"No Seas Can Now Divide Us": Captains' Wives, Sister Sailors, and the New England Whalefishery, 1840-1870

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“NO SEAS CAN NOW DIVIDE US”: CAPTAINS’ WIVES, SISTER SAILORS, AND THE NEW ENGLAND WHALEFISHERY, 1840-1870

A Dissertation Presented

by

AMANDA L. GOODHEART

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

SEPTEMBER 2018

Department of History

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DEDICATION

To Mike, with love and gratitude.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people whose love, assistance, and encouragement have made this dissertation possible, and I am grateful for the opportunity to thank them publicly for their support.

I'd like to begin by thanking my parents for taking my brother and I to South Shore beach every summer, as well as for our annual summer trips to battlefields, historic sites, and museums along the East Coast. My dual loves of history and the sea were forged during those early childhood years.

Though they have long since passed, I would like to thank my primary research subjects, Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble, for living extraordinary lives and for having the foresight to document them. Special thanks to Elizabeth's great-great-grandson Steve Holmes for sharing his family's legacy with me.

There are several faculty members at Salve Regina University to whom I owe a debt of gratitude. Joyce Botelho's Introduction to Public History class change the course of my professional career, while Brother John Buckley and John Quinn provided support during the research and writing of my undergraduate thesis on this topic. I'm also grateful for Timothy Neary's inspiration both as a professor and professional colleague, as well as his help in guiding me through the graduate school application process.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Sara Meirowitz, former Supervisor of Interpretation at Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., for giving me the opportunity to live and work at the Seaport as an undergraduate intern in the summer of 2007. I will treasure the memories I made that summer for years to come.

Many members of the UMass Amherst History Department have contributed to this dissertation over the years. I'm particularly thankful for the ladies and gentlemen of Joyce Berkman's Women's History Seminar and Steve Platt's Writing History class for their help in shaping the arguments and style of this study. I am also thankful for Mary Lashway, whose invaluable help and cheerful support in navigating program fees, half-time status, and all things Graduate School has been deeply appreciated over the years. I am also grateful to have been awarded the department's Caldwell Writing Prize in 2010 as well for the Graduate Department Travel Grant in 2012 for this research during my time at UMass.

No acknowledgements section in a dissertation would be complete without thanking the many archivists who helped make its research possible. Mine is no different, and begins by thanking Mark Procknick at the New Bedford Whaling Museum for his many years of patient, cheerful assistance. Thanks also to the reference staff at the Westfield Athenaeum for battling troublesome microfilm readers on my behalf. I'd also like to thank the staff at the Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., the Nantucket Historical Association, and the Stonington Historical Society for their assistance, as well as Betsy Tyler for sharing her research on the Veeders with me. Thanks also to Harvard University's Baker and Schlesinger Libraries, the Martha's Vineyard Museum, the Mattapoisett Historical Society, the Nantucket Atheneum, the New Bedford Free Public Library, the Newport Historical Society, the Phillips Library at the Peabody Essex Museum, and the Providence Public Library staff for preserving primary source materials that have been invaluable to this study.

I have been fortunate to present portions of this dissertation to public over the years. Within the world of academia, I have spoken about the sister sailors at the 2009 Maritime Conference in the Humanities, the 2012 American Cultural Association/Popular Culture Association Annual Meeting, and the 2016 Dublin Seminar for Early New England Folklife. I have also given talks about my research at the Springfield Museums, the Avon Free Public Library, the Enfield Public Library, the Essex Public Library, the Brainerd Memorial Library, and the Chester Memorial Library. Special thanks to my friend and former colleague Kristina Guerin at the Springfield Museums for giving me my first paid lecture gig back in 2015, and thereby introducing me to the local lecture circuit.

I'd like to offer a collective thank you to my family, friends, and coworkers for their support during my time in graduate school. From filling my office with inflatable whale pool toys to listening to my endless rambles about gender and whaling, thank you for encouraging me as I traveled along this journey.

My final acknowledgements are dedicated to the individuals without whom I could not have reached this point. I'd like to begin by thanking Barry Levy for his expertise and maritime humor, both of which I greatly appreciated as I pursued my Ph.D. at a university far from the sea. I'm thankful for his willingness to serve on my committee and for his support over the past five years.

Thanks also go to Manisha Sinha for sticking with me even after taking a position at another university, and for always encouraging me to find balance between my personal and professional life. She has been my cheerleader from the very beginning of this process, and I am deeply grateful for it.

I’d like to thank Marla R. Miller for her steadfast guidance and support both during my time as a graduate student as well as a young professional working in my chosen field. I would not be where I am today without her.

Heartfelt thanks to Joyce Avrech Berkman for providing me with support, encouragement, and commitment long into her retirement, and for guiding me as I progressed on my journey from a bright-eyed first year graduate student to a historian of women and gender. Joyce served as a member of the UMass faculty for forty-eight years, so I carry the fact that my dissertation will be the last of her long and noteworthy career like a badge of honor.

Thanks are also owed to my oldest and dearest friend Amanda J. Kowalski. Though we have long been separated by distance, her friendship, humor, and unmatched talent as a writer have made this study, and me, all the better.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband Mike, the mariner who sailed away with my heart all those years ago, and who has been my safe harbor amidst stormy seas ever since. None of what follows would have been possible without him.

ABSTRACT

“NO SEAS CAN NOW DIVIDE US”: CAPTAINS’ WIVES, SISTER SAILORS, AND THE NEW ENGLAND WHALEFISHERY, 1840-1870

SEPTEMBER 2018

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Between 1840 and 1870, nearly three hundred whaling captains’ wives accompanied their husbands at sea aboard New England whaleships. Unlike previous scholarship which has analyzed these women solely within the context of mid-nineteenth century domesticity, this study argues these women effected real and lasting change within their communities and the New England whalefishery. By going to sea with their husbands, women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble defied longstanding gendered traditions wherein men hunted whales at sea and women supported those efforts ashore. In doing so, they joined the ranks of the sister sailors, a term first created by one of the women featured in this study. Using their personal writings as a point of departure, this study examines the transformative nature of the sister sailors’ experiences at sea, how those experiences contributed to changing perceptions of women within whaling communities, as well as to what extent those experiences were influenced by the social, cultural, and political developments of the mid-nineteenth century. This study challenges current narratives about the sister sailors’ significance in the history of the New England whalefishery, while also introducing new

variables of interpretation to the study of nineteenth-century women’s lives and gender norms.

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INTRODUCTION

Like the women featured in this study, I too have undergone a transformative experience aboard a whaleship. The vessel in question was the *Charles W. Morgan*, and though she never left her berth, my time aboard her nevertheless changed my life in profound and meaningful ways. Not only did the *Morgan* help me decide that I wanted to pursue a career in the museum field, but she also introduced me to the women who would become my research subjects, muses, and intellectual shipmates for the next ten years.

It began in the summer of 2007 when I joined the staff of Mystic Seaport as an undergraduate intern. Whereas most students usually work as interpreters or curatorial assistants as part of their internship experience, that summer I became a cast member in the Seaport's children's theater production "Tale of a Whaler." The play focuses on my character, Julie, a young women who disguises herself as a man and joins the crew of a whaling ship after her lover jilts her. With its maritime puns, audience participation sequences, and traveling player-esque props, "Tale of a Whaler" tends to skew more edutainment than education. However, what the play may lack in dramaturgy it makes up for in production value, as it is staged in an open air theater with the majestic *Charles W. Morgan* as its sole set piece every summer.

While my fellow cast members came from purely theatrical backgrounds and therefore expressed little interest in the *Morgan* beyond the requisite talking points— built in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1846, the *Morgan* whaled for eighty years and is now the only wooden whaleship left in the world— I, being both a thespian and a historian, was captivated with the *Morgan*, and thereby spent as much time as I could aboard her decks that summer. From her bowsprit to her helm, from her captain's cabin to her fo’c’sle, from her hold to her mizzen mast, I came to know every inch of that vessel. I ran my hands along her weathered deck, I saw shafts of light beaming down through her deck prisms, I even crawled into one of the crewman’s bunks— with permission, of course. Yet, it was the *Morgan* deck house that proved to be her most significant feature, for it was during a conversation about said deck house that I first learned about the five whaling captains’ wives who accompanied their husbands at sea aboard the *Morgan* during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Women, aboard whaleships? Surely this was an anomaly. “No,” the interpreter replied with a warm smile, one I’ve come to adopt when sharing surprising information with museum visitors, “Lots of women sailed aboard whaleships.” Fascinated, I pressed him for more details. “I’m not exactly sure how many there were, but the museum’s Collection Research Center has some of their journals.”

The next morning I arrived at the Mystic Seaport Collection Research Center’s reading room and shared my question with the archivist. She gave me that same knowing smile, disappeared for a few minutes, and returned with a manuscript. “This is the journal Mary Brewster kept while aboard the whaleship *Tiger* in the mid-nineteenth century,” she said, “I think you might enjoy it.” To say that I enjoyed reading that journal would be an understatement of epic proportions. I did not just enjoy Mary’s witty, charming prose; I devoured it. Inspired by what I found in Mary’s journal, I began researching other women who went to sea aboard whaleships. That research took me to two other seaside communities; Nantucket, where I discovered Susan Veeder, and New Bedford, where I first learned of Elizabeth Marble. And just like that, I was, as my “Tale of Whaler” character Julie would say, completely hooked.

Over the past ten years I have come to know the three women featured in this study better than most people know their closest friends. I have read their journals and annotated their letters. I have examined their portraits and handled their personal possessions. I have read their wills and visited their graves. I have found their former homes and spoken to their descendants. I have read the love poems their husbands wrote to them and I have uncovered evidence of their greatest sorrows. I have doubted their assertions and I have challenged their statements. I have answered many questions and I have formed many more. It has been a long journey from that fateful summer at the Seaport to now, and this dissertation is the end result of that experience.

Between 1840 and 1870, nearly three hundred New England whaling captains' wives accompanied their husbands at sea aboard whaleships.[1] In doing so, they challenged longstanding conceptions of gender that had sustained New England whaling communities and the whalefishery for more than a century. Although none of the women featured in this study left behind evidence indicating they knowingly or purposefully tested these prevailing gender norms, they were nevertheless agents of change within their communities and the New England whalefishery, as their presence aboard whaleships challenged mid-nineteenth century conceptions of gender as understood by men and women in New England whaling communities. Men hunted whales at sea, women supported those efforts ashore; such was the status quo in New England whaling communities until the mid-nineteenth century, when women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble joined their husbands at sea. Enabled by a series of social, economic, and industrial factors, these women underwent transformative experiences while at sea, and these experiences impacted not only themselves and their families, but their communities and the New England whalefishery as well. Yet, aside from a small sampling of scholarship, these remarkable women have been largely excluded from both the historical narrative of the New England whalefishery and the study of women and gender in nineteenth century New England. This study seeks to correct this omission, and in doing so, demonstrate that women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth were not just captains' wives, but rather sister sailors, women whose experiences at sea effected real and lasting change within New England society during the mid-nineteenth century.[2]

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[1] See Appendix A.

In her landmark book *Gender and the Politics of History,* historian Joan Scott defines gender as the social organization of sexual difference. Unlike the term sex which defines an individual as anatomically male or female, gender describes the social and cultural construction of sex founded in relationships of power.[3] Although it is commonly assumed that an individual's gender stems directly from their sex, in reality, the cultural meanings and values used to define men and women's gendered roles in society are fluid, complex, and ever changing, both historically and in the present day. Therefore, the ideals and experiences of masculinity and femininity are both socially constructed and historically valuable. Gender is also a useful category of historical analysis, and when combined with the analytical tools of race and class, becomes an intersectional lens through which social relationships can be explored. For purposes of this study, my focus is the experience of white, middle-class women in New England whaling communities. As a gender scholar, I recognize the importance of race as a social construction and a metalanguage, as well as the role of class in the study of history. However, because my research subjects all share a common racial and class background, this study focuses on exploring the social and industrial implications of gender as experienced by white, middle class women in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities.[4] Areas of future exploration relative to this topic include studies of women of color within New England whaling communities, examinations of marriage and family life as experienced by men and women of color in the New England whalefishery, and studies of working-class white women in New England whaling communities.

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[2] The sister sailors were not the only women at sea during the mid-nineteenth century. The wives of merchant captains and British naval officers frequently accompanied their husbands at sea, and many women sailed aboard passenger vessels during this period as travelers, emigrants, missionaries, or family members of men involved in diplomatic service. Women also worked at sea during the mid-nineteenth century. There are several examples of women disguising themselves as men to serve on maritime crews, and women also worked as laundresses or stewardesses aboard commercial vessels. There were also women whose presence at sea was involuntary during the mid-nineteenth century. Such was the case for many women engaged in maritime prostitution, as well as the thousands of enslaved women who were transported by sea as part of the international slave trade. For a popular history of women living aboard merchant vessels, see Joan Druett, *Hen Frigates: Passion and Peril, Nineteenth Century Women at Sea*. For an overview of British naval officers' wives and their experiences at sea, see Suzanne J. Stark, *Female Tars: Women Aboard Ship in the Age of Sail*. See Lila Marz Harper's *Solitary Travelers: Nineteenth-Century Women's Travel Narratives and the Scientific Vocation* for a useful discussion of female travelers in the nineteenth century, and Sari Maenpaa's "Comfort and Guidance for Female Passengers: The Origins of Women's Employment on British Passenger Liners, 18501-1914," *Journal for Maritime Research* 6, No. 1 (November 2004): 145-164, for a history of women employees aboard passenger vessels. Edwin C. Guillet's *The Great Migration: The Atlantic Crossing by Sailing Ship from 1770* provides a detailed account of the emigrant experience aboard nineteenth century sailing vessels, while Robin Miskolcze's chapter on the Middle Passage in *Women and Children First: Nineteenth Century Narratives and American Identity* documents the experience of enslaved women at sea.

[3] Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999), 2.

This study builds upon and adds to the theoretical and analytical frameworks of three distinct historiographies: the prolific bodies of scholarship pertaining to the American whaling industry and women in nineteenth century New England, as well as the small yet significant collection of work on gender in the New England whalefishery. My dissertation also serves as a link between these three historical narratives. By adding gender to the categories of analysis within the history of American whaling, my work examines previously unexplored topics including the impact of the sister sailors on the mid-nineteenth century New England whalefishery. By examining these women as agents of historical change within New England whaling communities, my work also adds new variables of interpretation to the study of women's lives and gender relations during the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, my work represents the first scholarly analysis of the sister sailors. Whereas popular historians have chronicled these women in narrative histories, and gender historians have examined these women solely within the context of mid-nineteenth century domesticity, this dissertation is the first academic study to analyze the sister sailors as agents of historical change in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities. By examining how the sister sailors' experiences at sea impacted themselves, their communities, and the New England whalefishery, this study demonstrates the lasting historical significance of Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble as ordinary women who nevertheless lived extraordinary lives.[5]

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[4] For more on race as a metalanguage in the study of history, see Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *SIGNS* 17 No.2 (1992), 251-274. For useful examinations of race and gender during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race and Power in Colonial Virginia*; Catherine Adams, *Love of Freedom: Black Women in Colonial and Revolutionary New England*; and Martha Hodes, *The Sea Captain's Wife: A True Story of Love, Race, and War in the Nineteenth Century*.

