

# THE DUKES COUNTY INTELLIGENCER

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EDGARTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS



Captain Jared J. Jernegan, II  
by DOROTHY COTTLE POOLE

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Accessions

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## Captain Jared J. Jernegan, II

by DOROTHY COTTLE POOLE

In the *Vital Records of Edgartown to the Year 1850* can be found this entry:

### MARRIAGES

Jared J. Jernegan, II, mariner, 21, son of Nathan and Prudence, to Rebecca Ripley, 22, daughter of Jethro and Eunice, on June 3, 1847.

Jared had already been on three whaling voyages, starting when he was thirteen as cabin boy aboard the *Alexander Barclay*, Captain Clement Norton. The *Barclay* whaled off New Zealand and unloaded at Bremerhaven before returning home, December 25, 1841. Jared, alert and capable, was soon a foremast hand and, when the voyage was over, his settlement was \$400.

After a few months at home, Jared, not quite nineteen, shipped on May 28, 1842, as a boatsteerer aboard the *Milton*, Captain Abraham Lewis, bound for the Pacific. He returned May 8, 1844, remained at home until September and then shipped as second mate aboard the *Chandler Price*, Captain John Pease. It was May 1847 when he returned from the Pacific and this time he found Edgartown too attractive to leave immediately. The Ripley home seemed to be the lodestone. Of course, Jared and Alonzo Ripley had always been friends, but it soon developed that the real attraction was Alonzo's sister, Rebecca, resulting in the marriage record with which this article began.

The young couple had a blissful summer before Jared sailed as first officer aboard the *Erie* of Fairhaven. The *Erie*, Captain Ichabod Norton, cleared for the Indian Ocean and the Northwest Coast on September 1, 1847. Earthquakes on Guam and yellow fever in Pernambuco added to the hazards of this voyage, but Jared returned safely on April 11, 1850.

This time his stay ashore was brief because he was offered a berth as master of the *William Thompson* of New Bedford. Jared sailed for the North Pacific on July 30, 1850, full of elation at having his own command and determined to make a paying voyage.

Meanwhile back in Edgartown, Rebecca was busily and happily preparing for the arrival of their first child. The baby was born

March 22, 1851, and was named Josephine, but she lived only a short time.

At last Jared came home, March 3, 1853. He had proved his ability, bringing and sending home 142 barrels of sperm oil, 2874 barrels of whale oil and 35,800 pounds of bone to make his lay \$5600. Rebecca was pleased with his success, but she wanted his company and so he stayed ashore six months.

On September 1, 1853, as master of the *Erie*, he sailed for the North Pacific and the Ochotsk Sea. Jared was very proud of the *Erie*, claiming she was the "best looking ship afloat." Therefore, he was especially pleased to meet his brother Nathan, master of the whaleship *Niger*, at the Sandwich Islands. It was the first time the brothers had seen each other since Jared commenced whaling.



Whaleship *Niger* New Bedford Whaling Museum

When Captain Jared returned to the Vineyard in March 1857 he was met by his wife and their three year old son, Alymer. The five months that Jared stayed home seemed to fly, as Alymer followed his father everywhere and the two became fast friends. It was hard to part when the *Erie* sailed again for the North Pacific on August 3, 1857, but Jared was eager to get back to sea and looked forward to a successful voyage, which would enable him to provide well for his little family.

This voyage was marred by the news of Rebecca's death. She had died January 28, 1858, two weeks after the birth of their

second daughter. Jared's letters to Rebecca's family reflect his sorrow, as the lonely life of the whaling master became lonelier still. In November 1858, off the Sandwich Islands, Jared wrote to Rebecca's mother:-

Nov. 3d, 1858

#### Honored Parent

I will devote a leisure in penning you a few thoughts as they occur to me. .... It always afforded me grate pleasure to write to my poor Lost (to me) Wife, and now I would write to you the one that have the care of my Beloved Children. O how much I want to see them so that I may try in a measure to make up that loss they have meet with. True they are very young and cannot realize there grate loss and yet I hope Alymer will remember his mother. You perhaps have heard me say in times past that one having Daughters was of know account. But I was wrong, I now thank God that he saw fit for my Babe to be a daughter. I shall love it dearly and it shall alwaes be my ame to make her happy. Say to Alymer he must love her dearly. He must love his little Sister better than everyone on earth. I wrote you a letter from Lahaina that I had received the daguerreotypes of my little ones and that they both gut spoiled after leaving port I washed them both with water then Varnished them which caused them both to look as I suppose they did when first taken. I was greatly pleased with the looks of the Babe I think it is a true likeness of the child I lost, or of its Partrit. Alymer has grown a grate deal he is a nobel Boy. I hope God will see fit for these children to grow up for without them I feel as if I should be alone in the world. Pleas try to impress upon Alymer's mind while young that his father never wants him to go to Sea.

When he grows up I never want him to spend all the best of his days away from home and all dear friends as I have done. I will not say be kind to my little ones for I beleave you will do all for them that need be done and perhaps more than you are able to do. But your kindness toward my little ones will ever be remarked by your (Son-in-Law) ..... You may feel assured I feel very lonely in not receiving those kind letters from my poor lost Rebecca. O how lonely will be my home without her it shall be my gratest pleasure to make her dear little ones happy. I think you will ever say that they are well cared for I am anxious to return home and shall come as soon as I get a paying Voyage. I have good Officers and a good crew. I still have the most of my original crew - only one man has diserted

the Voyage. If we can find whales I do not doubt but this will prove my best cruise a Whaling glad shall I be when the good ship *Erie* is homeward Bound. I do not think I shall ever go another cruise a Whaling but one cannot tell what the future will bring forth. I suppose Alymer will soon be old enough to attend school it is my wish that every attention be paid to his Education. Please try and impress upon his young mind that it is hard for enny one to become a noble man with out good Education he shall have every advantage that Money can give him I was sorry to learn Brother Samuel's Wife was very sick. Truly I hope she may recover I would not for enny of my friends to meet with the same grate loss that has happened to me.....

Please give my respects to all of my inquiring

I am Truly your Sun-in Law

Jared J. Jernegan, II

In January 1859, seventeen months from home, he wrote to his brother-in-law, Alonzo, saying he was well but "low in spirit." He continued:-

You have lost a beloved Sister and I a devoted Wife, how lonely will be my home without her - ..... I hope Alymer will remember his mother..... Say to your Mother I shall always feel grateful toward her for taking care of my Motherless Children. I feel they will be well cared for I was much gratified that the Babe was a Daughter - I think this will prove my last cruise Whaling but one can not tell what the future will bring forth.....time glides on. I know the flower of my days have already gone by. Yes, I have lost a beloved Wife one that was ever uppermost in my thoughts and I think I shall feel her loss very grate when I ame home She was a devoted Wife and my prayer is that she is now at the right hand of her blessed Saviour. Say to Alymer he must Love his little sister dearly yes better than every one and Earth.....

Please say to Alymer he must try and remember his father-please embrace both of my children for me Ask Ally what he wants me to fetch him home.....

A few months later he wrote again to the Ripleys, telling them that he was recruiting for a northern cruise,

"probably three seasons" as I want a good Voyage - probably the last I am tired of going to Sea. I have been advised of the death of my darling child. I do assure you it was a heavy blow to me yes she has gone to meet her Mother in heaven My Prayer is that my Boy may be spared me. Say to Alymer he must be a good boy. Say to him his father loves him dearly. Yes I do love him he is all that I have to remember my beloved Wife by I hope

Alymer will remember his mother I shall always feel grateful to you for looking after my little ones and should my Boy live I trust he will always love his grandparents.

