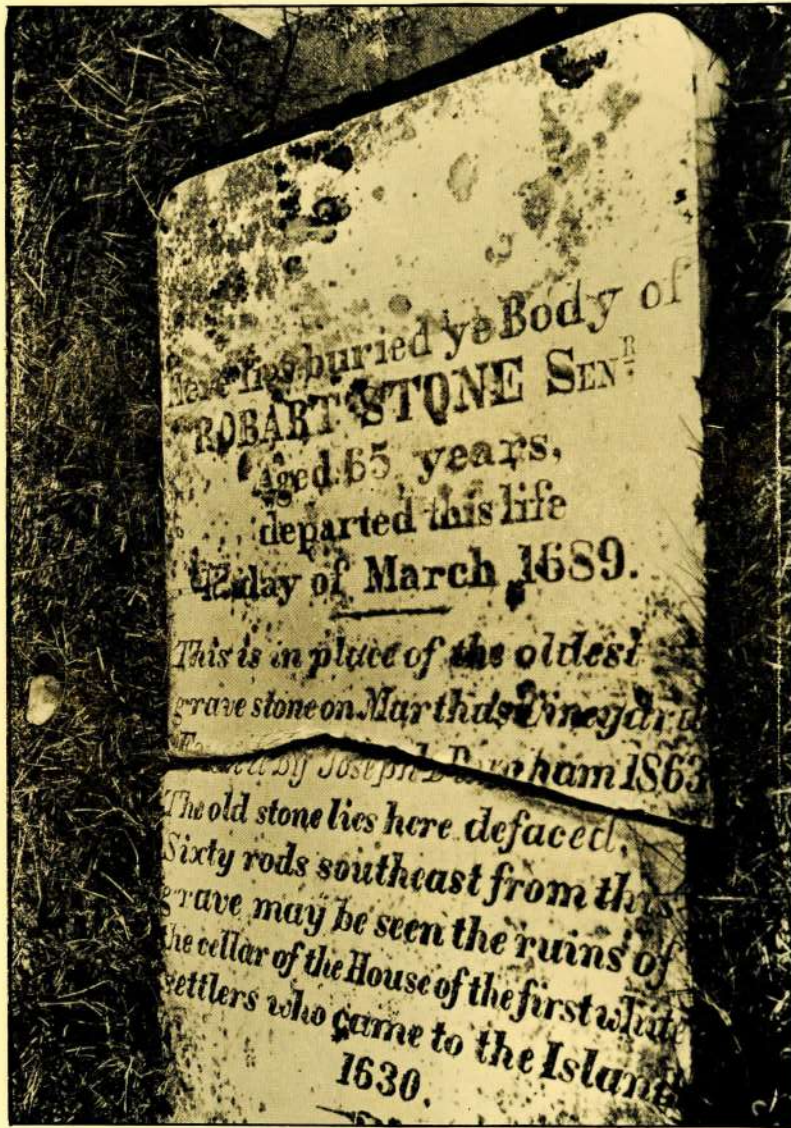
It is about 11 o'clock at night & the negroes & I must retire into darkness.

Publication of the Henry Baylies diary has been made possible by the kindness of Joanne Coffin Clark



Sprague sketched some "large islands of ice" that they "tact Ship past" in January 1824, while "Homeward Bound." He estimated them to be 200 feet above water.

A Mystery in an Edgartown Cemetery



Stone in Tower Hill Cemetery, Edgartown, states that in 1630, twelve years before the Mayhews arrived, "white settlers" lived 60 rods to the southeast (in today's Green Hollow). Joseph Dunham placed it there in 1863 after the original stone had been "defaced." Who defaced it? And why? Robert Stone, whose grave it is, is another mystery. His name appears in no town records. Was he one of the first settlers? Dunham wanted to memorialize the settlement. Why? (See p. 30ff). Incidentally, a copy of the stone was recently placed on top of the original. Why?