Although published accounts of whaling voyages date back to the early 1820s, it was not until the twilight days of the New England whalefishery that the industry became a topic of historical focus. Beginning in the 1870s, residents of whaling communities such as Nantucket began compiling histories of their fishery. Many of these amateur historians, including Obed Macy and Alexander Starbuck, came from New England's oldest whaling families, and thereby recognized the importance of preserving their communities' unique heritage. Over a century later, their compilations of whalefishery history and industrial records represent the foundation upon which the study of American whaling is built.[6] As the last of the whaleships disappeared from New England wharves during the 1920s, other local historians followed in Macy and Starbuck's footsteps, publishing historical accounts glorifying the mighty New England whalefishery.[7] During the Great Depression, several important compendiums of whalefishery records were published with funding provided by the federal government including *Whaling Masters*, a directory of American whaling captains, and *Ships Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts*, a collection of vessel ownership records from New England's largest whaling port.[8] The American whalefishery became a topic of scholarly interest beginning in the 1940s. Reginald B. Hegarty's *Birth of a Whaleship* and Foster Rhea Dulles's *Lowered Boats: A History of American Whaling* are among the earliest historical monographs on American whaling, while Karl Brant's *Whale Oil: An Economic Analysis* represents the first economic analysis of the New England whalefishery.[9] Though the field of social history first emerged in the 1960s, it was not until the late 1980s that historians began applying social methodologies to the study of American whaling. Notable studies from this period include the work of Lance Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter on the economics of whaling, and social histories written by Briton Cooper Busch and Richard Ellis.[10] This period also gave rise to a new generation of popular historians. In recent years, the work of Nathaniel Philbrick and Eric Jay Dolin has helped foster continued interest in the history of the New England whalefishery among the public.[11] This interest has led to the development of several noteworthy documentaries, a Hollywood feature film, and increased visitation at historical organizations such the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the Nantucket Historical Association, and Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., whose missions focus on the preservation and interpretation of America’s maritime history.

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[5] The sister sailors therefore belong in the same historical category as women missionaries, camp followers, and diplomat's wives, as their experiences at sea demonstrate that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, women were utilizing traditional understandings of gender even as they lived unconventional, and in some cases, extraordinary lives. For an analysis of women in missionary work, see Jennifer Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives: How Gender and Empire Remade Hawai'i's Pacific World* and Dana Lee Robert, *American Women in Mission: The Modern Mission Era, 1792-1992*. For a thorough analysis of women camp followers, see *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution*. For an overview of women's experiences in diplomatic service see Helen McCarthy, "Women, Marriage, and Work in the British Diplomatic Service," Women's History Review 23, No. 6 (December 2014): 853-873.

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[6] Obed Macy, *The History of Nantucket; Being a Compendious Account of the First Settlement of the Island by the English, Together with the Rise and Progress of the Whalefishery; And Other Historical Facts Relative to Said Island and Its Inhabitants* (Boston, MA: Hilliard, Gray and Co.,), 1853; Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 1878, Reprint (Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books), 1989.

[7] Some noteworthy studies from this era include Walter Sheldon Tower's *A History of the American Whalefishery*, E. Keble Chatteron's *Whalers and Whaling: The Story of the Whaling Ships Up to the Present Day*, Elmo P. Hohman's *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry*, and A. Hyatt Verill's *The Real Story of the Whaler: Whaling Past and Present*.

[8] Federal Writers' Project of the Works Project Administration of Massachusetts, *Whaling Masters* (New Bedford, MA: Old Dartmouth Historical Society), 1938; National Archives Project, *Ships Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts* (Boston, MA: The National Archives Project), 1940.

In general, the scholarship that presently exists on the history of the New England whalefishery either chronicles the industry from its origins to its downfall, or examines the economics of whaling. Precious few of these studies utilize the tools of intersectional analysis. Of the scholarly works analyzing the role of race in the American maritime tradition, David Cecelski's *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime America* and W. Jeffrey Bolster's *Black Jacks: African-American Seamen in the Age of Sail* are the most noteworthy, as they both examine the experiences of men of color in various maritime professions.[12] There are currently no scholarly monographs that analyze the role of class in the New England whalefishery, and as subsequent discussions will demonstrate, gender is also largely absent from comprehensive overviews of American whaling, both those written during the early twentieth century as well as more modern studies. By adding gender to the list of analytical tools in the study of the mid-nineteenth century New England whalefishery, this study enhances the scholarship on the history of American whaling.

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[9] Reginald B. Hegarty, *Birth of a Whaleship* (New Bedford, MA: New Bedford Free Public Library), 1964; Foster Rhea Dulles, *Lowered Boats: A Chronicle of American Whaling* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company), 1953; Karl Brandt, *Whale Oil: An Economic Analysis* (Palo Alto, CA: Food Research Institute at Stanford University), 1940.

[10] Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter, *In Pursuit of the Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1816-1906* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press). 1997; Briton Cooper Busch, *Whaling Will Never Do For Me: The American Whaleman in the Nineteenth Century* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press), 1994; Richard Ellis, *Men & Whales* (New York, NY: Alfred Knopf), 1991.

[11] Nathaniel Philbrick, *Away Off Shore, Nantucket Island and Its People, 1602-1890* (Nantucket, MA: Mill Hill Press), 1994; Nathaniel Philbrick, *In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex* (New York, NY: Viking), 2000; Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan*: *The History of Whaling in America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company), 2007.

Over the past fifty years, historians in the field of women and gender have produced a wealth of scholarship in an effort to reclaim women's historical experiences, analyze the effects of historical events on their lives, and assert their role in shaping American history. From the late 1960s through the 1980s, the bulk of scholarship on women in nineteenth century America found its theoretical roots in the separate spheres, a concept first introduced in Barbara Welter's landmark study "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860" and later articulated by Nancy Cott in *The Bonds of Womanhood: Women's Sphere in New England, 1780-1835*.[13] While Cott argued that the ideology of the separate spheres inspired the concept of sisterhood that would later form the intellectual basis of the feminist movement during the mid-nineteenth century, the theoretical construct of the separate spheres has been widely criticized in recent years. In her landmark article, “Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman’s Place: The Rhetoric of Women’s History,” Linda Kerber characterizes the historical community’s preoccupation with the separate spheres theory as an attempt to “impose narrative and analytical order on the anarchy of inherited evidence.”[14] In the case of nineteenth century American women, the inherited evidence is largely paradoxical. Women remained in the same secondary legal and political status as their predecessors during this period, yet, according to many historians, mid-nineteenth century gender norms maintained greater degrees of elasticity than the prescriptive ideology of the separate spheres might suggest.[15] This study adds to this new generation of scholarship in the field of women and gender history by introducing a new area in which to demonstrate the complexity of mid-nineteenth century gender norms; that of New England whaling communities.

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[12] David Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 2001; W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 1997.

[13] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, No. 2 (1966), 151-174; Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: Woman's Sphere in New England 1780-1835* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), 1978.

The final historiographic framework this study builds upon is the small yet significant body of work on gender in the New England whalefishery. Prior to the 1990s, scholarship on gender in the American whaling industry was limited to two formats: edited diaries of women who went to sea, and a handful of works written by popular historians.[16] Over the past twenty years, historians Margaret Creighton and Lisa Norling have transformed the study of gender in the New England whalefishery. With the exception of a few popular histories of maritime women, their work comprises the entire body of scholarship on gender in the New England whaling industry.[17]

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[14] Linda Kerber, “Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History,” *Journal of American History* 75, No. 1 (June 1988), 9-39.

[15] For noteworthy examples of scholarship that challenges the separate spheres ideology’s role in nineteenth century gender norms see Anne Boylan’s *The Origins of Women’s Activism: New York and Boston, 1797-1840*; Barbara Cutter’s *Domestic Devils, Battlefield Angels: The Radicalism of American Womanhood 1830-1865;* Nancy A. Hewitt’s *Women’s Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872;* Catherine E. Kelly’s *In the New England Fashion: Reshaping Women’s Lives in the Nineteenth Century*; and Mary P. Ryan’s *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865*.

[16] Some highlights of this early scholarship include Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Beetle Hough’s *Whaling Wives of Martha’s Vineyard*, Genevieve M. Darden’s *My Dear Husband: Being a Collection of Heretofore Unpublished Letters of the Whaling Era*, as well as the published versions of Annie Ricketson, Mary Lawrence, and Eliza William’s journals.

Margaret Creighton's contributions to the study of gender in the whaling industry include two landmark studies. Her book *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870*, represents the first scholarly attempt to examine gender and masculinity in the context of the whalefishery. In *Rites and Passages*, Creighton argues whaling was a transformative, gendered experience for American men.[18] Rejecting the concept of universal masculinity, Creighton claims the dangerous, difficult work of whaling turned whaleships into melting pots wherein differing perspectives of class, race, gender, and authority blended together creating a uniquely maritime rite of passage into manhood for American whalemen.[19] Creighton furthers this argument in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World*, claiming whaleships were also sites for the construction and strengthening of masculine identities.[20] In her discussion of women within this “blue water brotherhood,” Creighton examines whalemen's perspectives of women as well as their interactions with women at sea.[21]

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[17] British historian David Cordingly's popular histories on maritime women include *Heroines and Harlots: Women at Sea in the Great Age of Sail and Seafaring Women: Adventures of Pirate Queens, Female Stowaways, and Sailors’ Wives*. Joan Druett’s hugely popular narrative histories include *Hen Frigates: Wives of Merchant Captains Under Sail*, *Petticoat Whalers: Whaling Wives at Sea 1820-1920*, and *She was a Sister Sailor: The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster, 1845-1851*. Suzanne Stark’s *Female Tars: Women Aboard Ship in the Age of Sail* is another noteworthy example of popular histories focusing on maritime women published during this period.

[18] Margaret Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 5.

[19] See Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, specifically chapters 3 and 5.

[20] Margaret Creighton, “Davy Jones' Locker Room: Gender and the American Whaleman, 1830-1870,” in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920*, ed. Creighton and Lisa Norling (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 118.

[21] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 163.

According to Creighton, whalemen categorized women into two archetypes: the good, virtuous, faithful women at home whom they sentimentalized and revered, and the sexually liberated, lower class, foreign women whom they bedded and fantasized about while at sea. According to Creighton, women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble undermined the fraternity of the whaleship, for while whalemen were forced to leave their sweethearts at home, during the mid-nineteenth century some captains were allowed to bring their wives to sea.[22] I concur with Creighton's assessment of whaleships as sites of identity construction for American whalemen, for I argue that the transformative nature of the whaling experience applied to whaling crews as well as the sister sailors, as their time at sea left lasting impacts on themselves, their communities, and the New England whalefishery.

While Margaret Creighton's work focuses on the men who went to sea, Lisa Norling examines the experiences of the women they left ashore. In her landmark study *Captain Ahab had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1720-1870,* Norling examines domesticity in the context of the whaling industry.[23] According to Norling, Nantucket's Quaker culture, particularly the traditions of spiritual equality and the subordination of the self to the community, played a crucial role in the development of the whaling industry. Norling argues these traditions allowed men to focus on building the fishery, while their wives "channeled their energies into sustaining families and a tightly-knit community onshore that could withstand the demographic and socials stresses the risky industry entailed."[24] However, by the early nineteenth-century, the New

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[22] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 166.
[23] Lisa Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery 1730-1870* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 2000.
[24] Norling, 53.

England whaling industry's geographic shift to New Bedford also brought about a shift in whaling communities' conceptions of gender, as domesticity replaced Nantucket's Quaker consensus. Norling argues this shift coincided with several other changes in the industry, including expanding the fishery beyond the Atlantic, a drastic increase in the number of whaling vessels and annual voyages, as well as increasingly diverse port communities. According to Norling, women in mid-century whaling communities were faced with a painful discrepancy— how could they be proper wives and mothers while their husbands were at sea for years at time? Norling argues they responded by adapting domesticity's prescriptive ideals of marriage, motherhood, and family to the requirements of the whaling industry as best they could.[25] The strength of Norling's analysis lies in her discussion of daily life in mid-century whaling communities as described in the letters and journals of more than sixty-six families. However, by focusing almost exclusively on life in whaling communities and not taking the experiences of the sister sailors into account, Norling overlooks a crucial part of the story of gender in the nineteenth century whalefishery. In her brief discussion of the sister sailors, Norling states “the 'sister sailors' had very little lasting impact on the whaling industry or on society at large; their presence and efforts did not alter the gender roles and relations in maritime communities.”[26]

Norling's characterization of the sister sailors as adherents of mid-century domesticity is shared by others whose work focuses on gender in the New England whalefishery. In her 1977 article, “Feminist and Victorian: The Paradox of American Seafaring Women of the Nineteenth Century,” Julia C. Bonham articulates a similar view of captains' wives who went to sea, arguing “they really did not buck the system by going to sea, because, to them, a woman's place was by her husband's side.”[27] In her foreword to Anne MacKay's publication of Martha Smith Brewer Brown's sea journals, Joan Druett also views the sister sailors' experiences at sea through the lens of domesticity, stating women like Martha had to worry about “endangering their 'true-womanly' image” when they went to sea.[28] This study challenges the standard narrative of women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble, as I argue that mid-nineteenth century whaling communities abided by distinct conceptions of gender that were influenced not by domesticity, but by the realities of the whaling industry. As such, the women who accompanied their husbands at sea were not fulfilling domestic gender norms, but rather challenging conceptions of gender that identified women as shore-side helpmeets whose labor supported men’s’ efforts at sea. Furthermore, I argue that while their presence at sea was often motivated by and in keeping with the principles of domesticity, the sister sailors’ experiences at sea were transformative, not just for themselves, but for their communities and the whalefishery, as their presence aboard whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century led to measurable change within the New England whaling industry. Whereas Lisa Norling characterizes the sister sailors as participants in a “failed experiment in combining maritime work and home life,” I argue that Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, Elizabeth Marble, and their fellow sister sailors were agents of historical change, as their experiences at sea left lasting impacts on themselves, their communities, and their whalefishery.[29]

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[25] Norling, 233.
[26] Norling, 261.

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[27] Julia C. Bonham, “Feminist and Victorian: The Paradox of American Seafaring Women of the Nineteenth Century,” *American Neptune* 37, No. 3 (July 1977), 218.

[28] Joan Druett, introduction to *She Went A-Whaling: The Journal of Martha Smith Brewer Brown from Orient, Long Island, New York around the world on the whaling ship Lucy Ann, 1847-1849,* Anne MacKay, ed., (Orient, New York: Oysterponds Historical Society, 1993), 5.

Of the nearly three hundred women who accompanied their husbands at sea aboard New England whaleships between 1840 and 1870, this study focuses on the experiences of three individuals: Mary Brewster of Stonington, Connecticut; Susan Veeder of Nantucket, Massachusetts, and Elizabeth Marble of Fall River, Massachusetts. I chose these women for several reasons. They lived in three different whaling communities, and their time at sea covers much of this study's scope. Furthermore, though all three women came from white, middle-class backgrounds, their experiences at home and at sea were surprisingly diverse. Most importantly, all three women chronicled their time at sea in journals and letters, and these personal writings, along with those of thirty-five other captains' wives, have provided this study with rich, vivid source material about the sister sailors' experiences at sea. When combined with analysis of supplementary primary source material including logbooks and whaling industry records, as well as the traditional cornerstones of social history analysis— census records, civic records, and vital records— these personal writings demonstrate the impact the sister sailors made on their communities and the New England whalefishery.

Like a whaling voyage, this dissertation also follows a charted course, one that begins with an overview of the New England whalefishery from its origins in Native American culture to its peak in the mid-nineteenth century. By providing an account of the New England whaling industry's origins, major developments, and the nature of the whaling process, Chapter 1 provides a historical foundation for subsequent analysis as to the role of whaling captains' wives within mid-nineteenth century whaling communities and the New England whalefishery. This chapter also includes a discussion of the commodities produced from whales as well as the nature of hunting and processing whales at sea as experienced by nineteenth-century New England whalemen. Although this dissertation is by no means a work of environmental history, Chapter 1 also acknowledges the lasting impact of the whalefishery on the four species of whales pursued by New England whalemen during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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[29] Norling, 261.