Then from the coast of California, where he was hunting the California gray whale, he wrote in November to his parents-in-law telling them that he would, indeed, be obliged to fish a third season on the Northern Whaling Grounds to make a paying voyage.

The *Erie* has never been filled with oil. [Before Jared took her, the *Erie* had been four voyages to the North Pacific under four different masters] I am in hopes we shall fill our casks. .... Tell Alymer that his father wishes for him to try to Remember his beloved Mother and how bad she would feel were she living if he should not be good to his Grandparents. I hope he will take pleasure in going to school for I am in hopes he will wish to become a noble man. he shall have everything done for him that will be for his interest Yes I will do as near right as I can for is he not all I have to remember my Beloved Wife by. .... When you write me again Please mention if those grape vines that I set out when at home are doing well. I like to learn all about such things. .... I would have you to try to impress upon Alymer's mind that I do not wish for him to even think of going to sea. Try to impress on his Young mind that there is no comfort for those that go to sea for a liveing You know you can say this with truth O how little I have seen of my home and much loved friends and now I am almost left alone in the world. It is an old saying that money will find a plenty of Friends I do not wish to live among such friends, give me the blessing of a pure and noble, such I shall never shun, sometimes I think I am a little old-fashioned and thus I would be. .... Your letters are always received with great pleasure and I hope you will continue to keep me informed of the health and the doings of my noble Boy. Say to Alymer he must think that he is all the Boy his Father has got.

The next spring it was Sister Mary Jane's turn to hear from the Sandwich Islands. Jared enjoyed Mary Jane's letters because the "tone of expression appears so much as Rebecca used to" and because Mary Jane mentioned "so much about my noble Boy." She sent Jared a daguerreotype of Alymer, but she also wrote that the boy feared "a crows and cruel mother." Jared replied:-

..... My Sister do you not beleave I loved my sainted Wife well enough that I shall never, never see her Noble Boy ill used.

Time may change my mind, But as I now feel it appears as though I should never see the one that will lesson my love towards my darling Boy. You must teach him to love me. Tell him his Father heart is almost broken for the loss of his Sainted Mother and for the loss of his little Sister. Truly my lot has been a hard one to bare and sometimes I feel as the quicker I leave this world the better it would be for me. But when I reflect on the future world I ask myself if I am prepared to meet my Angel Wife. I think I must experience a change of hart ere I am prepared to stand before our blessed Saviour.

.....O my Sister little do you no how fresh the wound is in my hart, and how slow the wound heals caused by the grate, grate loss of my Beloved Wife I loved your Sister with a pure heart yes I loved her with a heart that was never soiled by loveing another before or since hear death. If others are planing for me to unite myself with another I do not thank them. Say to them that your Sister has left a Husband that would sooner die than to think of such a thing as to give himself to another for many years to come and purhaps never. Say to them if they wish not to offend me they will Please never mention the subject to me for as true as I am to be judged hereafter I have never seen the Lady that I thought I should like to give myself to as for loveing another while my Boy lives it appears to me impossible. But we do not no what the future will do for us You nor your Parents will never see the hour that they will feal sorry that they took me into thare Family (now mark and remember what I have said) if I am permitted to return to home once more I suppose I shall be subjected to menny, menny temtations But there is one above that will alwaes watch over me with a kind and Beautiful smile such as she used to give towards me when on earth do you not beleave I remember those pleasing Eyes and to me charming smile. Truly I believe I loved your Sister more than menny men loves there Wives, and I thank my God that I never used her ill. I have a clear conscience that I alwaes was kind to her and if permitted I believe she is now smiling uppon me as I am perusing these few thoughts to Jane her Sister How dearly I shall love her only liveing child. And should I never live to meet him on earth you will say to him (for me) that if his Father had not died he would of ben very, very kind to him and that his last thoughts were for his Mother and him. I think the death of your Sister has broken my Spirits. I cannot sing as I used to before her death, it appears as tho I should disturb her in that beau-

tiful Land where I beleave she now is. I beleave she can see my every movement (and thus I would have it be. When I arrive home I will have such a monument as you mentioned about and should I never live to return home, I will hear state that such a one must be placed over her and you may have a few words carved on the marble saying that I was her beloved Husband who viewed her as an Angel to me, I would have her daguerreotype and mine also, set into the monument so that when my Son visits our resting place me may know I loved his mother .....

Yours very truly

Jared Jernegan, II

Back from his northern cruise, Jared found mail awaiting him at Lahaina. He had a hard season, getting no oil until it was nearly over, but now over 3000 barrels of oil were stowed beneath the *Erie's* deck. Pleasure and disappointment were mingled as Jared wrote to the Ripleys in October 1860:-

.....I hope I am thankful for so good cargo when so menny Brother Whalemen are dueing so very Poorly..... I think you may look for me (at home) by the middle of April. Disappointed not to return overland. My chief mate now on shore sick and has had several dangerous spells lately. Doctor does not think it safe for him to take the *Erie* home I worked hard to procure the cargo I now have and think it will prove to my interest to return home in the *Erie*. I shall leave Port Lahaine about the first of November and shall look for a few weeks for Whales. She can carry about 25 barrels more oil. but I shall not fret if I never see another Whale. I shall soon be with you. You mentioned in your letter I would be welcome to make my home with you. I do not doubt your word in the least But do you not think I would be a grate deal of Trouble to you without doubt I shall be obliged to receive much company But I will come and make my home with you at first for I feel this to be right and I would be near my Boy until he gets well acquainted with me I was grately Pleased to learn Alymer was well and I do hope he will be spared to me Sometimes my Past Life appears as a dream to me. O how menny changes since I left my home. and as the time draws near for my return it Brings up afresh the deep wound which the loss of my Beloved wifes death made in my heart. I do not wish to wound your feelings by bringing to your mind the loss of your beloved daughter. But I would have you know that a few months or years has not lessened my love for my departed wife. I loved your daughter with a whole heart and I shall always feel kindly



toward you her Parents and I thank you with my whole heart for taking care of my Boy how glad I shall feel to take my Alymer uppon my knee and talk to about his Beloved Mother, fear nothing for Alymer he has a father that will never suffer a hare of his head to be injured Alymer shall have everything done for him that will prove for his interest I have menny letters to write this time in Port and I have a grate deal of business to attend to. Therefore you will excuse this letter being short, I think you will see me by the 20th of April at the latest I shall come direct to your home.

Your with grate Respect  
Jared Jernegan

The same day, Jared wrote to his son:-

.....I am coming home to see you and I am not going to Sea again. if you are a good Boy you shall go off to New London and to menny outhr places with me. then you no you will see menny nice Articles that you can purchase to bring home with you you are all the Boy I have gut and I hope you will alwaes wish to please me, yes if you only do as I wish for you to, I shall be very Proud to call you Son. When I come home in the steam-boat you must not be afread to come to me and take rate hold of my hand I like all good Boys, and of course I shall like you much better than all the rest put together and I hope you will try and love me. I have written your Aunt Mary Jane to make you some fine nice clothes so you will look nice when you go to New Bedford with me. I have also told your Aunt to Buy you a nice Bever hat. I wish I could bring you home a nice hat But I cannot find anny that I think would sute you So good Bye

From your Father

Jared had said that he thought he would be home by the twentieth of April, but he arrived in New Bedford on Feb. 28, 1861. Alymer had his promised sightseeing and shopping expeditions and then he and his father returned to Edgartown.