In keeping with the use of maritime metaphor, Chapter 2 tacks this study's sails in a new direction by focusing on gender in the New England whalefishery. During the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the gender identities of men and women in New England whaling communities were linked to the vital role their labor played in the growth and sustainability of the whalefishery; men hunted and processed whales at sea, while women supported those efforts on shore. These conceptions of gender fit nicely within the ideological framework of colonial and New Republic gender norms. This harmony between prescriptive gender norms and lived experience ended with the emergence of domesticity as the dominant gender paradigm in mid-nineteenth century New England, as the separate spheres divorced the male, public realm of work and commerce from the female, private realm of the home. Yet, as Chapter 2 will show, women in New England whaling communities continued providing vital support to the whalefishery during the nineteenth century, even as their experiences deviated from the period's prescriptive gender norms. By charting idealized prescriptions of gender as well as the realities of lived experience within New England whaling communities, this chapter will identify, define, and explore the unique conceptions of gender found within the New England whalefishery during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Continuing on this course, Chapter 3 serves as an introduction to the nearly three hundred whaling captains' wives who accompanied their husbands at sea aboard New England whaleships between 1840 and 1870. Through an examination of their motivations for accompanying their husbands at sea, the social and industrial factors that enabled them to do so, and the ramifications of that decision on themselves, their families, and their communities, this chapter will demonstrate how these remarkable women challenged longstanding gender norms. Chapter 3 also introduces this dissertation's three case studies: Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble. By examining these women through a collective survey as well as individual case studies, Chapter 3 demonstrates the historical significance of these women within the history of gender in nineteenth century New England.

Chapter 4 takes this study to sea, literally. Using the rich, vivid source material found in their personal writings, this chapter details Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth's Marble's experiences at sea living aboard New England whaleships while comparing their experiences to those of thirty-five other women whose personal writings survive in publicly accessible collections today. This chapter also examines the sister sailors' journals and letters as examples of diary literature and material culture, and traces the women's journey from captains' wives to sister sailors, a term first coined by Mary Brewster while aboard the ship *Tiger*.

The final chapter of this study follows the sister sailors back to shore. By examining the extent to which Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble's time at sea impacted their lives after they returned home, Chapter 5 demonstrates the transformative nature of the sister sailors' experiences at sea. This chapter also measures the impact of these experiences on the sister sailors' communities and the New England whalefishery. By establishing communities of support for themselves while at sea and influencing popular opinion within the fishery, the sister sailors helped bring about changes in mid-nineteenth century gender norms. Despite the fact that the voyages in which they participated amount to less than six percent of the whalefishery's total productivity between 1840 and 1870, Chapter 5 demonstrates that these remarkable women are nevertheless agents of important and significant change, as their experiences at sea left lasting impacts on their lives, their communities, and the New England whalefishery.

CHAPTER 1

"LET US CHASE THE MIGHTY WHALE": A HISTORY OF THE NEW ENGLAND WHALEFISHERY[30]

Although humans have hunted whales for thousands of years, few people have exerted more influence on the history of whaling than the men and women of the New England whalefishery. From its humble origins in the region's coastal communities in the mid-seventeenth century, the New England whalefishery quickly transformed into one of the nation's most important industries.[31] New England whale oil greased the wheels of industrialization during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, and at the industry's peak in 1846, three quarters of the world's whaling fleet registered at New England ports.[32] This chapter will trace the history of whaling in New England from its origins in Native American culture through its golden age in the mid-nineteenth century. In doing so, this chapter will present a historical overview of the industry that played a vital role in the lives of the women featured in the study. By providing an account of the New England whaling industry's origins, major developments, as well as the nature of the whaling process, this chapter will provide a foundation for subsequent analysis as to the role of whaling captains' wives within mid-nineteenth century whaling communities and the New England whalefishery itself.[33]

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[30] The title of this chapter comes from *The Whalers Song* as quoted in Henry Theodore Cheever's nineteenth century account of the American whaling industry. Henry Theodore Cheever, *The Whale and His Captors; or The Whaleman's Adventures, and the Whales Biography as Gathered on the Homeward Cruise of the "Commodore Preeble"* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1864), 136.

[31] Whaling was the fifth largest industry in nineteenth century America. Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter, *In Pursuit of Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1806-1906* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 4.

[32] In an 1887 government report on the history of the American whaling industry, A.H. Clark claimed that in 1846 the American whaling fleet amounted to 729 vessels out of a worldwide fleet of just under 1,000. A.H. Clark, "The Whalefishery: History and Present Condition," in *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States*, ed. George Brown Goode (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 192.

Leviathan: The Whales They Hunted[34]

Of the ninety known species in the Cetacean family, only four were targeted by the New England whalefishery during its two hundred fifty years history; sperm whales, right whales, bowhead whales, and gray whales.[35] These animals produced several valuable commodities, though the most important were whale oil and whalebone, known today as baleen.[36] In an era before petroleum and plastic, whale oil provided illumination and lubrication, while whalebone gave structure to a variety of consumer goods ranging from corsets to buggy whips. Global demand for these commodities helped establish the New England whalefishery in the 1640s, and led to this region's domination of the international whaling industry for centuries. This propensity came at a high environmental cost. Several species of whale were hunted to near extinction during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and despite modern conservation efforts, some species, including sperm whales and right whales, are still struggling to recover from the devastating effects of overfishing.

The most important of all species hunted during the era of the New England whalefishery was the sperm whale. Despite their fearsome toothed jaws and large square heads, sperm whales are highly elusive creatures. Much of their behavior remains unknown to modern science. As historian Richard Ellis so eloquently summarizes, "we based an industry on animals upon which we knew almost nothing; it sufficed that we knew how to kill them."[37] American whalers hunted sperm whales for the waxy substance found within their skulls known as spermaceti. Believed to aid sperm whales in echolocation and communication, up to five hundred gallons of spermaceti is housed in the spermaceti organs of sperm whales.[38] In its natural state, spermaceti contains a low viscosity, noncorrosive oil that remains liquid even at freezing temperatures. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this commodity was used in a variety of applications ranging from industrial lubrication and candle making to leather dressing and the quelching of steel.[39] However, spermaceti was not the only product derived from sperm whales, as these animals were also harvested for their blubber. When boiled, sperm whale blubber generates an oil that burns brightly with minimal odor. Sperm whales were also hunted for ambergris, a grey, gritty substance formed in their digestive tract that has been prized by the perfume industry for centuries due to its natural fixative properties.[40] Thanks to international demand for these commodities, it is believed that up to one million sperm whales were harvested worldwide during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and the species is currently classified as endangered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.[41]

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[33] See Appendix C of this study for a useful lexicon of whaling terminology.

[34] The term leviathan originally referred a large, biblical sea monster as described in the Book of Job. Over time, the word has also become closely affiliated with whales. Job 41:1-34, New International Version.

[35] Randall R. Reeves and Tim D. Smith, "A Taxonomy of World Whaling: Operations and Eras," in *Whales, Whaling, and Oceans Ecosystems*, eds. James A. Estes, Douglas P. DeMaster, Daniel F. Doank, Terrie M. Williams, and Robert L. Brownell (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 90-91.

[36] While many cultures around the world have hunted whales for human consumption, the New England whalefishery focused on whale commodities such as oil and baleen. For an excellent summary of whale meat consumption in America, see Nancy Shoemaker, "Whale Meat in American History," *Environmental History* 10, No. 2 (April 2005).

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[37] Richard Ellis, *Men and Whales* (New York, NY: Knopf, 1991), 32.

[38] Kenneth S. Norris and George W. Harvey, "A Theory for the Function of the Spermaceti Organ in the Sperm Whale (*physter Catodon L*)," in *Animal Orientation and Navigation*, eds. Sidney R. Galler, Klaus Schmidt-Koenig, George J. Jacobs, and Richard E. Belleville (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972), 397.

[39] Samuel T. Pees, "Whale Oil Uses" Petroleum History Institute, 2004, http://www.petroleumhistory.org/OilHistory/pages/Whale/oil_uses.html.

[40] Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), 85-86.

During the era of the New England whalefishery, whalemen hunted right whales for their blubber and the flexible strips of baleen that line their mouths. Right whale oil was sold worldwide as a commercial illuminant, and baleen provided structure for fashionable corsets and crinolines for more than four centuries. However, it was not until the eighteenth century that this member of the Mysticeti order became known as the right whale. Named by New England whalemen, right whales earned the reputation of being the "right" whales to catch due to their docile nature, slow, surface level feeding habits, and natural buoyancy post mortem. These factors made the right whale the most widely hunted species during the era of the New England whalefishery.[42] As a result, the right whale is currently the most highly endangered of all whale species, with less than five hundred individual animals left in the world.[43]

Bowhead whales were the third most popular species hunted by New England whalemen during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Unlike other members of the Mysticeti order that migrate to warmer climates to breed, bowhead whales spend their entire lives in the frigid waters of the Arctic.[44] As such, they are equipped with the thickest blubber of any whale species as well as the largest number of baleen strips. Bowhead whale blubber can measure up to twenty-eight inches thick, and bowheads can have up to six hundred individual strips of baleen in their mouths.[45] Although the indigenous peoples of modern day Alaska and Canada have hunted bowhead whales for centuries, it was not until the 1840s that New England whalemen began to target this species.[46] Prior to the era of commercial whaling, it is estimated that bowhead populations ranged between thirty and fifty thousand worldwide. By the 1920s, the population dropped to under three thousand, and despite measurable comebacks in recent years, the bowhead whale is still listed as an endangered species by to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.[47]

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[41] "Endangered and Threatened Species under the National Marine Fisheries Service's Jurisdiction," National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration Fisheries Service, Updated January 29, 2018, http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/esa/listed.htm#mammals.

[42] Dolin, 22.

[43] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service, "Northern Right Atlantic Whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*) Western Atlantic Stock Report," February 2017, https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/tm/tm241/8_F2016_rightwhale.pdf.

[44] Davis et. al., 28.

The gray whale is the last of the four primary species targeted during the period of the New England whalefishery. A member of the Mysticeti order, gray whales undertake the longest annual migration of any known whale species, traveling from their summer home in the Arctic to the warm lagoons off the Baja Peninsula each winter to breed.[48] These lagoons became prime hunting grounds for New England whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century, with whalemen purposefully targeting gray whale calves in order to capture their larger, more valuable mothers.[49] These hunting tactics decimated the gray whale population. By the 1930s, it was widely believed the species had gone extinct.

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[45] Dolin 24.

[46] Ellis, 225-227.

[47] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service, “Bowhead Whale (*Balaena mysticetus*): Western Arctic Stock Report,” December 20, 2016, http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars/pdf/stocks/alaska/2016/ak2016_bowhead.pdf.

[48] Raymond C. Highsmith, Kenneth O. Coyle, Bodil A. Bluhm, and Brenda Konar, “Gray Whales in the Bering and Chukchi Seas,” in *Whales, Whaling, and Oceans Ecosystems*, eds. James A. Estes et. al., 303.

[49] Although gray whales are often affectionate and playful with modern day whale watchers, during the nineteenth century they were commonly referred to as “devil fish” by New England whalers due to the ferocity with which female gray whales defended themselves and their young from attack. Davis et. al., 23.

However, thanks to modern conservation efforts, the gray whale population has recovered to pre-commercial whaling numbers.[50]

After more than two hundred fifty years of commercialized whaling, the New England whalefishery ceased production during the first decades of the twentieth century after a series of social, industrial, and economic changes transformed the region's once mighty whaleships into relics of a bygone era. One of these changes was the rise of modern factory vessels. Beginning in the 1920s, several European nations including Norway and Denmark sent fleets of factory ships into international whaling grounds.[51] Fueled by European demand for whale based cooking fats like margarine, factory ships harvested thousands of whales during the mid-twentieth century.[52] At the same time, international organizations including the Geneva Convention began raising concerns about the state of global whale populations. In 1946, the United States joined fourteen other nations in signing the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling in order to "provide for proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry" through the creation of the International Whaling Commission, or the IWC.[53] Despite the organization's role in anti-whaling efforts during the 1980s, the IWC was originally founded to provide support to international whaling industries, not to protect whale populations. It was not until the rise of American environmental movement in the 1970s that conservation became an issue of international concern.[54] In 1972, the United States passed Maritime Mammal Protection Act which banned the hunting, killing, import, sale, and export of marine mammals and marine mammal products.[55] That same year, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment adopted a ten year ban on commercial whaling. By the early 1980s, the number of anti-whaling countries involved in the International Whaling Commission outnumbered whaling nations, and these countries helped form a voting bloc that shifted the focus of the IWC from industry support to conservation. On July 23, 1982, the IWC passed an international moratorium on commercial whaling with provisions for indigenous and scientific whaling, a moratorium that remains in effect today.[56] However, given that participation in the IWC is voluntary, Iceland and Norway continue to operate small scale commercial whaling industries, and Japan faces international criticism for its alleged exploitation of the moratorium's scientific whaling exemption.[57] Nearly a century after the demise of the New England whalefishery, whaling continues to be an issue of political and environmental importance in the United States and around the world.

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[50] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service, "Gray Whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*): Eastern North Pacific Stock Report," July 31, 2015, http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars/pdf/stocks/pacific/2014/po2014_gray_whale_enp.pdf.

[51] J.N. Tonnessen and A.O. Johnsen, *The History of Modern Whaling*, trans. R.I. Christophersen (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 9.

[52] Robert C. Rocha Jr., Phillip J. Clapham, and Yulia V. Ivaschenko, "Emptying the Oceans: A Summary of Industrial Whaling Catches in the 20th Century," *Marine Fisheries Review* 76, No. 4 (2014), 42-45.

[53] *International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling*, December 2, 1946, Washington, D.C. available from the International Whaling Commission, https://archive.iwc.int/pages/view.php?ref=3607&k=.

All Along Shore: The Origins of Whaling in New England

While the traditional narrative of the New England whaling industry begins with the arrival of English settlers in the early-seventeenth century, in reality, the history of whaling in New England predates European arrival by hundreds of years. Whales played an important role in several New England Native American cultures prior to the Contact Period. The Wampanoags believed the god Mosup created the red cliffs of Martha's Vineyard by smashing the bodies of whales along its shore, and Narragansett sachems regarded access to drift whales that washed up on the beaches of Chappaquiddick Island as one of their people's most precious natural resources.[58] Accounts of Native American whaling by Europeans provide further evidence as to the role of whaling in New England Native American culture. Roger Williams discussed the Native American practice of distributing whale meat to all tribe members in his 1643 treatise, *A Key into the Language of America*, and English explorer James Rosier recounted an experience wherein he witnessed Eastern Abenaki killing a beached whale with spears and arrows in 1605.[59]

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[54] Kurkpatrick Dorsey, *Whales and Nations: Environmental Diplomacy on the High Seas* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2016), 108.

[55] Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, (PL 92-522, October 21, 172).

[56] Lisa Kobayashi, "Lifting the International Whaling Commission's Moratorium on Commercial Whaling as the Most Effective Global Regulation of Whaling," *Environs* 29, No. 2 (May 2006), 180.

[57] For an extensive study of the history and politics of whaling in Japan since the passage of the IWC moratorium, see June Morikawa's *Whaling in Japan: Power, Politics, and Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press), 2006.

Like the Native Americans, New England's European settlers also viewed whales as a valuable resource. While William Bradford was busy writing the Mayflower Compact in the fall of 1620, his fellow *Mayflower* passengers lamented the lack of whaling equipment aboard ship, for "every day, [they] saw whales playing hard, of which in that place, if [they] had instruments and means to take them, [they] might have made a very rich returne."[60] Five years after the settlement of Plymouth, Massachusetts, colonist William Morrell underscored the importance of whaling to early settlers in verse claiming "the mighty whale doth in these harbors lye, whose oyle the careful merchant deare will buy."[61] Consequently, when King Charles I issued the fledgling Massachusetts Bay Colony its Royal Charter in 1629, he included universal fishing rights in its provisions stating "wee have given and granted all fishes, royal fishes, whales, balan, sturgeons, and other fishes, of what kind and nature soever that shall at any time hereafter be taken in or within the said seas or waters."[62] Whales continued to be a source of economic interest for the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonists throughout the sixteenth century. In 1662, the Cape Cod community of Eastham voted that all profits secured from drift whales should support the ministry, while other communities followed the model of thirds; a third to the colonial government, a third to the town, and a third to the finder.[63] Yet, despite its later significance in the history of American whaling, Massachusetts was not the home of the first organized whaling fishery in New England; that distinction is held by the port of Southampton, New York.

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[58] David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community Among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 33; 137.

[59] John A. Strong, "Indian Whalers on Long Island, 1669-1746," *Long Island History Journal* 26, No. 1 (2016), 1.

[60] George Cheever, ed., *The Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, in New England, in 1630: Reprinted from the Original Volume* (New York, NY: Wiley, 1848), 43.

Located on the Southern Fork of Long Island, the port of Southampton has been a fishing community since its founding in 1640. In addition to providing ready access for trade, Southampton's location also allowed residents to take advantage of drift whales that washed up on shore each year during annual migrations. Beginning in 1644, Southampton's residents began harvesting drift whales, and the resulting spoils were shared equally within the community.[64] However, unlike their Native American predecessors, the English settlers of Southampton were not interested in whale meat, but rather in the profits to be made from rendering whale blubber into oil. Driven by European demand for whale oil, by the mid-seventeenth century the residents of Southampton had begun establishing organized shore whaling companies.[65]

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[61] William Morrell, "Morell's Poem on New-England," *Collections of the MHS for the Year 1792*, vol. 2 (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1895), 125.
[62] Charter of Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1629. The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, Yale University, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/mass03.asp
[63] Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery* (1877; reprint Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 7.
[64] Starbuck, 9-10.

Shore whaling in seventeenth century Southampton was largely a seasonal venture, with whalemen taking to the waters off Long Island during the late fall and early spring to coincide with annual migrations. The seasonal nature of shore whaling fit nicely into the economy of an otherwise agricultural community, allowing residents to perform other work during the rest of the year.[66] According to nineteenth century whaling historian Alexander Starbuck, Southampton shore whaling expeditions generally included "several boats each fitted out for whaling on the coast, with the voyages generally lasting two weeks. The boats were so small, however, that they never ventured far from land, the men usually camping out on shore during the night."[67] Look out stations were also built along the coast during this period to aid in the pursuit of whales. After a successful catch, whalemen towed the carcass back to shore, stripped away the blubber, and boiled it down into oil to be sold to local merchants.

Inspired by Southampton's shore whaling companies, the residents of other New England communities began experimenting with shore whaling during the mid-seventeenth century. As in the case of Southampton, these operations relied upon both

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[65] James Truslow Adams, *History of the Town of Southampton* (Port Washington, NH: Ira. J. Friedman, Inc., 1962), 231.

[66] Men of color played a vital role in early New England shore whaling operations. During the late seventeenth century, Native American men outnumbered their white counterparts among New England shore whaling boat crews, while a lesser number of free and enslaved African-Americans also participated in the whalefishery during this period. Nancy Shoemaker, *Native American Whaleman and the World: Indigenous Encounters and the Contingency of Race* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press), 2015; Martha Putney, *Black Sailors: Afro-American Merchant Seamen and Whalemen Prior to the Civil War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press), 1987.

[67] Starbuck, 23.

European and Native American residents for their sustainability and success. Settlers on Martha's Vineyard adopted shore whaling in the 1650s, while the communities of Barnstable, Eastham, and Yarmouth were whaling by the 1670s.[68] However, the success achieved by these early shore whaling communities would soon be eclipsed by the residents of a tiny sandbar located off the coast of Massachusetts.

The word Nantucket comes from the Wampanoag *Natockete*, meaning "the far off place," an appropriate name for the small, crescent shaped island located a half day's sail off the coast of Cape Cod.[69] Little is known about Nantucket's Native American residents prior to the Contact Period, though it is estimated that their population numbered at nearly three thousand in 1641, the year New York colonial officials deeded the island to a Massachusetts merchant named Thomas Mayhew.[70] Mayhew subsequently sold Nantucket to an association of twenty investors in 1659, and together they negotiated with the island's sachems to secure ownership of the island.[71] In contrast to other New England communities, the purchase, management, and settlement of Nantucket by English settlers was a business arrangement from the onset. As such, all twenty of Nantucket's first purchasers received equal land grants with the goal of establishing collective economic enterprise. Though the association would eventually expand to include other European settlers by right of invitation, members of these twenty founding families controlled Nantucket's society and economy for the next two centuries.[72]

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[68] Nancy Shoemaker, *Living with Whales: Documents and Oral Histories of Native New England Whaling History* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 38.

[69] Dolin, 58.

[70] Nathanial Philbrick, *Away off Shore: Nantucket and its People* (New York, NY: Penguin Books), 18.

[71] In 1659, Nantucket's sachems sold Mayhew and the first purchasers the western half of the island along with rights to, "half the remaining meadows and marshes," as well as grazing rights to Wampanoag lands anytime between the fall harvest and the spring planning seasons. In return, Mayhew and the first purchasers paid the Wampanoags twenty-six pounds. A year later, the English secured ownership of the entire island for an additional sum of forty pounds. Transfers of land from individual Native Americans to English residents continued well into the late-eighteenth century. Frances Ruley Karttunen, *The Other Islanders: People Who Pulled Nantucket's Oars* (New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2005), 25-36; Henry Barnard Worth, *Nantucket Lands and Land Owners Volume II Bulletin No. 3* (Nantucket, MA: Nantucket Historical Association, 1902), 110-129.

When Nantucket's rocky soil proved inhospitable to profits via agriculture, the association turned to the sea for their survival. According to nineteenth-century Nantucket historian Obed Macy, the island's introduction to whaling came when a whale swam into a local bay, at which time residents of the island "attacked and killed the whale. This first success encouraged them to undertake whaling as a permanent business."[73] Like Southampton, Nantucket's location in the North Atlantic placed the island in middle of seasonal whale migrations. In 1666, the association invited James Lopar, a successful Long Island whaleman, to settle on the island for the purpose of "engaging in the business of whaling."[74] In return, the association agreed to provide him with land, livestock, and one third ownership in the island's whaling company. Lopar agreed to these terms, though for unknown reasons, never settled on the island.[75] Organized whaling on Nantucket did not begin until the association contracted Cape Cod resident Ichabod Paddock in 1680 for the purposes of teaching the island's residents how to whale.[76] Paddock kept up his end of the bargain, and within a few years "any man who could hold an oar" was involved in Nantucket shore whaling.[77]

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[72] Members of several first purchaser families, including the Coffins, Macys, Barnards, Starbucks, and Swains, still reside on Nantucket today.

[73] Obed Macy, *The History of Nantucket; Being a Compendious Account of the First Settlement of the Island by the English, Together with the Rise and Progress of the Whalefishery; And Other Historical Facts Relative to Said Island and Its Inhabitants* (Boston, MA: Hilliard, Gray and Co., 1835), 3.

[74] Macy, 28.

[75] Jeannette Edwards Riley, "Long Island's Offshore Whaling," *New York History* 14, No. 2 (April 1933), 125-126.

[76] Macy, 28.

[77] Starbuck, 81.

Shore whaling continued on Nantucket with moderate success until the turn of the eighteenth century, when the combination of two interrelated historical developments led to the establishment of the New England whalefishery; the emergence of deep sea sperm whaling operations on Nantucket, and the community's collective conversion to Quakerism. According to island lore, in the spring of 1712 Captain Christopher Hussey and his whaling crew were accidentally blown offshore during a passing storm, at which point Hussey somehow managed to find, capture, and kill a sperm whale. Once the seas calmed, he and his crew brought their catch back to Nantucket to the amazement of their fellow islanders.[78] Although the authenticity of the Hussey story has come into questions in recent years, in 1715 Nantucket residents began sending deep sea vessels into the waters off Cape Cod for weeks at a time in search of sperm whales.[79] Profits from these early voyages allowed for the investment of additional capital into the island's fishery, and by 1730 Nantucket's fleet had grown to twenty-five vessels.[80] Descendants of the island's first purchasers owned seventy-five percent of Nantucket's whaling fleet during this period, and among these influential families, the Starbucks, Gardners, and Coffins were the most active in Nantucket's sperm whalefishery.[81] In the case of the Starbucks, their influence also extended to the island's religious practices. After Mary Coffin Starbuck, a well-respected community elder, converted to Quakerism in 1702, the majority of the island's leading families followed suit.[82] The Quaker faith's core principle of following one's moral compass in the form of the "Inner Light" helped support the island's fledgling whaling industry. According to historian Lisa Norling, the "mutually reinforcing qualities" of the Quaker religion and the whalefishery played an important role in the expansion of the Nantucket whaling industry.[83] Quakerism's emphasis on the spiritual equality of all believers also played an important role in the development of the Nantucket whalefishery, as this religious belief helped create a community of strong, self-reliant women who could withstand the challenges of maintaining their communities while their menfolk were at sea.[84] This unique combination of economic, social, and religious factors supported the growth of Nantucket's whalefishery during the first half of eighteenth century. In 1715, the first year of recorded annual returns in the fishery, Nantucket vessels brought six hundred barrels of oil back from the whaling grounds; by 1730, that number had jumped to over three thousand barrels.[85] By the onset of the American Revolution, Nantucket's whaling fleet totaled over one hundred vessels, more than all other American whaling ports combined.[86]

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[78] In addition to Macy, several other nineteenth and early twentieth century chroniclers of New England's whaling history including Walter Sheldon Tower and Elmo Paul Hohman verified the authenticity of the Hussey story. See Walter Sheldon Tower, *A History of American Whalefishery* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press), 1907 and Elmo Paul Hohman, *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry* (New York, NY: Longmans, Green, & Co.), 1928.

[79] Ben Simons, "Christopher Hussey Blown Out (Up) to Sea," *Historic Nantucket* 53, No. 3 (Summer 2004), 9-10.

[80] Jean Pierre Proulx, *Whaling in the North Atlantic From the Earliest Times to the Mid-19th Century* (Ottawa, Onatario: Parcs Canada, 1986), 63.

[81] Edward Byers, *Nation of Nantucket: Society and Politics in an Early American Commercial Center*, 1660-1820 (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), 88.

Nantucket's transition to deep sea sperm whaling coincided with a turning point in world economic history. After changes in whale migratory patterns led to the collapse of the Dutch whaling industry in the Spitzbergen archipelago, European markets were left without a steady source of whale commodities.[87] Additionally, calls for street lighting in European cities led to increasing demand for sperm oil as a commercial illuminant.[88] As in the case of shore whaling, deep sea whaling was quickly adopted by other New England communities during the mid-eighteenth century, though rather than pursuing sperm whales, these communities chose to specialize in other species. New London and Stonington, Connecticut along with Sag Harbor, New York developed right whale fisheries during this period, while the residents of Provincetown, Massachusetts were known throughout the region as "plum pudeners" due to their preference for short, North Atlantic voyages.[89] In his mid-seventeenth century account of Massachusetts history, colonial official Thomas Hutchinson underscored the importance of New England's whalefishery during this period; "The increase in consumption of oil by lamps has been no small encouragement to our whale-fishery. The…whale-fishery [is] therefore worthy not only of provincial but national attention."[90] The New England whalefishery received that national attention in the coming decades, as the region quickly became the world's leading exporter of whale commodities.

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[82] As the daughter of Nantucket's most prominent community member, Mary Coffin Starbuck held considerable influence in early Nantucket society. Quaker ministers who visited Nantucket during this period described her as such: "She who was looked upon as a Deborah by these People," and because of this "they would not do anything without her Advice and Consent." Quoted in Alexander Starbuck, *The History of Nantucket: County, Island and Town, Including Genealogies of First Settlers* (Boston, MA: C.E. Goodspeed & Co., 1924), 520-521.

[83] Lisa Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1720-1870* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 82.

[84] Jeffrey Kovach, "Nantucket Women: Public Authority and Education in the Eighteenth Century Nantucket Quaker Women's Meeting and the Foundation for Female Activism," PhD diss., (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015), 17-20.

[85] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 168.

[86] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 174.

Into the Deep: The Rise of the New England Whalefishery

Between 1740 and 1775, the men and women of New England's whaling communities laid the foundation for their region's dominance over the world's whaling industry. The invention of onboard tryworks and the manufacture of spermaceti candles revolutionized the processing of whale commodities during this period, and the adoption of new business practices within the fishery transformed a series of small, community based operations into highly profitable, family operated firms. In addition, the opening of new whaling grounds in the Northern and Southern Atlantic greatly increased the productivity of whaling voyages. By developing new methods of processing whale commodities, adopting new business practices, and expanding into new whaling grounds, residents of New England whaling communities transformed their fishery into one of the nation's most valuable industries during the mid-eighteenth century.

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[87] Proulx, 55.

[88] Roger Foquet and Peter J.G. Peterson, "Seven Centuries of Energy Service: The Price and Use of Light in the United Kingdom, 1300-2000), *The Energy Journal* 27, No. 1 (2006), 155.

[89] Davis et. el, 19.

[90] Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, From the Charter of King William and Queen Mary in 1691 Until the Year 1750*, Vol. 2 (London, England: J. Smith, 1776), 445.

Residents of New England whaling communities developed two new methods of processing whale commodities during the mid-eighteenth century; the manufacture of spermaceti candles and onboard tryworks. Like so many aspects of the history of whaling in New England, the origins of spermaceti chandleries in the region is shrouded in myth. It is widely believed that Abraham Rodriguez Rivera, a Sephardic Jew who immigrated to Newport, Rhode Island from the Iberian Peninsula during the 1740s, was the first New England resident to create candles from spermaceti.[91] However, around the same time, Benjamin Crabb of Rehoboth, Massachusetts petitioned the Massachusetts General Court for the "sole privilege" of manufacturing spermaceti candles, though it is unknown if he ever acted on his grant.[92] The earliest definitive evidence of spermaceti chandleries operating in New England points to wealthy Quaker merchant Obadiah Brown of Providence, Rhode Island. Brown opened his first chandlery in 1753, and within a few years, several other New England ports had begun building chandleries dedicated to the manufacture of spermaceti candles.[93] The construction of onboard tryworks also began during the mid-1750s. In the days of shore whaling, productivity was limited by the need to return to port to process blubber into oil before it went rancid. Onboard tryworks solved this problem, allowing vessels to sail for extended periods of time without returning to port.[94] First developed by Nantucket whalemen during the 1750s, this modification was quickly adopted by other whaling communities, and led to an increase in the productivity and duration of New England whaling voyages.[95]

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[91] While there are several late nineteenth and early twentieth century accounts that repeat this story, the role of Newport's Jewish community in the establishment of spermaceti chandleries in New England remains an unexplored topic of academic inquiry.

[92] "An Act for Granting Unto Benjamin Crabb the Sole Privilege of Making Candles of Coarse Spermaceti Oyl," in *The Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, vol. 3* (Boston, MA: Albert Wright, 1878), 546-547.

The business of whaling also changed during the mid-eighteenth century. During the shore whaling period, residents of New England whaling communities worked together to catch and process whales. By the mid-eighteenth century, the whalefishery had evolved into a series of privately owned businesses known as firms. These firms held considerable power within the New England whalefishery during the mid-eighteenth century, as they owned and operated whaling vessels, shore side processing facilities, as well as transport vessels. "By operating at all levels of the whalefishery, from capture through export" whaling firms owned by members of Nantucket's elite including the Starbuck, Rotch, and Coffin families perfected this system of horizontal integration during the mid-eighteenth century.[96] By the 1770s, this business model had been adopted by other New England whaling communities, and it would remain the industry standard for the next hundred years.

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[93] James Hedges, *The Browns of Providence Plantations: Colonial Years* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 77-90.

[94] The adoption of onboard tryworks changed the role of women in New England whaling communities during the mid-eighteenth century. Whereas women had once worked alongside men in the processing of whale commodities during the drift and early shore whaling periods, the invention on onboard tryworks effectively removed them from the process of preparing whale commodities for market. However, women continued to provide critical support to the whalefishery via the maintenance of family and community ties while their husbands and sons were away at sea. See Chapter 2 for a thorough analysis of the role of women in the New England whalefishery.

[95] Dolin, 107.

[96] Byers, 155-157.