Jared was a handsome young man of thirty-seven whose rather stern features reflected the sorrow and loneliness of the past three years. But this soon changed when he met the charming young school teacher, Miss Helen Clark.

Helen, and others of her family, had come to Edgartown from Gorham, Maine, ten years before to live with relatives, Aunt Charlotte Coffin, Aunt Pierce and Dr. and Mrs. Pease. Helen was a good student, especially in geography and mathematics, and she

became a school teacher who instructed many a future whaling master in the mathematics he later used in his navigating. However, she was quite willing to forego teaching to become Mrs. Captain Jared Jernegan, which she did on June 5, 1861.



Dukes County Historical Society  
Captain Jared J. Jernegan II

Jared stayed ashore eighteen months, but he grew restless. The *Erie* had been sold and converted to a merchant ship and Captain Jernegan was asked to take her to Honolulu. He sailed June 3, 1862, loaded with assorted cargo, which included 160 tons of coal and a deckload of oak. The *Vineyard Gazette* for November 28, 1862, Edgar Marchant, Editor, gives the account of this ill-fated voyage:-

Loss of Ship *Erie*. Capt. Jernegan, late of ship *Erie*, before reported lost off Cape Horn, arrived in town on Sunday evening last, having taken passage in the barque *Tempest*, Capt. King, which left Pernambuco for New London, on the 16th of October. Captain Jernegan states that the *Erie* was abandoned on the twentieth of August, 1862. On the 16th of August, in lat. 56, lon. 74W, the *Erie* experienced a severe hurricane, in which she lost all her sails, carried away the bowsprit, foremast, maintopgallant mast, all the bulwarks, and lost deckload; in fact the ship was left a complete wreck. A tremendous sea was running at the time, and it made a clean sweep over the *Erie's* decks. Sounded the pumps, and found the ship had sprung a leak. On the second day got the wrecked spars clear of the ship, the bowsprit having done much injury to the ship's bow and probably caused her to leak. The gale continued up to the 19th, at which time the crew were nearly exhausted, and the leak gaining fast. Commenced to heave some of the cargo overboard from the run scuttle, it being too rugged to work at the after hatchway. The ship was now settling by the stern, having 160 tons of coal in the after hold. Having no boats to leave the ship in, Capt. Jernegan was very anxious to see a friendly sail. He had already lost two men overboard, (Charles Hitch, son of Hardy Hitch, of Fairhaven, and Barney Snell, of Fall River,) and many of the remaining crew were frost bitten, and had been without dry clothing since the 16th. The cabin, or house on deck, was badly wrecked, and the doors fell down. On the 20th, at daylight, saw a ship running before the wind under three close-reefed topsails. She proved to be the *Southern Rights* of Richmond, Me., W. L. Knowles, master, from Callao for London. Capt. Jernegan says -

Having lost our boats, they sent a small boat to our rescue. It was very rough at the time I sent six of my men in the boat. When she returned, it was very rugged, and as the wind was increasing, I thought it best for the remainder of my crew to go. I abandoned the *Erie* to save the lives of my men, as well as my

own life. We saved nothing but the clothing we had on. The following night we had a heavy gale from the southeast, with much snow, and the *Southern Rights* was much iced up. We had a very long passage to this port (Pernambuco) where we landed on the 8th of October.

George D. Courtney of this town, who was in the *Erie* when the disaster occurred, also came home in the *Tempest*. The rest of the crew were at Pernambuco, but would soon sail for home.

Captain Jernegan came home as third mate aboard the *Tempest* and there was great rejoicing in the Jernegan family. Little Laura, born twenty-six days after her father sailed, was a constant delight, and Aylmer and his father spent much time together through the winter months.

However, a shipwreck could not make a landsman of Jared, and on June 3, 1863, as master of the whaling bark *Oriole* of New Bedford, he cleared for the North Pacific. The *Oriole* was a beautiful vessel which Jared likened to a clipper ship and, indeed, she sailed like one. Near the equator, they encountered a Confederate privateer, but smartly outsailed her.

Jared missed his family and wrote to Helen urging her to meet him in either San Francisco or Honolulu and sail home aboard the *Oriole*. Off the Sandwich Islands on March 25, 1865, he wrote:-

My Own darling Wife,  
Edgartown,

I will commence a letter to you and forward it as soon as I arrive at Honolulu now what shall I say to please my Helen. I will commence by saying I am very anxious to arrive at Honolulu where I have no doubt there are many letters for me. Then I shall hear (as it were) my darling Helen's answer to my invitation to meet me next Fall of 1865. And then I hope you will write you were pleased with the presents I sent you and the children last Fall. I hope they did not get soiled. Dear Helen, I am tired of being alone and I want to have you always near me for I know I love you dearly. You have often asked me in your letters to me if I still loved you as when we were first married, why my darling little wife, I assure you, that the love I then felt for you was near nothing compared with the love I now feel towards you. When we were first married we were almost strangers to each other. Now I no you are a good wife and a darling mother. I do hope your health will be good so I shall not be disappointed by you not

coming out How very, very happy I shall feel if I can only see way down in one corner of your letters to me that you shall Shurely see me next Fall. Now how much do you guess I think it will cost for you to meet me on this voyage, well I will say about \$1000 altho I shall not be surprised if it should over-run this amount. Well believe me when I asshure you I shal never, never retrett this amount being spent that I may have you with me. I would have you be sure to supply yourself with money enough to meet your expenses and I think it will be well for you to supply yourself with a surplus fund in case of sickness. Perhaps Mr. Jones agt. for the *Oriole* will write me not to go to San Francisco, if so you will take the first packet for Honolulu. When I receive your letter in which you say you shall shurely meet me, in answer I will say for certain where I shall expect to meet you. I have always expected to meet you at San Francisco and I suppose you will feel a little disappointed if I do not meet you there. But still the passage from San Francisco down to Honolulu is near nothing, as you will be in good weather all the passage Mrs. Holly will tell you all about it Helen do you no I believe I like to write you.....Do you not think you will be rejoiced to show me our darling child. But I expect I shall be so much taken up with its mother, that I shall hardly notice Laura for a short time. Poor Allie will be at home all alone. I declare it makes me feel downhearted to think I am not to see him for so long a time. But if you are with me it will drive away some of my lonely hours. Helen, I think you will say I do not appear like the same man as I did when I was last with you. But I hope you will never have cause to say that your Husband does not appear to set as much of you as at our last meeting. I beleave you will say I appear much happier if possible than ever before. I think I look uppon life in a much different light than I ever did before. I often say to myself what is life worth to me if I am to live it way out here alone. I can say with Trouth that I would give more for the society of my darling wife than for every other enjoyment of life together, and I flatter myself that if you meet me on this voyage you will say beleave the gratest aim of your husband's life is that he may no how he can please you the most Another year I shall be discharge all of my ships company that wish to leave. But I think Mr. Apes will go three seasons in the *Oriole*. He is a good man and I think we get along nicely. much better than some nabors due at home. I think Mr. Apes and myself will alwaes agree in our whaling views And I think you will say when on the *Oriole* that you was not aware that everything went on so nicely on board of a ship. Sometimes

I think you will wonder that we have Patience to stay away from home for so long a time. I will answer we are obliged to study Patience.