Whaling firms also streamlined the business of whaling during the mid-eighteenth century. In addition to covering the costs of outfitting a vessel with all the necessary supplies for a multi-year voyage, whaling firms also hired the captain. Many of these men came from the same families as their employers during the mid-eighteenth century. Family ties also bound captains to their whalemen during this period, as it was not uncommon for members of mid-eighteenth century whaling crews to be related by blood or marriage.[97] These crew members were compensated for their labor through the lay system. First developed on Nantucket, the lay system paid each man a share, or lay, of the vessel's profits based on his degree of responsibility. Captains were paid the shortest, most profitable lays due to their authority, skills, and experience, while first time whalers known as greenhands drew the longest lays.[98] In contrast to wages, the lay system meant every man's pay, from the captain to the cabin boy, depended upon the performance of the entire crew. In *Letters from an American Farmer,* Hector St. John de Crèvecœur described the lay system as such: "They have no wages [so] they are all proportionally concerned with the success of the enterprise, and all equally alert and vigilant."[99] However, because crew members were paid at the conclusion of a voyage, the lay system also transferred the financial risks of whaling from the vessel's owners to its crew.[100] It is for this reason that other New England whaling communities adopted the lay system, and this system of compensation and risk management would become the standard in the American whaling industry for the next hundred years.

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[97] Men of color continued to sail aboard New England whaling vessels during this period. However, in the case of Native Americans, they played a far less important role in the deep sea whalefishery than during the shore whaling era. As for African Americans, while there were some instances of free blacks rising to the ranks of officer or captain during the mid-late eighteenth century, the majority of African-American whalers held positions as cooks or stewards aboard whaling vessels during this period. These trends continued into the nineteenth century. For more on the changing status of men of color in the New England whalefishery in the eighteenth century and nineteenth centuries, see W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* and Nancy Shoemaker, *Native American Whaleman and the World: Indigenous Encounters and the Contingency of Race*.

[98] In this instance, short means large and long means small. After the vessel's owners took their cut of the profits at the end of a voyage (sometimes as much as 70 percent), the average late eighteenth century whaling captain received a 1/8 lay, an officer a 1/12 lay, and a greenhand a 1/175 lay To put this statistic another way, the ship would have to process 175 barrels of whale oil before the greenhands on board would earn a single penny. By the nineteenth century, lays had lengthened to 1/12 for a captain, 1/18 for an officer, and 1/200 for greenhands. Granville Allen Mawer, *Ahab's Trade: The Saga of South Seas Whaling* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 109-112.

In addition to innovations in the processing of whale commodities and changes to the industry's business practices, the New England whalefishery also expanded during this period, as whalemen discovered new and distant whaling grounds. Whereas early attempts at deep sea whaling were restricted to the waters off Cape Cod, by the mid-eighteenth century, New England whaling vessels were sailing off the shores of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and along the Davis Strait. New England whalemen reached Baffin's Bay in 1751 and the Gulf of St. Lawrence just ten years later.[101] By the 1770s, New England whalemen had begun to turn south and east, expanding their grounds to include the Caribbean, the Cape Verde islands, and the coast of South America.[102] As Edmund Burke stated in a speech before Parliament in 1774,

> while some [whalers] draw the line or strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude and pursue their gigantic game long the cost of Brazil. No sea, no climate is not witness to their toils.[103]

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[99] J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782; reprint New York, NY: Fox, Duffield and Company, 1904), 169.

[100] Davis et.al, 15.

[101] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 71-72.

[102] Macy, 55.

[103] As quoted in Dolin, 164-165.

These toils led to increased productivity and profitability throughout the region, and by the 1770s, the New England whalefishery compromised a fleet of over three hundred vessels.[104]

After more than twenty-five years of continuous growth, the New England whalefishery suffered a series of blows during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. The first came in the form of the American Revolution, as hostilities between Great Britain and its colonies brought the New England's whaling industry to its knees. Of the dozens of New England communities engaged in whaling at the start of the American Revolution, Nantucket fared the worst during the war. The island's whaling fleet shrunk from one hundred fifty whaleships to fewer than thirty during the revolutionary period.[105] In keeping with the pacifist tenets of the Quaker faith and in recognition of Great Britian's status as Nantucket's primary trade partner, the island's leaders attempted to remain neutral during the conflict.[106] These efforts proved futile, as more than a thousand Nantucket whalemen were imprisoned or killed by the British during the American Revolution, leaving more than two hundred widows in a community of only eight hundred families.[107] Other New England whaling communities suffered similar losses during the revolutionary period, and despite the region's efforts to rebuild the whalefishery after the war, the combination of the Embargo Act of 1807 and the War of 1812 led many New England communities to abandon their whaling operations in the first decade of the nineteenth century.

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[104] *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1950*, available from United States Census Bureau, https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1960/compendia/hist_stats_colonial-1957.html753.
[105] Macy, 118.
[106] Nantucket residents' attempt to remain neutral during the Revolution also stemmed from the island's relationship with Great Britain vis a vis the whalefishery, as the vast majority of Nantucket's whale commodities were exported directly to Great Britain during the late eighteenth century. Eduard Stackpole, *Whales and Destiny* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1972), 4.
[107] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery,* 77.

One of the few ports that continued whaling during the interwar period was New Bedford, Massachusetts. Located at the mouth of the Acushnet River, New Bedford is home to a deep, naturally guarded harbor. This valuable natural resource led members of Nantucket's influential Rotch family to purchase large parcels of land surrounding the harbor in the 1760s with the goal of establishing a new whalefishery on the mainland.[108] After the War of 1812, several other prominent Quaker families joined the Rotches to help revitalize New Bedford's whalefishery, and by 1820, New Bedford whaling vessels were bringing more than twenty-five thousand barrels of oil and seventeen thousand pounds of whalebone back from the hunting grounds annually. By 1830, those numbers had risen to over seventy-five thousand barrels of oil and nearly three hundred thousand pounds of bone.[109] The profits generated from these commodities greatly expanded the New Bedford whalefishery, and eventually led to the community's usurpation of Nantucket's title as New England's leading whaling port.

New Bedford residents were not the only New Englanders engaged in whaling operations during the early nineteenth century. Between 1820 and 1840, more than forty New England communities sent vessels into the world's oceans in pursuit of whales.[110] Some ports, like New London, Connecticut and Sag Harbor, New York, had been whaling for nearly a century. Others like Stonington, Connecticut transitioned to whaling after a successful stint in the sealing industry, while residents of the ports of Fall River, Massachusetts and Hudson, New York established whaling companies for the first time in their community's history during the early nineteenth century. As the century progressed, these communities sent more and more whaling vessels to sea. In 1820, a total of seventy-seven whaling vessels departed New England ports. By 1830 that number had nearly doubled to one hundred twenty vessels, and in 1840 a total of two hundred twenty-three whaling vessels sailed from New England ports.[111]

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[108] The Rotch family helped found one of America's first energy cartels— the Spermaceti Trust. The Rotch family firm was the primary supplier of spermaceti to the island of Nantucket during the mid-eighteenth century. As such, they pressured other chandlery owners to join together to fix prices so as to not bloat the market. This highly effective model is still used by Middle Eastern companies to control modern day petroleum markets. Richard C. Kulger, "The Whale Oil Trade, 1750-1775" in *Seafaring in Colonial Massachusetts* (Boston, MA: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1980), 166-168.
[109] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 665 & 668.
[110] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 665-674.

The New England whalefishery's expansion during this period was supported by increasing demand for whale commodities. As industrialization spread from England to the European continent and eventually to the United States during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, so too did the market for whale oil. The heavy machinery that powered the Industrial Revolution required substances to help ease friction and wear, and whale oil's natural viscosity made it the perfect industrial lubricant.[112] Aided by global demand for whale oil and a well-established regional tradition of whaling, New England communities continued to expand their whaling operations throughout the early-nineteenth century.

“Thar She Blows”: The Golden Age of New England Whaling

In the years between 1840 and 1870, the New England whalefishery transformed into a fully commercialized industry. Building upon the technological and industrial innovations of prior generations, residents of New England whaling communities perfected the hunting and processing of whales during the mid-nineteenth century, and in doing so, ushered in a new era of American whaling. At the industry's peak, the New England whaling fleet employed nearly seventy thousand men from more than sixty communities, and represented a capital investment of more than seventy million dollars.[113] The profits from these voyages generated unprecedented wealth for the industry's elites. In the case of New Bedford, Massachusetts, a community that became known as the Whaling City, its residents helped make their city one of the wealthiest per capita in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century.[114] Other New England whaling communities including Fairhaven, Massachusetts and New London, Connecticut benefited from successful returns on their investments in the whalefishery during this period, as global demand for whale commodities continued to support the industry's growth and expansion. A series of technological and industrial changes including the development of purpose-built whaleships and improvements in the hunting and processing of whales at sea also supported the industry's growth during this period. In addition, societal changes such as increasingly diversified whaling crews and stratification between rich and poor led to changes in demographics within New England whaling communities. When examined collectively, these technological, industrial, and social changes all contributed to what has become known as the golden age of the New England whalefishery.

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[111] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 665, 668, and 675.

[112] Davis et. al, 29.

Technological innovations played a vital role in the growth of the New England whalefishery during the mid-nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1830s, blacksmiths in

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[113] Dolin, 206.

[114] Everett Allen, *Children of the Light: The Rise and Fall of New Bedford Whaling and the Death of the Arctic Fleet* (Orleans, MA: Parnassus Imprints, 1983), 82.

New England whaling communities began experimenting with whaling irons. The standard two flued iron that had been in use for centuries had a tendency to pull when tension was put on the line, leading to missed opportunities during whale hunts. In 1845, an African-American blacksmith named Lewis Temple solved this problem with the invention of the toggle iron, a device that allowed whalemen to secure their catch easily and effectively.[115] The toggle iron revolutionized the whale hunt, and within ten years, became the industry standard. In addition to the widespread adoption of toggle irons, this period was also the era of the purpose built whaleship. Unlike earlier whaleman who simply adapted coastal trading vessels for whaling, residents of New England whaling communities began constructing purpose-built vessels known as whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century. Among these was the *Charles W. Morgan*, built for its namesake in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1848.[116] According to historian Ronald Hegarty, "the *Morgan* is as near to being a perfect example of the typical whaler of the 1850s as ever was built."[117] With an average measure of three hundred tons, whaleships like the *Charles W. Morgan* represented a fundamental departure from conventional shipbuilding in the mid-nineteenth century.[118] Though they were most commonly rigged as barks, these vessels could also be rigged as ships or brigs, providing their owners with versatility without sacrificing the size of the vessel's hold.[119] In a commentary penned during the waning years of the whaling industry, A. Hyatt Verrill described New England whaleships as being "staunch, seaworthy and able, yet neither graceful nor beautiful."[120] What whaleships may have lacked in elegance, they made up for in practicality. Their squat, square hulls provided ample space for storing whale oil, as well as crew living areas and work spaces for the processing of whales at sea, and their wide, flat decks allowed for the construction of onboard tryworks and the storage of whaleboats. The combination of these purpose built whaleships and the use of toggle irons greatly improved productivity and efficiency within the mid-nineteenth century whaling industry.

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[115] Lewis Temple, a former slave from Richmond, Virginia, invented the toggle iron in his blacksmith shop located on Walnut Street in downtown New Bedford. According to nineteenth century whaling historian Clifford Ashley, Temple's Toggle, as the iron became known, "…was the single most important invention in the whole history of whaling." Clifford Ashley, *The Yankee Whaler* (Garden City, NY: Halcyon House, 1942), 86.

[116] From her berth at Mystic Seaport: The Museum of America and the Sea, the *Morgan* provides whaling historians and enthusiasts alike with a tangible piece of whaling history. She recently completed her historic thirty-eighth voyage around New England, and has been a source of inspiration for generations of whaling historians and enthusiasms alike, myself included.

[117] Reginald B. Hegarty, *Birth of a Whaleship* (New Bedford, MA: New Bedford Free Public Library, 1964), 21.

[118] The mid-nineteenth century was the era of the clipper ships, fast, graceful vessels used by American and British merchants to transport cargo around the world. For more on the history of clippers, see Sam Jefferson, *Clipper Ships and the Golden Age of Sail: Races and Rivalries on the Nineteenth Century High Seas*.

Technology was not the only part of the New England whalefishery that underwent significant change during the mid-nineteenth century. As the whaling industry diversified during this period, so too did whaling crews. During the eighteenth century, the average New England whaling crew consisted of white men from local communities, with small percentages of Native Americans and African Americans rounding out the ranks. By the mid-nineteenth century, men from all over the world were sailing aboard New England whaling vessels including Azorean Portuguese, Cape Verdeans, and Pacific Islanders.[121] The majority of these men joined whaling crews after New England whaleships sailed into foreign ports, as competition from other industries including textiles, railroads, and gold mining had begun to lure white laborers away from whaling during this period. When these vessels returned home at the end of a voyage, many of these foreign born whalemen settled in New England whaling ports, establishing robust immigrant communities that still exist to this day.[122] These demographic changes within whaling crews contributed to the overall shift from whaling enterprises wherein owners and crew were connected by family and social ties, to a fully commercialized industry comprised of investors, managers, and employees.[123] This change was especially evident in the Whaling City of New Bedford, where investors hired agents to serve as mid-level managers in the outfitting and oversight of whaling voyages. During the mid-nineteenth century, some of these agents resorted to filling their crews by means of coercion, leading to rumors of whalemen waking from a night of drinking only to discover they had unknowingly shipped aboard a whaler.[124] The widespread adoption of high interest rates for slop chest purchases during this period also demonstrate changes in the relationship between whaleship owners and their crew. If a crew member lacked the funds to purchase necessities such as clothing or tobacco while at sea, he could buy them from the vessel's slop chest on credit. Although slop chests had been in use for decades, during the mid-nineteenth century, whaling agents began instructing captains to charge exorbitant interest rates on slop chest purchases as a means of earning additional revenue. These interest rates left many mid-century whalemen owing ship owners money than they were paid at the end of a voyage.[125] These changes in the business of whaling further separated the fishery's elite from the rest of their communities during the mid-nineteenth century, a process that had begun a century earlier with the adoption of whaling firms in the 1750s.

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[119] In both historic and modern maritime parlance, the word ship is not synonymous with vessel. A ship is a vessel with at least three masts, all of which are set with square sails, while to a bark is a vessel with at least three masts with the rear mast carrying a fore and aft sail rig. Most whaling vessels were ship rigged, hence whaling historians use the term whaleship to describe whaling vessels. So, while all whaleships were vessels, not all whaling vessels were ships. See Appendix E for an image of the *Charles W. Morgan* as well as an interior ship plan for a comparable whaleship of the period.

[120] A. Hyatt Verill, *The Real Story of the Whaler: Whaling Past and Present* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company 1916), 54.

[121] Margaret Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (London, England: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 9.

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[122] A wonderful example is the thriving Azorean Portuguese community in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[123] This shift in crew demographics coincides with a deterioration in race relations aboard New England whaleships. Whereas prior generations of New England whaleman had once labored alongside non-white sailors with relative tolerance, by the mid-nineteenth century, "the flexibility of racial divisions aboard ships increasingly disappeared as a result of an overall hardening of racial attitudes in the United States." Bradley Ray Cartwright, "Pacific Passages: American Encounters with the Pacific and its People, 1815-1855," (PhD diss., University of Colorado Boulder, 2006), 22.

[124] Although by no means a common form of recruitment, shanghaiing, or the forcible inducement of whalemen by trickery, did occur in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities. Norling, 137.