I am hopes ere you leave home Alymer will be able to write a good letter for he will not wish for others to now everything he may wish to write I want you to purchase him a writing Desk so he can have a place to keep his writing matter. I am in hopes he will give me a long letter this spring. Say to him I shall always be very happy to hear from him and that I set lots of him. I expect you will ask me a grate many questions and should I not answer all of them you will Please not find any falt for I assure you it affords me a grate deal of pleasure to comply with your every wish But if I do not happen to remember I think I am excusable I shall have a long story to tell you when we meet. What did your friends say when you told them I had sent for you Oh me thinks there were some very long faces and now let me guess who put on the longest face (your aunt Chilot, now am I not write Never mind I will forgive her as I believe she opposed it through good motives. Say to her if she has undertaken to git you off the notion of meeting me that I shall always remember it but will forgive her.

Yes, my darling Helen, I do promise myself to see you next November and I know my darling little wife will be very anxious for the time to glide away I shall let you git rate up into my lap just as you used to, then I will tell my beautiful little wife how lonely I have been for more than two years. Many of my Brother Whalemen have been very unsuccessful and I think this will cause many of them to send for there wives. I no of several captains who intend for there wives to meet them next fall. Perhaps you will meet with some of them on the steamer. It is not every woman I would have my little wife to trust herself with as a friend I no I would rather for you to go on Board of the Steamer not knowing one on Board, than to be acquainted with some that will take passage with you. I have every confidence in you and I shall have no fear but you will take care of yourself the passage out here.

Sometimes I think perhaps Mr. Jones will make me an offer in monny not to send for you to meet me, if so I will write him I am not one that will sell the society of my darling wife. Me thinks it would make me feel very small for another to know I could sell the Society of my Beautiful little wife. No, no, I assure you I love you dearly and will not except of any such turms. When I say to you I am very lonely I believe you feel that it is on your account. Helen let me say to you have no



fears in regard to the Passage out to San Francisco, as I assure you it is near nothing, so listen to no one that may try to make it appear a grate undertaking. If I did not want to see you and want your Society I should never of sent for you for I assure you it is no place for a Lady on a Ship if she is not happy in her Husband.

Three weeks later, he landed at Honolulu and added a post script:-

My own darling little Wife

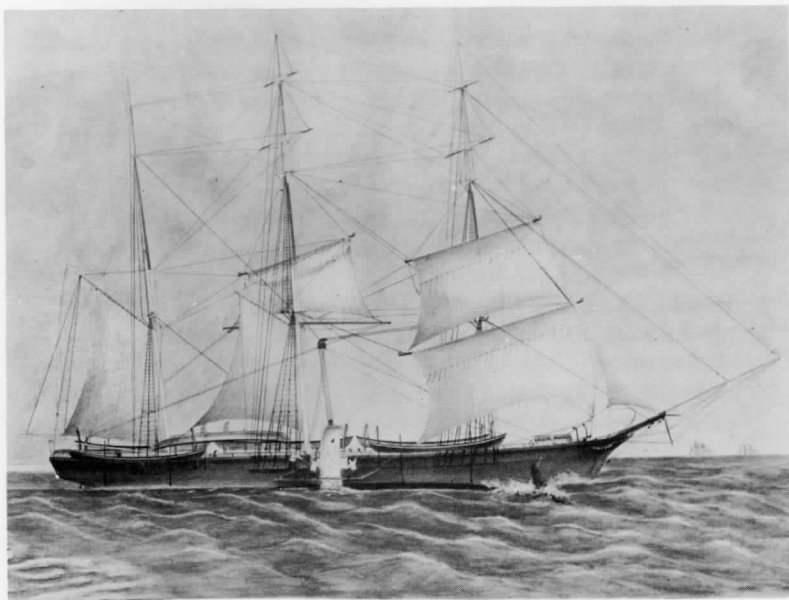
I am now at Honolulu and have received a large Pile of letters from you. I will close this letter and write another to you. You will meet me at Honolulu.

From your own Husband

Jared Jernegan

Then, as an afterthought, he sent along this appeal:-

Dear Helen, I will hear mention that my white shirts are all nearly worne out. Perhaps you could make me say three or Four and Bring them with you. I expect to see you next October at San Francisco.\* O how happy I shall feal if you are only well. I should also be pleased to have a few collars (16 neck) When I was at home Brother Nathan wanted to sell his Gold Watch Now I will hear say



New Bedford Whaling Museum  
Bark *Oriole* cutting in a whale

\*Captain Jared's plan to meet Helen in San Francisco was evidently not carried out.

I should like for you to Purchase it if you Think you can git it for a fair Price and fetch it with you. Have it put in good order. J. J.

Helen and Jared met in Honolulu as agreed. Many years later (1912) Helen wrote her recollection of her passage out and the voyage home on the *Oriole*. This account may be found in *Whaling Wives* by Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Beetle Hough. The *Oriole* arrived in New Bedford on September 2, 1866, and the Jernegan's son, Prescott, was born the 17th of December, so the family stayed ashore the next two years.

In October, 1868, Jared took command of the *Roman*, which had just been altered from a ship to a bark. Helen and the two younger children accompanied him and were five months at sea before reaching Honolulu.

Here the family stayed while Jared went whaling in the Arctic summers and, when he returned in the fall, the family joined him aboard the *Roman* for the between seasons cruises to the line.

A detailed account of the voyage on the *Roman* and the family's life in Honolulu, as remembered and transcribed for her children by Helen Jernegan later (1912) and six-year old Laura's diary may also be found in *Whaling Wives*. Among the many interesting events was Jared's second meeting with his brother Nathan. Seventeen years ago they had met by chance at the Sandwich Islands, but this time they arranged by letter to meet on a certain day in March, 1869, in mid-ocean - and they did. Captain Nathan Jernegan, in command of the whaleship *Splendid* of Edgartown, had not been home for three years, so he had many questions to ask about the Vineyard. The family visited all day while Captain Jared was arranging for supplies of salt provisions and other articles which Nathan needed to be transferred from the *Roman* to the *Splendid*, and Captain Nathan, who had just left port, reciprocated with "all kinds of fruit and vegetables which tasted very good to us." (Helen's notes.)

Another red letter day for Helen was on the 'tween-seasons cruise of 1870 - 1871 when, in February, Jared spoke the bark *Emily Morgan* of New Bedford, Captain Benjamin Dexter. The captain's wife was aboard and she and Helen visited on the *Roman*, talking and sewing just as if they were at home in Edgartown.

But a short while later, Helen and the children were badly frightened. The *Roman* had anchored at Resolution Bay at Tahuata, the smallest of the Marquesas, to repair the main topmast and recruit wood and water. Some of the crew, who had

been ashore on liberty had come back to the ship drunk, were incited to mutiny by a half-caste, George Clark, who had a grievance against Jared. Locked in their cabin, Helen and the children heard the angry shouts as the mutineers gained full possession of the deck. The Jernegans feared that the mutineers would set fire to the vessel, but instead, they lowered the boats and pulled for the island. Meantime, the fourth mate and his shore party returned to the ship and released the second mate and the captain, who then called Helen and the children from their cabin. With only nine crewmen, the *Roman* slipped anchor and put to sea; and it was not until then that Mr. Apes, whom they thought the mutineers had killed and tossed overboard, was found, unconscious in the rigging. All hands were relieved to arrive at Honolulu in March.