In addition to changes in whaling technology, crew demographics, and relations between whaleship owners and crews, the process of whaling also underwent significant changes during the mid-nineteenth century. Period accounts of the hunting and processing of whales at sea written by New England whalemen provide rich, albeit graphic, depictions of this transformation, as whalers relied upon a combination of traditional knowledge and new technology to perfect their craft during the mid-nineteenth century.[126] Upon the sighting of a whale, whalemen posted in the ship's rigging called out the phrase "thar she blows" to alert the ship of a nearby whale.[127] The ship's officers then steered the vessel toward the animal while the crew rushed to lower whaleboats, small custom built row boats used to kill and transport whales back to the whaleship. While the captain remained behind to pilot the ship, the crew rowed toward the whale, waited until the animal surfaced to breathe, and hooked it with irons, now commonly known as harpoons.[128] At this point during the hunt, the whale would either dive, swim away, or attack. If the animal dove, the crew quickly cut the line attaching the whale to the boat else they be pulled down with it. If the animal swam away, the whalemen would be pulled across the ocean on what veteran whalemen Clifford Ashley once described as a "Nantucket sleigh ride" until the whale eventually tired.[129] If the whale attacked, like Herman Melville's Moby Dick, the whalemen faced certain death. Luckily for New England whalers, most whales did not attack, allowing the crew to row their whaleboats alongside the animal and stab pointed lances into its blowhole. When the whale spouted blood, a signal of its impending demise, the whalemen then began the arduous task of hauling the carcass back to the ship.[130]

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[125] Davis et. al, 40.

[126] See Appendix E for images of the whale hunt.

[127] Creighton, 64.

[128] It is a common misconception that harpoons were used to kill whales. On the contrary, the harpoon served the same purpose as a fishhook, a means of securing the animal to the boat via a line.

The processing of whales at sea was a foul, gruesome enterprise.[131] As one nineteenth century whaleman put it, "I know of nothing to which this part of the whaling business can be more appropriately compared than to Dante's pictures of the infernal regions."[132] If the crew caught a right, bowhead, or gray whale, the process began with securing the carcass beneath cutting stages whereupon officers carefully cut blubber away from the whale using a method known as flensing.[133] Whalemen then hoisted strips of blubber onto the ship and passed them down to men below deck in the blubber room. In this cramped, lightless space, whalemen worked on their hands and knees to cut the blubber into smaller pieces before hoisting them back above deck to the tryworks. Here the whalemen boiled the blubber in the large copper tryworks until chunks of skin and fibrous tissue, known as cracklings, floated to the top and were skimmed off.[134]

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[129] Clifford W. Ashley, *The Yankee Whaler* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1926), 80.
[130] Macy, 224-231.
[131] See Appendix E for images of the processing of whales at sea.
[132] John Ross Browne, *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise, with Notes of a Sojourn on the Island of Zanzibar to Which is Appended a Brief History of the Whale Fishery, Its Past and Present Condition* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1846), 63.
[133] Frederick D. Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage Round the Globe from Year 1833-1836, Vol 2.* (Reprint: New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1970), 222.
[134] These cracklings were then used as fire starter for the next round of trying-out.

Whalemen then stored the remaining purified oil in wooden barrels and placed them the ship's hold. In addition to harvesting blubber, the crew would also strip whalebone from the animal's mouth and bundle the strips together before adding them to the hold. If the crew was fortunate enough to capture a sperm whale, there were additional steps in the process. To harvest spermaceti, officers first severed the animal's head from the rest of the carcass so as to separate the case from the junk. The case housed a small reserve of the purest head matter, while lesser quality spermaceti was found in the junk. The crew then removed the animal's jawbone and teeth for the crew's use in the creation of scrimshaw before flensing the blubber from the carcass.[135] Depending upon the size of the whale, the trying-out process could last anywhere from one to three days with whalemen working day and night. According to period accounts, trying-out left everything, from the ship to the crew, drenched in oil. "From this smell and taste of blubber, raw, boiling, and burning, there is no relief or refuge," wrote one nineteenth century whalemen, while another described his emotional state after trying-out as follows; "weary, dirty, oily, sleepy, sick, disgusted."[136] After trying out, the crew spent the next several hours cleaning the decks with a scouring agent comprised of salt water, sand, and ash before the long, horrific trying-out process came to a close.[137] Although yields varied depending on the size and species of the catch, the average whale provided

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[135] Scrimshaw is the name given to engravings or carvings done in bone or ivory. During the mid-nineteenth century, New England whalemen created works of scrimshaw as a form of leisure while at sea. Over time, scrimshaw has become a revered form of folk art. The New Bedford Whaling Museum has one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of scrimshaw in the world, including pieces created by one of the whalemen chronicled in this study. For more on the history of scrimshaw, see Stuart M. Frank's *Ingenious Contrivances, Curiously Carved: Scrimshaw in the New Bedford Whaling Museum* (Boston, MA: David R. Godine), 2012.

[136] Charles Nordhoff, *Whaling and Fishing* (Cincinnati, OH: Moore, Wilstach, Keys, 1856), 129; Diary of William A. Abbe, *Atkins Adams*, October 11, 1858, as quoted in Creighton, 71.

[137] Homan, 173.

New England whalemen with forty barrels of oil, with each barrel containing approximately thirty-five gallons.[138] While the price of whale commodities fluctuated widely during the mid-nineteenth century, the gross value of the New England whalefishery's catch during this period averaged over $2.2 million dollars per year in nineteenth century currency.[139] Whaling may have been a foul, dangerous business, but it certainly was profitable.

Another industrial change that helped contribute to the New England whalefishery's growth during the mid-nineteenth century was the discovery of new whaling grounds.[140] During the eighteenth century, New England whaling vessels typically hunted their prey in the Northern and Southern Atlantic. This changed during the nineteenth century, as New England whalemen opened up several new area for commercial whaling including the Sandwich Islands (now the state of Hawaii), the Sea of Okhotsk between Russia and Japan, and the Southern Pacific. New England whaling vessels also began exploring the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Northwest during this period. Although expansion into these new grounds benefited the fishery in many ways, the most significant discovery of the mid-nineteenth century was the Arctic. In the summer of 1848, Captain Thomas Roys and the crew of the New Bedford whaleship *Superior* ventured into the previously unexplored Bering Strait after failing to capture whales in the traditional Pacific Ocean grounds. As Roys recounted several years later, "there is a heavy responsibility resting upon the master who shall dare cruise different from the known grounds."[141] Roys's concern proved to be unwarranted, as his crew soon filled the ship's hold with oil and whalebone. News spread quickly among the whaling fleet, and soon New England communities were scrambling to send their vessels into the Arctic. Coupled with new fashion trends that relied on baleen for waist training corsets and oversized crinolines, the expansion of the New England whalefishery's hunting grounds into the Arctic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans helped sustain the industry's growth and expansion during the mid-nineteenth century.

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[138] Samuel T. Pees, "Whale Oil Prices" Petroleum History Institute, 2004, http://www.petroleumhistory.org/OilHistory/pages/Whale/prices.html.
[139] Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 700-701.
[140] See Appendix F for a map of the nineteenth-century global whaling grounds.

There was also societal change occurring within New England whaling communities during the mid-nineteenth century. As the whalefishery transformed into a commercialized industry, the divide between rich and poor widened in New England whaling communities, particularly in cities like New Bedford, Massachusetts and New London, Connecticut. In the case of New Bedford, as early-twentieth century whaling historian Foster Rhea Dulles put it, "there were now sharp distinctions drawn between the old Quaker families on the hill and the common run of whalemen who thronged the cobbled streets along the waterfront."[142] While there had always been distinctions between rich and poor in New England whaling communities, the shift from family operated firms to an investor based industry exacerbated the divide between the men who owned whaling vessels and the men who sailed them. Furthermore, despite record setting profits, crew lays remained the same or worsened during the mid-nineteenth century, even as the average voyage duration increased to three years, making it increasingly difficult for whalemen to sustain themselves within the industry.[143] Captains were the one exception to this trend. Many of them saw an increase in their compensation during the mid-nineteenth century, especially when they bought ownership shares in the vessels they sailed.[144]

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[141] As quoted in John R. Bockstoce, *Whales, Ice and Men: The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1995), 23.
[142] Foster Rhea Dulles, *Lowered Boats: A Chronicle of American Whaling* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1955), 211.

Over the course of two centuries, the residents of New England’s whaling communities transformed their region’s whalefishery from a community based system of shore whaling to a thriving, multi-faceted, multi-million dollar industry. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, commodities harvested from whales lit the world, provided lubrication for the Industrial Revolution, and supported a global demand for consumer luxury goods, and the residents of New England’s whaling communities played a vital role in the harvesting, processing, and marketing of those commodities. In doing so, they built an industry that changed the course of history. As this study will subsequently demonstrate, the success of that industry had as much to do with the men who hunted whales as the women they left behind on shore.

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[143] Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Teresa D. Hutchins, *Risk Sharing, Crew Quality, Labor Shares, and Wages in the Nineteenth Century American Whaling Industry*, 51-56, available from the National Bureau of Economic Research: http://www.nber.org/papers/h0013.pdf.

[144] These share-holding captains were an important contributor to the phenomenon of wife-carrying whaling vessels during the mid-nineteenth century. Davis et. al, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 389.

CHAPTER 2

"THOU O'ER THE WORLD AND I AT HOME": GENDER IN NEW ENGLAND WHALING COMMUNITIES[145]

Gender was a fundamental component of daily life within New England whaling communities. According to historian Margaret Creighton, the New England whalefishery was a "blue-water brotherhood" with whaleships serving as sites of transformative gender construction for New England men.[146] But what of the wives, daughters, sisters, and mothers these men left behind? During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the gender identities of women in New England whaling communities were linked to the vital role their labor played in the growth and sustainability of the whalefishery. In addition to maintaining homes and raising children, women in New England whaling communities routinely assumed duties traditionally held by men. They managed household accounts, oversaw family farms, and conducted business transactions while their husbands were at sea. This gendered system of labor fit nicely within the ideological framework of colonial New England gender norms because it reinforced women's role as helpmeets to their husbands in the management of the household economy. This changed during the nineteenth century after a series of social, political, and economic developments within New England society led to the establishment of new gender norms that separated the male, public realm of work and commerce from the female, private realm of the home. Yet, as this chapter will show, women in New England whaling communities continued providing vital support to the whalefishery during the nineteenth century, even as their experiences deviated from the period's prescriptive gender norms. By charting idealized prescriptions of gender as well as the realities of lived experience within New England whaling communities, this chapter seeks to identify, define, and explore the unique conceptions of gender found within the New England whalefishery during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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[145] The title of this chapter comes from the opening stanza of an unattributed poem entitled *The Sailor's Wife*; "Thou o'oer the world and I at home, for one may linger, the other may roam." In keeping with the tenets of mid-nineteenth century gender norms, the poem extols domestic ideals that, as this chapter will demonstrate, were incompatible with the realities of life within the New England whalefishery. "The Sailor's Wife," *Sailor's Magazine* 33, No. 7, March 1861.

[146] Margaret Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 162.

"She Works with Willing Hands": Gender in Colonial New England[147]

When English settlers arrived on the shores of Massachusetts Bay in the early-seventeenth century, among the many Old World traditions they brought with them was patriarchy. Translated from ancient Greek as "the rule of the father," patriarchy is defined as a social system wherein male authority is central to social organization. In the context of colonial New England, patriarchal authority passed through a strictly organized social hierarchy comprised of God, the king, men, and their dependents.[148] Under the tenets of patriarchy, each man was the master of his household, ruling with absolute authority as he fulfilled his duty of maintaining his dependents. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this dependent class not only included a man's children, servants, and slaves, but his wife as well.

An English adaptation of the French term *femme couverture*— meaning "covered woman"— the legal doctrine of coverture represented a married woman's legal status during the colonial period. Under coverture, a woman's legal rights were subsumed by her husband upon marriage, as married couples were considered to a single legal entity under English law. In the first installment of his *Commentaries of the Laws of England*, William Blackstone discussed coverture within the context of English common law:

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[147] Adopted from Proverbs 31:13, New International Version.
[148] Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 8.

> By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband: under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs every thing: that is therefore called in our law a feme-covert…and her condition under her marriage is called coverture.[149]

The legal principles of coverture defined nearly every aspect of a woman's life during the colonial period. Under coverture, married women could not buy, own, or sell property, nor could they enter into contracts, write a will, or sign legal documents without their husbands' consent.[150] In addition, as legal non-entities, married women could not sue or be sued, and their children were the legal property of their husbands until they came of age or married.[151] As Massachusetts Bay Governor John Winthrop wrote in his discourse on civil liberties, "the woman's own choice…makes such a man her husband; yet being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him."[152] As such, colonial women were expected to submit to their husband's patriarchal authority, for a wife's subordination to her husband was necessary in maintaining order both within colonial households and in society at large.[153]

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[149] William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, eds. John Williams and Richard Burn (Dublin, Ireland: L. White, W. Jones, and J. Rice, 1794), http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x001123949;view=1up;seq=5.

[150] Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 143.

[151] Married women did maintain one crucial legal right under coverture. A woman's right to her dower, or widow's third, was a fiercely protected right during the colonial period. Men were required to beget one third of their estate to their widows; when men died intestate, without a will, or left their widows less than their required third, courts intervened to guarantee the widow her legal right to her dower. For more on widows in colonial America, see Vivian Bruce Conger, *The Widows' Might: Widowhood and Gender in Early British America* and Carol Berkin's *First Generations: Women in Colonial America*.

[152] James Kendall Hosmer, ed., Winthrop's Journal: "History of New England" 1630-1649 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908) 238-239.

Ironically, despite their legal status under coverture, women were central to economic survival of the patriarchal order in colonial New England society.[154] As befitting their status as head of the household, husbands and fathers served as supervisors of the family labor force. However, thanks to their economic productivity, married women were also awarded a certain level of authority within colonial New England society.[155] In 1728, a New Hampshire minister's wife detailed the extent of in productivity in verse:

> Up in the morning I must rise,
> Before I've time to rub my eyes,
> With half-pin'd gown, unbuckled shoe,
> I haste to milk my lowing cow.
> But, Oh! It makes my heart to ake,
> I have no bread til I can bake,
> And then, alas! It makes me sputter,
> For I must churn or have no butter…[156]

In addition to overseeing the daily operations of the household, colonial women also raised children, supervised servants and slaves, and produced marketable goods such as foodstuffs and textiles. Some women also worked as skilled artisans in trades such as clothes making and upholstery.[157] Therefore, because the household was the center of the family's economic enterprise, and because women's labor was valued within that enterprise, women remained an important part of colonial society even though they were bound by the legal and social framework of coverture.

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[153] Stephanie Coontz, *Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families, 1600-1900* (New York, NY: Verso Books, 1988), 99.

[154] Elaine Forman Crane, *Ebb Tide in New England: Women, Seaports, and Social Change, 1630-1800* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 102.

[155] Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York, NY: Viking, 2005), 145.

[156] *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society Sixth Series Volume 4*, (Boston, MA: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1840), 228.

[157] Marla R. Miller, *The Needle's Eye: Women and Work in the Age of Revolution* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), 8. See also Marla R. Miller, *Betsy Ross and the Making of America* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company), 2010.

In addition to serving as helpmeets to their husbands, New England women also took on the role of a deputy husband during the colonial era, either in partnership with their spouses or in their husband's absence as the need arose. According to historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, under the right circumstances, "any wife not only could double as a husband, she had a responsibility to do so."[158] This was especially the case during periods of extended absences, a common occurrence in colonial New England's maritime communities. For example, Massachusetts court records indicate a woman named Anne Devorix managed her family's farm while her husband was at sea in addition to overseeing fishing vessel offloads in his stead.[159] Edith Creford of Salem, Massachusetts acted as her husband's attorney while he was at sea, while her fellow Salem resident Patience Marston met with Elizabeth Holmes of Boston to settle their husbands' accounts after a fishing voyage in 1710.[160] These examples of deputy husbandry demonstrate that even under coverture, gender norms maintained a certain degree of elasticity in colonial New England. This changed at the end of the eighteenth century, as a wave of political, economic, and social factors sharpened the divide between men and women's work, and in doing so, helped give rise to new gender norms that would impact New England women for more than a century.

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[158] Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Goodwives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1991), 38.

[159] George Francis Dow, ed., *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts Volume II* (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1912), 291.

[160] Ulrich, 46.

“Welcome sweet Liberty once more to me”: Gender in Revolutionary New England and the Early Republic[161]

The era of the American Revolution was a period of tremendous change in New England, as men and women alike were swept up in an ideological firestorm that called for the overthrow of the patriarchal theory of political legitimacy and establishment of a new nation founded in the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.[162] In addition to changes in the political arena, the American Revolution also brought about new ideas regarding the role of men and women in society. One of these ideas centered on the differences between the public and private domain. When coupled with radical shifts in the new nation’s economy, these ideas would lead to the establishment of new gender paradigms that would become as integral to the fabric of New England society as democracy itself.

Although the focus of the Founding Fathers was securing independence from Great Britain, their ideas were also responsible for a radical shift in thinking about the differences between men and women and roles they played within society. By rejecting the longstanding traditions of patriarchal absolutism and the divine right of kings, American revolutionaries believed legitimate political authority could only be achieved through the collective consent of the people. These ideas contributed to shift in thinking about a fundamental building block within colonial New England society, the institution of marriage. During the American Revolution, the longstanding connections between the family and the state gave way to a society marked by newly articulated distinctions between the public and private realms.[163] Marriage became a private relationship between two individuals, a relationship defined in terms of reciprocal rights and responsibilities rather than authoritarianism from the husband and submission from the wife.[164] Despite these seemingly egalitarian shifts in thinking, the basic legal structure that defined married women's status— the legal doctrine of coverture— would remain in place long after the Treaty of Paris recognized the newly formed United States of America.[165] It would be changes to American economics, not American politics, which would reshape understandings of gender during the first decades of the nineteenth century.

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[161] As cited in Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996) 17.
[162] Norton, 297.

While the origins of the American market economy date back to the seventeenth century, the shift from independent household economies to a cash based economic system rooted in wage labor first began during the New Republic. Under the colonial household economy system, men and women worked together within the household, each responsible for their designated share of the labors. Though their roles differed from that of their husbands, women's domestic labor held economic value during the colonial period.[166] In contrast, with the rise of the market economy at the turn of the nineteenth century, economic production shifted from the household to the newly designated public domain of work. Within this domain, men no longer worked as independent artisans within a barter system of debits and credits; they became wage laborers for employers. During the early nineteenth century, the introduction of wage labor transformed the definition of economic contributions in New England society. These economic changes "eroded traditional routes of occupational advancement and made the process of choosing a calling and succeeding at it more demanding for men in all walks of life."[167] Thus, as economic productivity became synonymous with wage labor, the societal value of American women's domestic work diminished throughout the early nineteenth century. Yet, even as their economic value diminished, American women were presented with a new role in the early decades of the nineteenth century: the Republican Mother.

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[163] Ruth Bloch, "The American Revolution: Wife Beating and the Emergent Value of Privacy," *Early American Studies* 5, No.2 (2007), 223-251.
[164] Michael Grossberg, *Governing the Hearth: Law and Family in Nineteenth Century America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 20 and Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 16.
[165] Linda K. Kerber has long argued that despite its ideological emphasis on fundamental rights, the American Revolution did little to change the lives of American women because the legal doctrine of coverture not only survived the Revolution, its social and legal footholds strengthened during the Early Republic period. See Linda K. Kerber, "The Paradox of Women's Citizenship in the Early Republic: The Case of *Martin vs. Massachusetts*, 1805," *American Historical Review* 97, No. 2 (1992), 349-378.
[166] Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), xi.

Charged with instilling the moral and civic values of democracy within her children, the idealization of the Republican Mother represented a public outlet for American women at a time when their access to that domain was quickly eroding.[168] The duties of the Republican Mother are exemplified in this excerpt from a Columbia University commencement speech from 1795: "Let us contemplate the mother distributing the mental nourishment to the fond smiling circle…while you keep our country virtuous you maintain its independence."[169] Along with granting women moral authority over the next generation of American citizens, the Republican Motherhood ideology also helped legitimize the education of women at the turn of the century.[170] In keeping with their duties as Republican Mothers, American women were responsible for educating their children so they could grow up to become learned citizens of the New Republic.[171] However, it is important to stress that a woman's access to education was limited to what society deemed necessary in the fulfillment of her duties as a Republican Mother. Many prescriptive literary tracts published during the Early Republic period warned against women becoming too learned, "for to be lovely then you must be content to be women; to be mild, social and sentimental- and leave the masculine virtues, and the profound researches of study to the providence of the other sex."[172] Additionally, only the upper classes of American society could afford to educate their daughters, leaving the role of the Republican Mother— and the limited outlets it provided— outside the grasp of working women, poor women, and women of color. In the end, while the egalitarian rhetoric of the Revolution helped replace monarchy with democracy, and the Republican Mother ideology gave women an ideological foothold in the making of American democracy, patriarchy continued to define New England women's status throughout the Early Republic.[173] Furthermore, the sharpening of the ideological differences between men and women during this period helped lay the foundation for new paradigms that would transform New England men and women's understanding of gender during the mid-nineteenth century.

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[167] Amy Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 8.

[168] Historian Anne Boylan argues that the civic responsibilities Republican Motherhood opened the ideological door for women's participation in the public arena through benevolence and moral reform during the antebellum period. See Anne Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism: New York and Boston, 1797-1840* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press), 2002.

[169] "Female Influence" *New York Magazine*, May 1795, 301-305 as cited in Angela Vietto, *Women and Authorship in Revolutionary America* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 78.

[170] Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak; Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 91-92.

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[171] Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 199-200.

[172] Alphonso, "An Address to the Ladies," *American Magazine* (March 1788), 244-45 as cited in Gary D. Schmitt, *A Passionate Usefulness: The Life and Literary Labors of Hannah Adams* (Charlottesville, VA: The University of Virginia Press, 2004), 24.

[173] Rosemarie Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early Republic* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 186.

“What soft cherubic creatures these gentlewomen are”: Gender in Nineteenth-Century New England[174]

As the Early Republic gave way to the American antebellum, a new social class emerged within New England society. Economically situated between the longstanding class distinctions of rich and poor, this new American middle class was identified not only by its place within the American economic spectrum, but by its unique societal point of view.[175] As a whole, members of the New England middle class championed morality, emphasized the importance of marriage and family, and subscribed to sharply defined gender roles. Aided by increasing literacy rates and the emergence of a print culture dedicated to promoting middle class ideals, these new societal changes helped bring about tremendous change in the ways New England men and women understood themselves and their roles within society.[176]

One of the most important societal changes of the antebellum period for New England men and women was the widespread acceptance of companionate marriage. Whereas prior generations had married for economic or political purposes, beginning in the 1820s, New England men and women began to view romantic love as a necessary precondition to marriage. Once condemned as dangerous and fool hearty, romance was rebranded in the antebellum period as “the key to domestic harmony rather than a threat to it.”[177] In fact, by the mid-nineteenth century, love was the only acceptable basis for an idealized marriage. Within these new companionate marriages, "the mutual return of conjugal love [and] the ties of reciprocal sincerity," provided the foundation of a private partnership between a man and woman based on love and mutual consent.[178] The poet Dora Greenwall captured the spirit of these idealized companionate marriages in a poem fittingly entitled, *Home*; "Two birds within one nest, two hearts within one breast, two souls within one fair, firm league of love and prayer."[179] Setting the sentimentality of the period aside, companionate marriages represented a break with a thousand year old tradition, as men and women looked to the institution of marriage as "the pivotal experience in people's lives, and married love the principal focus of their emotions, obligations and satisfactions."[180] These changes to the nature and role of marriage in New England society helped support the emergence of new conceptions of gender during the mid-nineteenth century.

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[174] Emily Dickinson, “What soft cherubic creatures,” in *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. R. W. Franklin (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 653.

[175] Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1.

[176] Carol Lasser and Stacey Robertson, *Antebellum Women: Private, Public, Partisan* (New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 58.

[177] Ellen K. Rothman, *Hands in Hearts: A History of Courtship in America* (New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc., 1984), 103.

Beginning in the 1820s, a new gender paradigm materialized within the prescriptive literature of the New England middle class. Championed by advice authors such as Sarah Josepha Hale and Catherine Beecher, these gendered ideals are best described by their twentieth century classification, the separate spheres.[181] Building upon the erosion of the household economy that first occurred during the Early Republic period, the gendered ideology of the separate spheres associated women with the private realm of the home while men were granted control over the public domain of work, politics, and commerce.[182] Rooted in new understandings of biological differences between the sexes, these separate yet complementary spheres of influence were the cornerstone of the newly emerging culture of domesticity.[183] By extolling "true women" as moral guide posts for their husbands and children, domesticity in turn reinforced the ideology of the separate spheres by relegating American women to the confines of the home.[184] Meanwhile, middle class American men were assigned the responsibility of providing for their wives and children based on their own economic endeavors. No longer could a husband rely on the support of his wife in providing for the household. In fact, under the tenets of domesticity, women's domestic work within the household transformed into "homemaking, an act of love rather than an act of survival."[185] This concept of the sole male breadwinner was intrinsic to domesticity, as new middle class conceptions of manhood were linked to success in the public sphere, as well as other masculine characteristics such as strength, courage, and competitiveness.[186] These new conceptions of gender were extolled in middle class print culture.[187] In this example from an 1838 ladies' journal, the differences between men and women were outlined using the flowery, sentimental language of the period:

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[178] "Letters on Marriage" 1775, reprinted in *The Work of the Rev. John Witherspoon Volume IV* (Philadelphia, PA 1802), 169.

[179] William C. Gannett, *Of Making One's Self Beautiful* (New York: James Pott & Company, 1899), 128.

[180] Coontz, *Marriage: A History*, 177.

[181] While the separate spheres paradigm has maintained a long list of critics since its appearance in Nancy F. Cott's *The Bonds of Womanhood*, Linda K. Kerber's essay, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" is the among the most compelling examples of scholarship highlighting the prescriptive nature of the separate spheres in the development of nineteenth middle class gender roles. See Nancy F. Cott *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* and Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" in *Towards an Intellectual History of Women* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 1997.

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[182] Catherine E. Kelly, *In the New England Fashion: Reshaping Women's Lives in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 15.
[183] Stephanie Coontz, *Social Origins of Private Life*, 223.
[184] Women's sexual purity, moral righteousness, piety were all crucial to both domesticity and the separate spheres, a radical departure from the longstanding Western belief that women carried Eve's original sin and were therefore vessels of temptation, sexual wickedness and sin. For more on the ideological frameworks of True Womanhood, see Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, No. 2 (1966), 151-174.
[185] Coontz, *Marriage: A History*, 155.
[186] Greenberg, 12, and Karen Lystra, *Searching the Heart: Women, Men and Romantic Love in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989), 123.
[187] Cott, 63.

> Man is strong, woman is beautiful. Man is daring and confident, woman is diffident and unassuming…Man shines abroad, woman at home…Man prevents misery, woman relieves it. Man has science, woman taste. Man has judgement, woman sensibility. Man is a being of justice, woman of mercy.[188]

These prescriptive ideologies quickly became dominant gender norms in New England during the mid-nineteenth century, as residents of New England communities continued to shift away from the traditional household economy to a system of wage labor.

Even with the seemingly universal acceptance of domesticity and the separate spheres within New England middle class print and visual culture during the mid-nineteenth century, it is important to underscore the prescriptive nature of these gendered ideologies. In history, the ideal rarely squares with the real, and as such, nineteenth century gender norms were far more fluid than the tenets of the separate spheres and domesticity would suggest. Over the past several decades, historians in the field of women and gender have produced numerous studies highlighting instances where women's experiences deviated from the prescriptive ideology of domesticity during the nineteenth century. In some cases, this was due to economic necessity. For example, women of the lower classes had always worked in support of their families, and continued to do so throughout the nineteenth century.[189] Women in rural New England farming communities also continued to provide valuable labor and support to their families during the nineteenth century.[190] The fluidity of gendered labor during the early-nineteenth century also led to changes in professions such as teaching. During the colonial period, the majority of grade school teachers were men; by 1840, women comprised more than half of New England's teachers.[191] Other examples of New England women deviating from the prescriptive ideologies of the mid-nineteenth century can be found in studies of women's activism and experiences during the Civil War.[192] In the case of New England whaling communities, the men and women who lived and worked in support of the whalefishery also deviated from mid-nineteenth century gender norms. Despite the widespread acceptance of middle class values and the ideology of domesticity, residents of New England whaling communities continued to abide by unique conceptions of gender that valued men and women's contributions to the whalefishery during the mid-nineteenth century.

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[188] "Light Reading," in *The New York Mirror and Ladies' Literary Gazette; Being a Repository of Miscellaneous Literary Productions in Poems and Verse Volume I*, eds. Samuel Woolworth and George P. Morris (New York, NY: Published by George P. Morris 1824), 157.

[189] With the rise of industrialization, there were more opportunities for unskilled women workers than ever before in mills and factories. For a thorough analysis of women workers during the nineteenth century, see Thomas Dublin's *Transforming Women's Work: New England Lives in the Industrial Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 1994.

"Contribute my mite": Gender in New England Whaling Communities[193]

Like their neighbors throughout the region, the men and women of New England's whaling communities lived within a gendered society influenced by a range of local, regional, and national factors. However, when examining conceptions of gender within whaling communities, an additional source of influence must also be considered:

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[190] Martin Bruegel, "Work, Gender, and Authority on the Farm: The Hudson Valley Countryside, 1790s-1850s" *Agricultural History* 76, No. 1 (Winter 2002), 6.

[191] Jo Anne Preston, "Domestic Ideology, Social Reformers, and Female Teachers: Schoolteaching Becomes Women's Work in Nineteenth Century New England" *The New England Quarterly* 66, No. 4 (December 1993), 531.

[192] See Anne M. Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism: New York and Boston, 1797-1840* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 2002; Bruce Dorsey, *Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 2006; Nancy A. Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 1988; and Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Flight the Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 2005.

[193] This section title comes from a letter written by Phebe Coleman to her husband Samuel Coleman, February 9, 1800, Mss. 107, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

the whalefishery. In ports such as Nantucket and New Bedford, where whaling served as the social and economic lifeblood of the community, the whalefishery's influence extended far beyond the wharves and chandleries; it touched nearly every aspect of daily life. The residents of New England's whaling communities thereby adopted distinct conceptions of gender shaped by the realities and necessities of life within the whalefishery. Rather than viewing gender solely through political, social, or economic lenses, in New England whaling communities, men and women understood gender within the context of the whaling industry, and in doing so, perceived gender difference through separate yet mutually supportive roles within the fishery. Men provided for their families and the community by hunting and processing whales at sea, while women supported those efforts by maintaining family and community ties on shore.[194] Within this unique configuration of gender difference, the sea was viewed as a thoroughly masculine space, while the shore was defined by feminine labors in support of the whalefishery and the community.[195] Thus, while the gendered division of labor within whaling communities assigned the sexes very different tasks in very different spaces, both men and women's labor held value in New England whaling communities, as both were considered vital to the survival of families, the fishery, and the community as a whole.

This unique configuration of gender first emerged on the island of Nantucket during the mid-eighteenth century. More so than any other New England whaling community, Nantucket's economic survival depended upon the success of its whalefishery. The whaling industry's role in shaping its residents' understanding of gender was crucial, as Nantucket's unique conceptions of gender represented the bedrock upon which the island's community was built.[196] In keeping with patriarchal tradition, Nantucket men were tasked with the responsibility of maintaining their households. However, unlike in other colonial New England communities, Nantucket men were also charged with the continued survival on the community, which was inextricably linked with the success of the whalefishery.

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[194] Although men labored in related shore side industries such as chandleries throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, their contributions to the New England whalefishery, along with those of women, were conceptualized as labor undertaken in support of men's work aboard whaleships at sea.
[195] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, ix.