Jared sailed again for the Arctic, and Helen and the children took passage on a steamer bound for San Francisco and thence home. That season Jared sent home 379 barrels of sperm oil, 2232 barrels of whale oil and 30,763 pounds of whalebone which amounted to \$59,000. This was fortuitous for on September 7, 1871, the *Roman* was crushed by the ice and sank immediately, with scant time for the crew to save themselves. Several other vessels met the same fate before the captains decided to abandon the ships on September 14th. Seven ships had succeeded in getting outside the ice pack and the crews of the abandoned ships made their way in their whaleboats through the icy leads to this comparative safety. Sail was made for the straits and the course laid for Honolulu, which they reached late in October. Jared arrived home a month later. Jared had been whaling for thirty-three consecutive years, despite his prediction that his second voyage aboard the *Erie* would be his "last awhaling." Now he was forty-six years old and he settled down at the house on Summer Street, in Edgartown which had always been his home. Now Jared's family, (soon to be joined by a third son, Marcus W., born August 6, 1872,) was growing up here, thanks to the will of his father which gave "to my son Jared my dwelling house I now live in."

But Jared's seafaring days were not over. In 1874, he bought a fourth interest in the bark *Napoleon* of New Bedford and sailed, as master, for a four-year voyage to the Pacific.

While Captain Jernegan was searching for whales, affairs ashore were managed by his competent wife. Occasionally, this necessitated a trip to the mainland, and Laura would be left to take care of her brothers. A letter written to her mother in November, 1875, tells how she managed, and also gives considerable insight into the Jernegans' family life.

My dear Mama

at precisely five minutes  
of eight Monday evening

.....It seems so funny to be writing to you. I don't remember ever having written to you before.

We have got along nicely today. This morning I got all through my work at eight O'clock. After you went we had breakfast and then I cleared off the table and swept the kitchen and washed the dishes and then I did the rest of the work. I locked your bedroom door just as soon as I did the work there and I put the key under the top of the machine and I did not open it again until I put Marcus to bed. Just before I went to school I put the potatoes in the basin and asked Al to put them on. He said he would so I went to school.

When I got home he had got the table all set and everything all ready. We ate and I washed the dishes and went to school. We had those boiled potatoes I boiled 18 and we ate 10 so as to have enough for breakfast and cold meat and bread and apple pie. Then for supper we had head cheese four cruls five pieces of cake and the rest of the pie. That constituted our supper. I came home in the afternoon at quarter of three and then Al went out. I put Marcus to bed at quarter of 6. He went to sleep real good. This evening Prescott, Ally and I played the new game Al brought us. We played until quarter of 8 and then Al went downstreet.

Prescott got a book this morning down to the library. The name of it was *Forest Exiles*. It was real good. Oh I sent down and got that pound of butter to the Union Store this morning. It was real good. The milk pail is out for I put it out this morning. The milk the boy left this morning was just splendid it tasted exactly like cream. We drank it for supper.

Aunt Deborah and Annie came here this morning quite a long time after you left. You know I couldn't think what I wanted you to get this morning. Well it came to me all of a sudden. It was an Autograph Album. I have been wanting one for ever so long. I don't know as you will have time to get it when you get this letter but never mind if you don't.

Now I think you had better go to S. B. [South Berwick] You

will never have a better chance and we are getting along nicely here at home and you can go just as well as not. I would if I was you. There I believe I have written everything about today. You wouldn't think there was so much to write would you? Prescott is just going to bed now it is half past eight. I let him sit up because I was lonesome. I will write a lot more tomorrow night about tomorrow.

from Laura

During this voyage the bark *Atlantic* collided with the *Napoleon* resulting in a law suit which netted the owners of the latter \$10,000. Jared sold his interest and bought a half interest in the *Tropic Bird*, which he fitted for the Arctic. He spent one season there and then sold his half of the vessel and its cargo for \$53,000, and returned home overland.

The middle of August, 1881, Captain Jernegan took the bark *Bounding Billow*, Edgartown, to the North Pacific. Here he whaled until November 15, 1882, returning to San Francisco, from which port the bark sailed for the next ten years.

In July, 1883, Captain Jernegan sailed the *Napoleon* to the North Pacific, where he fished until the end of October, 1884, returning to San Francisco and home. Jared owned a half of the *Napoleon*, and other members of the Jernegan family also owned in her. They were understandably upset when Captain Samuel P. Smith who had bought a sixteenth interest from Jared, lost the vessel in the Arctic, May 5, 1885. More tragic was the loss of twenty-two men. Some of the boats were picked up by nearby ships, but two boatloads capsized from which three or four men reached shore; only one, J. B. Vincent of Edgartown, survived. He lived two years with the natives and all that time he carved on small pieces of wood:-

J. B. V. BARK NAP.  
CAPE NAVARIN  
TOBACCO GIVE

These he gave to the Eskimos, instructing them to hand them to any white men they met. Months and months later, one of these crude messages reached a whaler, and Mr. Vincent was rescued.

Twice more Jared went to sea, both times as relief master. In November, 1885, Captain George Baker cleared the bark *Europa* for Japan and the Ochotsk Sea and before long Jared heard from Aiken and Swift, agents, asking him to take over. He brought the

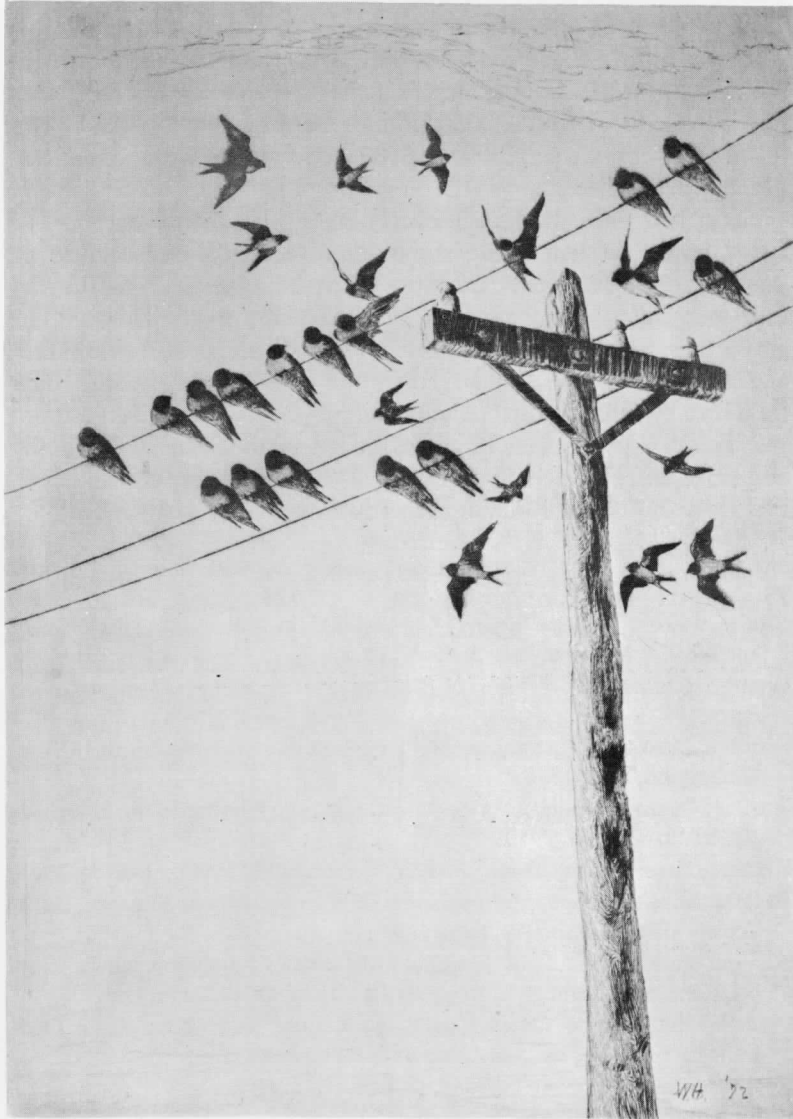
*Europa* back to San Francisco on October 28, 1886, with 1450 barrels of whale oil and 16,000 pounds of bone. The bark *Mary and Susan*, Captain Fisher, left San Francisco a month later, bound for the North Pacific. Again a relief master was needed and Jared, who was still in San Francisco, was given the berth. He brought the *Mary and Susan* into San Francisco November 3, 1887, with 750 barrels of oil and 17,000 pounds of bone. He was paid \$100 per month for his service and given \$70 for fare home from San Francisco.

Jared had been whaling for forty-eight years, but every time he came home he had made some improvement to his house or grounds. The Jernegans, despite - or perhaps because - of the fact that they spent many months at sea, liked growing things. The grapevines, which Jared had planted many years ago, still flourished, and the linden trees, now grown tall and stately, wafted their fragrance over the entire neighborhood. Contentedly, Jared spent the next ten years in his boyhood home, surrounded by his family and friends. He died in January, 1899, but Helen continued to live in the house on Summer Street for over thirty years more.

#### Sources

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- Whiting, Emma Mayhew and Henry Beetle Hough. *Whaling Wives*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1952.
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- Material from the manuscript collection of Professor Marcus Jernegan, Dukes County Historical Society, Edgartown.
- Material from Captain Jared Jernegan's journal and a Jernegan family scrapbook, researched and given to me by Mrs. Mary Willey, Edgartown.
- Pertinent information about Jared's son Alymer, and about Helen Clark Jernegan furnished by Miss Abbie Butler, Edgartown.
- Research assistance by my husband, Donald LeMar Poole.

Etchings  
by WILL HUNTINGTON



Swallows in August



Great Blue Heron at Black Point Pond



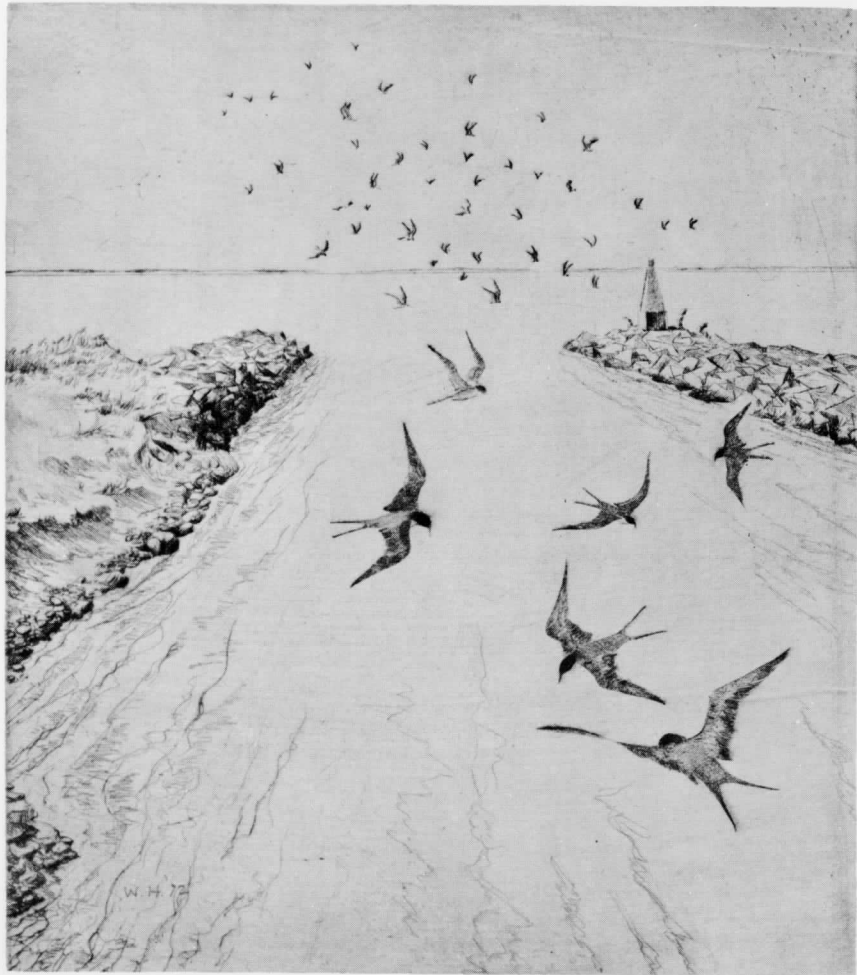


Blue Jays in the Honeysuckle Bush

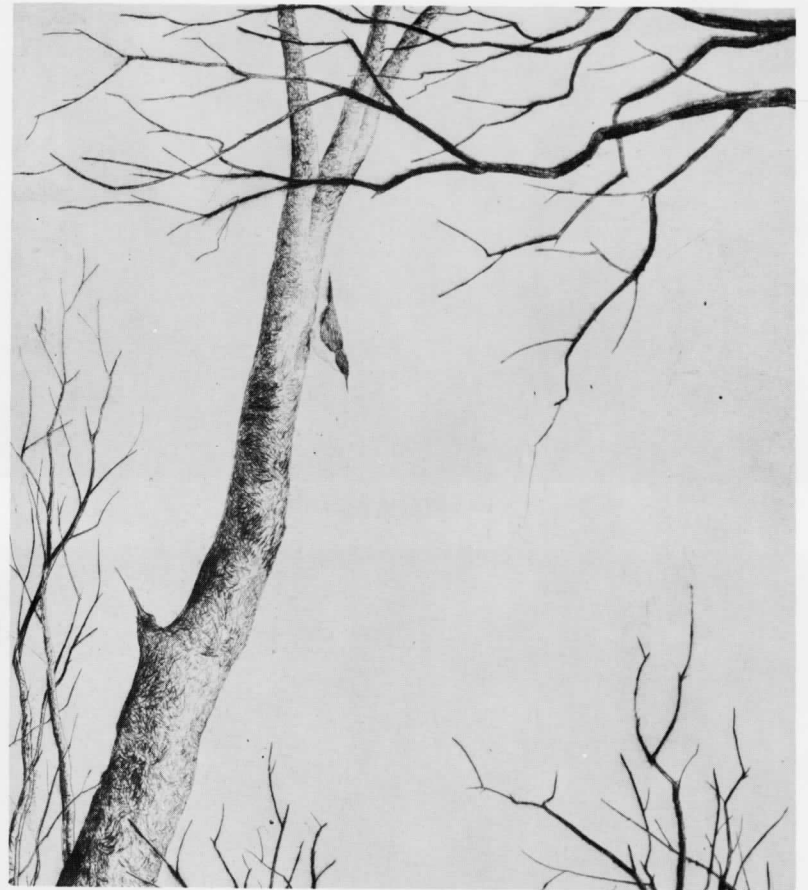


Widgeon over South Beach

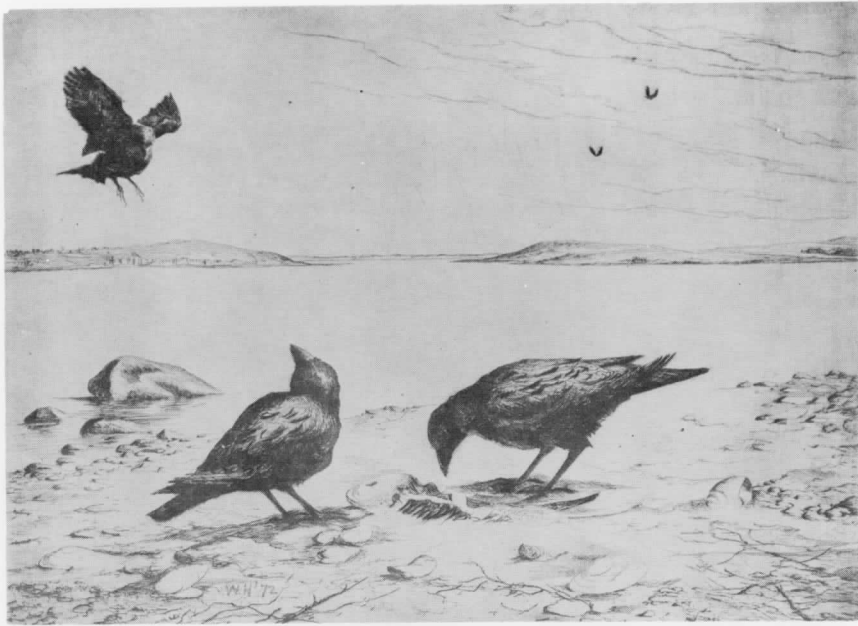




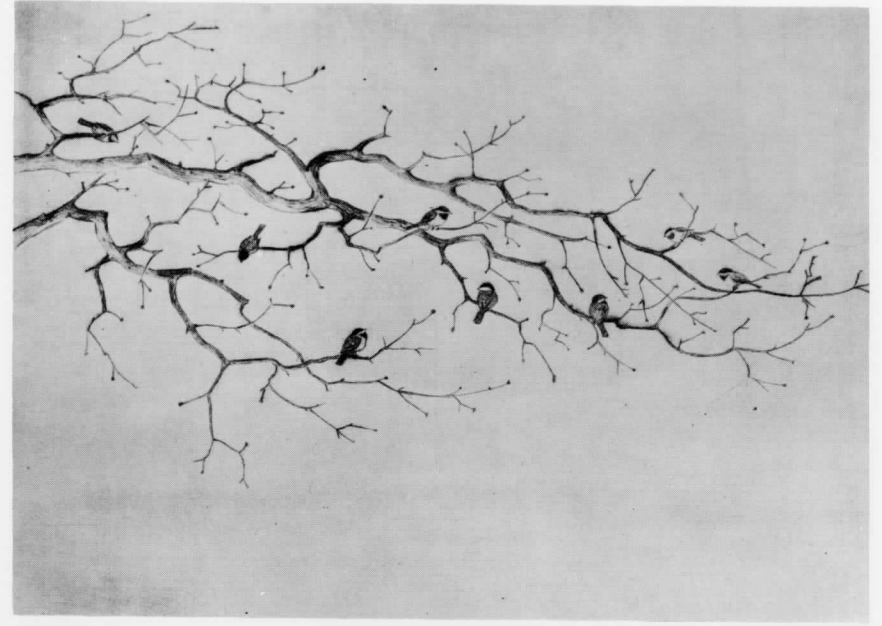
Terns feeding by the jetties



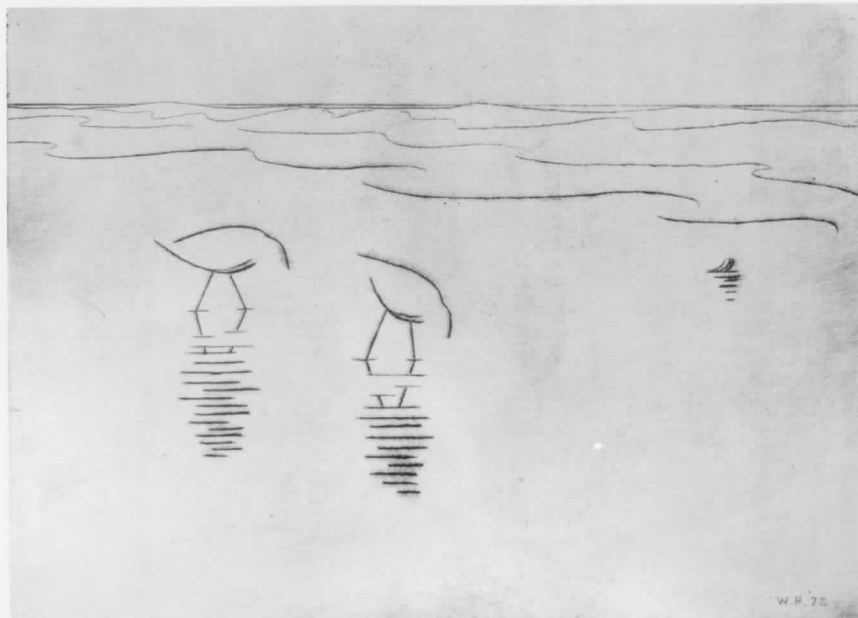
Nuthatch on the Prowl



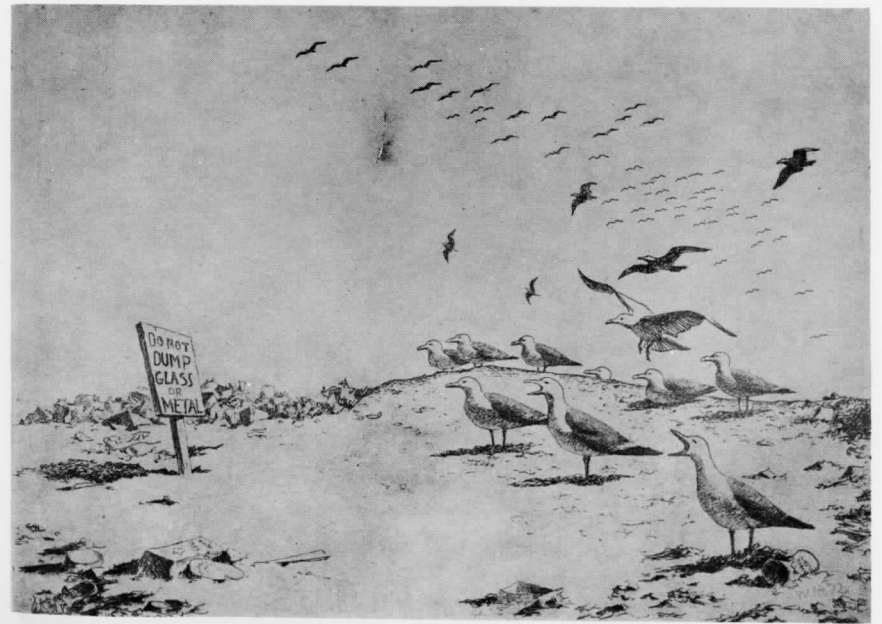
Quitsa Crows



White Oak and Chickadees



Piping Plover on Long Beach near Zach's Cliffs



Garbage and Gulls



Yellow Legs by Crab Creek



Black Ducks over Big Sandy

## DCHS News

Our summer visitors are gone, the Island is quiet again, and we have begun to evaluate the summer of 1972 with ideas on how to improve our services for another season.

We had approximately 6400 visitors this year, between May and November. The numbers have now dropped off with only occasional guests from the hotels still open. With no heating facilities in the Thomas Cooke House, it becomes necessary to close that aspect of our work and to concentrate on serving students and researchers who turn to our research-library for sources of information. We are now open Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 1 - 4 P. M. and Saturdays, 10 - 12, 1 - 4.

Along with the diminishing number of tourists, our staff has diminished also.. Alison Shaw, Pamela Williams, and Richard Kane, have returned to Smith, Oberlin, and the University of Penn. respectively. Frances Phelan has resumed her teaching duties in Baltimore, Maryland, while Anne Luedeman has moved to Boston for winter employment. Gillian Dowley and Deborah Lewis are both experiencing life in a kibbutz in Israel, as part of their college work. Gillian is at Kfar Blum in Upper Galilee, making a study of child development under kibbutz conditions.

Mrs. Hilda Gilluly continued as our hostess through the middle of October, assisted by volunteers: Mrs. John Achelis, Mrs. John Ferris, Miss Charlotte Hall, Mrs. Lane Lovell, and Mrs. George Mathiesen. Helping the Curator and Reference librarian in the Library, have been: Mrs. Samuel Halperin, as Registrar of Accessions, with Mrs. Harold Hassinger and Mrs. Wallace Tobin assisting in clerical work. Mrs. Kenneth Stoddard, Genealogist, has done a superb piece of work in organizing new genealogical files.

Mary Lee Steimel, Archivist, who has performed such notable work with our photographic files, maps, books and manuscripts, has resigned to further her education at the University in Louisville, Kentucky, where she expects to complete her degree in Library Science in 1973. Her leaving us is a great loss to the organization. She will be personally missed by all of those who came to know her.

One of the many contributions of Mary Lee's work was the display by which our organization was represented at the West Tisbury Agricultural Fair. With the assistance of other members of the staff, Mary Lee set up a display on the stage of the Grange Hall depicting the handicraft of the women of yesteryear. The display received commendations from many.

Mrs. K. Shedd of Edgartown has taken home many of the herbs from our old-English herb garden, to care for them until spring planting season. We appreciate her interest and her valuable assistance.

In September, the Archivist and Curator attended the thirty-second annual meeting of the American Association for State and Local History, held in Providence, Rhode Island. This was a privilege, as the conference was staffed with excellent speakers. The meeting next year will be held in Vancouver.

During early October, we were visited by students from Moses Brown School in Providence, R. I. and the Trailside Country School in Killington, Vermont. Several private schools often plan a week on the Island in the fall.

In July, the entire Island was saddened by the death of Allen Burns Gelinis, landscape artist, who was responsible for our grounds as well as over a hundred others. A memorial fund was established which has grown to over three hundred dollars and which will provide for memorial planting in the spring.

For those who visit the Island in the winter months, and for those who are privileged to make the Island their year-round residence, we extend a warm welcome to stop in at the research library and browse among the books on our shelves. Although we are not a lending library, we perform a distinct service in the community. Those who use our resources find the experience enjoyable and stimulating.

Margaret R. Chatterton  
Curator

## ACCESSIONS, July - September 1972

### ARTIFACTS:

*Table* made by donor's grandfather, gift of Henry C. Ottiwell.  
*Chair*, Windsor style, c. 1835, gift of Mrs. Everett Jones in memory of Lydia C. H. Drew and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Howes.  
*Hooked Rug*, gift of Mrs. C. H. Mahler.  
*Watercolor* by J. M. Rosé, 11 *watercolors* by Grace Norton Rose, 10 *etched plates* of Edgartown subjects, and 3 *drawings* by J. M. Rose, gift of Mrs. Upton Thomas.  
*Clacker*, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Coon and Miss Frances McGaw.  
*Toy sad iron*, gift of Mrs. Ralph R. Martin.  
*Bonnet*, gift of Miss Emily Nitchie.  
*Dolman and collapsible opera hat*, gift of Deidamia Osborn Bettencourt.

### BOOKS:

*From Time to Time* by Mary Payne with drawings by Edith Yoder, gift of the author.  
*Historical Collections Relating to the History and Antiquities of Every Town in Massachusetts* by John Warner Barber, 1841, gift of Candace C. Kasner.  
*Annual Report of the Town of Tisbury - 1970, and Tisbury 1671-1971*, gift of Mrs. Atherton C. Smith.  
*Holy Bible*, 1854, used on ship *Navigator* of Edgartown, gift of Thrift Shop, Community Services.  
*An Account of the disbursement of the State Bounty by the Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society, Nov. 28, 1893-Sept. 20, 1933*, gift of Mrs. Charles Tucker.

### PAPERS AND MANUSCRIPTS:

*85 Register Bonds* issued in Edgartown by John P. Norton between 1833 and 1840, gift of Acorn Foundation, Alexander O. Vietor, Pres.  
*Papers* belonging to Joseph E. Howes, gift of Mrs. Everett Jones. 5 *deeds*, 18th and early 19th century, to land on Chappaquiddick, gift of Deidamia Osborn Bettencourt.  
*Maps, postcards, letter, brochures and clippings* related to Vineyard, gift of Mrs. Upton Thomas.

#### PHOTOGRAPHS AND PRINTS:

2 *photographs* of Captain Henry H. Rice, gift of Clarence Carlson.

14 *photographs* of Vineyard subjects, gift of Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce.

*Mayhew Family Tree*, gift of Mrs. Alfred W. Bosworth.

*Photographs and negatives* of Vineyard subjects, gift of Mrs. Upton Thomas.

Marian R. Halperin  
Registrar

#### *Some Publications*

OF THE DUKES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON SALE  
AT ISLAND BOOK STORES AND IN THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY.

*The Mammals of Martha's Vineyard* by Allan R. Keith. Illustrated, paper. 50¢.

*Whaling Wives* by Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Beetle Hough. A new edition. Illustrated. Cloth \$4.50.

*Capawack Alias Martha's Vineyard* by Warner F. Gookin. Cloth \$1.00.

*Martha's Vineyard A Short History and Guide*. Eleanor Ransom Mayhew, Editor. New edition with added index. Maps and illustrations. Paper \$2.50.

*Our Enchanted Island* by Marshall Shepard. An attempt to prove that Martha's Vineyard is the Island of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Paper, 50¢.

*The Heath Hen's Journey to Extinction* by Henry Beetle Hough. Illustrations. Paper 50¢.

*The Fishes of Martha's Vineyard* by Joseph B. Elvin. With 36 illustrations of fishes by Will Huntington. Paper, 50¢.

*The History of Martha's Vineyard* by Charles Edward Banks. A new edition. Indices, illustrations, three volumes. Cloth, \$30.00.

*Tales and Trails of Martha's Vineyard* by Joseph C. Allen. Illustrated. \$3.95. When ordering by mail please add 25¢ to cover postage and handling.

*"Cap'n George Fred" Himself*. The autobiography of Captain George Fred Tilton of Chilmark. A new edition. Cloth. \$6.50.

*Wild Flowers of Martha's Vineyard* by Nelson Coon. Illustrated. Paper \$3.95.

*An Introduction To Martha's Vineyard* by Gale Huntington. Paper \$3.50.

*Indian Legends Of Martha's Vineyard* by Dorothy R. Scoville. Paper \$2.50.

*Come - Tour With Me* by Deidamia Osborn Bettencourt. A description of the Dukes County Historical Society's Cooke House, museum and grounds. Illustrated, paper. 50¢.

*Shipwrecks On Martha's Vineyard* by Dorothy R. Scoville. Illustrated, paper. \$3.00.