Whaling historian Elmo Hohman once described New England deep sea whaling as "seafaring at its most extreme."[197] Given the inherent risks and danger involved in the hunting and processing of whales at sea, it is therefore not surprising that Nantucket whalemen were attributed the masculine traits of courage, bravery, and daring during the eighteenth century. Whaling served as the primary means of supporting one's family and community during this period, as well as a gendered rite of passage that transformed boys into men. [198] Yet, unlike in other New England communities where seafaring professions often bore the stain of immorality, on Nantucket, the men who set out from the island each year to hunt whales were motivated not by the desire to escape from life ashore, but rather to support their families and communities. In his discussion of Nantucket's whalefishery in *Letters from an American Farmer*, John Hector St. John Crèvecœur describes whalemen's motives for going sea:

> The motives that lead these men to sea are very different from those of most other sea-faring men; it is neither idleness nor profligacy that sent them to that element; it a settled plain of life, a well-endowed hope of earning a livelihood.[199]

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[196] John Hector St. John Crèvecœur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782; reprint New York, NY: Fox, Duffield and Company, 1904), 128.
[197] Elmo Paul Hohman, *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry* (New York, NY: Longmans, Green, 1928), 7.
[198] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 81.
[199] Crèvecœur, 177.

Therefore, during the eighteenth century, Nantucket men went to sea in pursuit of economic stability for their families and communities.

While their fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons were away at sea, Nantucket's women were left with the task of maintaining the families and community they left behind. In *Letters from an American Farmer*, Crèvecœur described Nantucket women's role within the community as such: "They gradually advise and direct; when the husband goes to sea, he leaves her to learn to exercise the new government in which she is entered." In particular, Crèvecœur highlighted the crucial role women fulfilled in sustaining the island's community and industry:

> As the sea excursions are often very long, their wives in their absence are necessarily obliged to transact business, to settle accounts and in short, to rule and provide for their families. These circumstances being often repeated give women the abilities as well as a taste for that kind of superintendence to which by their prudent and good management they seem to be in general very equal. This employment ripens their judgement and justly entitles them to a rank superior to that of other women.[200]

By taking on duties traditionally assigned to men in a role akin to that of a deputy husband, Nantucket women were integral to the survival of not only their families and community, but of the whalefishery as well. As historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has noted, examples of women fulfilling the role of a deputy husband was commonplace throughout New England during the eighteenth century.[201] However, the frequency with which Nantucket women assumed those duties, the extent to which they fulfilled those duties, and the vital role the fulfillment of those duties played in the survival of the

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[200] Crèvecœur, 205.
[201] Ulrich, 36-50.

Nantucket whalefishery, demonstrate that Nantucket women were not just deputy husbands; they were husbands in absentia.

With their husbands away at sea for up to two years at time during the eighteenth century, Nantucket women oversaw family finances, conducted business, and maintained farms in addition to their maternal and domestic responsibilities, often exercising their own judgement in the process. Period letters, journals, and account books demonstrate just how commonplace husbands in absentia were on Nantucket. During her husband Simeon's frequent absences at sea, Phebe Folger took on responsibilities as a junior partner in the family business, selling and distributing goods Simeon purchased and shipped back to her from foreign ports. Phebe also advised her husband on the status of Nantucket's market for trade goods. In a letter penned while at sea in 1791, Simeon wrote to Phebe asking for her advice about purchasing rice and indigo: "I hope to hear from you Concerning Rice…if it is a thing to Git me word Befor I sail for New York I wish you would So as I may no how to act in Regard to Rice & Indigo."[202] Lydia Almy also served as a husband in absentia while hers was away at sea, taking in boarders, tanning skins, and even lending money in an effort to help support the household.[203] Phebe Coleman ran a small school while her husband Samuel was at sea. In a letter written in the winter of 1800, Phebe noted with pride that she had "thirty schollars belonging to my school," and despite the challenges of living and working without her husband, she assured her husband she was "willing to contribute my mite to accelerate that happy period when she shall not be obliged to separate."[204] In contrast to women in other New England communities who assumed the role of deputy husband to support their family as the need arose, women like Phebe Folger, Lydia Almy, and Phebe Coleman were charged with supporting their families as well as maintaining their community's economic stability. During the late-eighteenth century, several Nantucket women operated businesses along Centre Street near the harbor to support their families while their husbands were away at sea. Within a few decades, this area became known as "Petticoat Row" due to the preponderance of women shopkeepers.[205] According to Nantucket resident Eliza Barney "all the dry-goods and groceries were kept by women" and court records indicate two Nantucket women held licenses to sell imported goods such as tea and china in 1760.[206] This unique configuration of gender norms continued throughout the eighteenth century, as Nantucket women's work as husbands in absentia was necessary to supporting their families and community.

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[202] Simeon Folger to Phebe Folger, February 2, 1788, March 7, 1791, Mss. 118, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[203] Norling, 38.

The role of the Quaker faith is another important factor to consider when analyzing the development of Nantucket's unique conceptions of gender. Whereas much of Protestant New England followed in the patriarchal tradition of female subordination, Nantucket's Quaker faith helped foster generations of "rational, self-disciplined women" within the community.[207] Like all Quakers, Nantucket's Quaker community abided by religious beliefs outlined by George Fox, founder of the Religious Society of Friends.

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[204] Phebe Coleman to Samuel Coleman, February 9, 1800, Mss. 107, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[205] The Centre Street area would remain a stronghold for women business owners on Nantucket well into the nineteenth century. Norling, 42.

[206] Norling, 41.

[207] Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992), 13.

Unlike his contemporaries in other Protestant faiths, Fox believed in a more harmonious dynamic between men and women:

> For man and woman were helpsmeet, in the image of God and in righteousness and holiness…before they fell; but after the Fall in the transgression the man was to rule over his wife. But by the restoration by Christ into the image of God and his righteous and holiness again in that they are helpsmeet, man and woman as they were before the fall.[208]

According to the tenets of the Quaker faith, the Inner Light of God is present in everyone; both men and women can experience God directly. This spiritual equality among believers ensured that while Quaker women held no power independent from men in the eighteenth century, Quaker men could claim no authority separate from women.[209] Quaker women therefore exerted real power within their faith and their communities. On the island of Nantucket, the Quaker belief of religious egalitarianism, combined with the ongoing absences of husbands and fathers at sea, contributed to a collective sense of female authority.[210] This authority was bolstered by the Nantucket's Women's Meeting.[211] In keeping with George Fox's belief that women should be allowed to discuss "women's matters" such as sex and childbirth in church sanctioned meetings separate from men, the Women's Meeting helped create a community of organized, influential women on Nantucket.[212] Coupled with the economic realities of whaling, Nantucket's

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[208] As quoted in Mary Maples Dunn, "Women of Light," in *Women of America: A History,* eds. Carol Berkin and Mary Beth Norton (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1979), 118.

[209] Joan R. Soderlund, "Women's Authority in Pennsylvania and New Jersey Quaker Meetings, 1680-1760," *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 No 4 (1987), 722-749.

[210] Barbara Logue, "The Whaling Industry and Fertility Decline: Nantucket, Massachusetts 1660-1850," *Social Science History* 7 No. 4 (1983), 428.

[211] Jeffrey Kovach, "Nantucket Women: Public Authority and Education in the Eighteenth Century Nantucket Quaker Women's Meeting and the Foundation for Female Activism" (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015), 42-43.

[212] Levy, 13.

Quaker community helped shape gender norms that strengthened and sustained the island's residents— and its whalefishery— throughout the eighteenth century.

Despite its origins in Nantucket's Quaker community, the whalefishery's gendered system of labor did not remain exclusive to Nantucket for long. As more New England communities established deep sea whaling operations during the eighteenth century, they not only adopted Nantucket's whaling techniques and business practices, but its gender norms as well. Some of these communities, like New Bedford, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island, shared a connection to Nantucket's Quaker tradition. Most did not. Yet, during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, New England whaling communities nevertheless embraced these unique conceptions of gender for the same reason Nantucket residents did: the sustainability of the whalefishery depended upon strong, self-reliant women capable of maintaining family and community ties while their husbands were away at sea. Thus, the tradition of mutually supportive gender roles would remain the status quo in New England whaling communities well into the nineteenth century, as they were rooted in the realities of life within the whalefishery.

In keeping with the demands of the whaling industry, during the mid-nineteenth century women in New England whaling communities continued in the tradition of serving as husbands in absentia. In fact, "the reliance upon the services and support provided by women…was particularly striking in New England whaling communities" during this period.[213] Evidence of women's support of the whalefishery can be found in period letters, ledgers, and journals. In a series of letters to his wife Eliza, Martha's

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[213] Lisa Norling, "Ahab's Wife: Women and the American Whaling Industry, 1820-1870" in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920,* Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling, eds. (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 73.

Vineyard resident Henry Beetle praised her work as his business agent during his time at sea. In addition to paying off a note to Henry's creditors, Eliza also obtained written terms of employment for him after he shipped out in a hurry aboard another vessel.[214] In a letter to her husband Charles, Caroline Gifford of Dartmouth, Massachusetts detailed her decision about what to do with a note she collected from his former agent:

> There was about 5000 due to you at Phillips after your voyage was settled…of what I didn't use, since you wrote about putting in the Bank of Fall River…I told Phillips I wanted about 800 put in your name & 800 in mine.[215]

In addition to managing the family's finances, women in nineteenth century New England whaling communities also sewed, took in piecework, and lodged boarders in order to support their families. New Bedford resident Eliza Stanton sewed shirts for the whaling outfitters Cook & Snow for three years while her husband was away at sea, while Captain Silas Fisk's wife Julia managed a boarding house in their hometown of Groton, Connecticut.[216] For women in rural whaling communities, there was often the additional task of managing the family farm. Hannah Blackmer maintained her Aschunet, Massachusetts farmstead during her husband's time at sea, and Abby Grinnell oversaw the harvest of her family's farm in nearby Tiverton, Rhode Island 1845. She described the results of that harvest in a letter to her husband Stephen; "Our corn is very large and the barley is very good. We have thrashed…and we got sixty bushels…oxen have done very well this summer and they are fat enough for beef."[217] There is also evidence of women supporting other women in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities. New Bedford resident Harriet Allen kept a diary wherein she noted frequent exchanges of household goods between herself and other whalemen's wives. In the summer of 1863 she gave a bag of flour to one neighbor and a received some tubs on loan from her sister-in-law a few weeks later.[218] By working to support their families and sustain their fishery in their husbands' absence, women in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities continued in the tradition of the mutually supportive, gendered system labor forged by their predecessors a century earlier.

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[214] Henry Beetle to Eliza Beetle, October 2, 1851; September 10, 1854, Beetle Family Papers, Nicholson Whaling Collection, Providence Public Library Special Collections, Providence Public Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

[215] Caroline Gifford to Charles Gifford, January 19, 1870; August 21, 1867, Mss. 56, Series G, Subseries 7, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[216] Cook & Snow ledger book, 1855-1870, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts; Julia Fisk diary, 1859 and Silas W. Fisk correspondence, VFM 1007, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

By and large, the unique conceptions of gender found within New England whaling communities aligned with greater New England's understanding of gender during the eighteenth century and early-nineteenth centuries. While men were unquestionably the patriarchal heads of their families, women in eighteenth century New England whaling communities "bore the primary responsibility of maintaining their families and communities on shore."[219] This gendered practice of women serving as helpmeets dovetailed nicely with the larger structure of colonial maritime industries, as the deep sea trades represented "a permeable boundary between household and community that allowed casual and reciprocal interaction whenever necessary."[220] New

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[217] Hannah Blackmer's account of managing her family farm can be found in Genevieve M. Darden's *My Dear Husband: Being a Collection of Heretofore Unpublished Letters of the Whale Era* (New Bedford, MA: Descendants of Whaling Masters, 1980); Abby Grinnell to Stephen Grinnell, September 6, 1845, Mss. 80, Subgroup 3, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[218] Harriet Allen, June 6, 1863 and June 10, 1863, Log 401, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[219] Lisa Norling, "Ahab's Wife," 47.

[220] Lisa Norling, "'*How Frought with Sorrow and Heartpangs': Mariners' Wives and the Ideology of Domesticity in New England, 1790-1800*," *The New England Quarterly* 65 No.3 (1992), 425.

England whaling community gender norms also aligned with the gendered ideologies of the New Republic, as the archetype of the Republic Mother further underscored the important role women played in the sustainability of both the whalefishery and the nation. It was not until the emergence of the separate spheres as the dominant gender ideology during the mid-nineteenth century that prescription diverged from reality in the New England whaling communities. Yet, as the writings of Harriet Allen, Caroline Gifford, and so many others demonstrate, residents of New England whaling communities remained steadfast in their unique understanding of gender. Rather than adopting the tenets of domesticity that regulated women to the private sphere of the home while exalting men to the newly masculinized sphere of commerce, residents of New England whaling communities continued to define gender roles in mutually supportive terms: men hunted and processed whales at sea, while women supported those efforts on shore.

These changes in societal gender norms were accompanied by changes within the whalefishery itself. Aided by a series of technological and industrial innovations, the New England whaling industry expanded at an unprecedented pace during the mid-nineteenth century. Between 1820 and 1840, the region's whaling fleet tripled in size from seventy-seven vessels to two hundred twenty-three: by the mid-1850s, that number had risen to over two hundred fifty vessels.[221] Gross annual profits from New England whaling voyages averaged between one to two million dollars in nineteenth century currency during this period, and at the industry's peak, more than seventy thousand men from over sixty communities were employed within the fishery.[222] However, as previously detailed in Chapter 1 of this study, the business of whaling also changed during the mid-nineteenth century. Family operated whaling firms were replaced by investor owned corporations, and these investors sought to maximize profits from their vessels. As a result, the average whalemen's pay decreased during the mid-nineteenth century, even as overfishing in traditional whaling grounds led to longer voyages. By the mid-nineteenth century, New England whalemen could expect to be at sea for up to four years at time. Coupled with the rise of middle class gender norms, this shift from community fisheries to a fully commercialized industry led to tension within mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities, as men and women struggled to reconcile domestic ideals with the new realities of life within the whalefishery.

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[221] Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery*, 1878. Reprint. (Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 700-701; 665-687.

Beginning in the 1840s, the unique conceptions of gender that had sustained New England whaling communities for more than a century began to show signs of ideological strain as a combination of industrial and societal changes tested the limits of the fishery's longstanding gender norms. As the length of the average whaling voyage steadily increased, men and women in New England whaling communities were forced to live apart from their spouses for up to four years at a time. While some unhappy marriages undoubtedly benefited from this arrangement, during the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of New England couples married for love.[223] Therefore, unlike their eighteenth century predecessors, whose marriages were often forged for social and economic purposes, the men and women of New England whaling communities faced the challenge of supporting their families and their community while spending the majority of their married lives apart. The emergence of domesticity as the dominant theme in New England print culture also impacted couples in New England whaling communities during the mid-nineteenth century. With its emphasis on romantic love, this sentimental literature inundated men and women with celebrations of the nuclear family and companionate marriage.[224] In an 1851 issue of *Godey's Lady's Book*, an unnamed author described marriage as "one sacred oath hath tied our loves; one destiny our life shall guide; nor wind nor deep our common way divide!"[225] For men and women in New England whaling communities, particularly those who married for love, this prescriptive literature reinforced ideals that were impossible to achieve.[226]

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[222] Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), 206.

Evidence of the strain this ideological dilemma placed on married couples within New England whaling communities can be found in their letters. Given the extended periods of separation between husbands and wives during this period, these letters were "the very substance of relationships" for many married couples.[227] Faced with the burden of supporting their families and community in their husbands' absence, women in New England whaling communities used letters to their husbands as a means of communication as well as a sounding board for their emotions. After bidding her husband John farewell when he shipped aboard the New Bedford ship *Milo* in the fall of 1859, Susan Gifford wrote, "I felt very bad after you had gone. I did not know what to do with myself. I went up stairs and cried till my head ached and I felt most sick...*You* was all the World to me, and now you are gone."[228] Ruth Albert expressed similar sentiments in a letter to her husband William after he went to sea: "You have been gone 3 weeks this morning and it seems to me that you have been gone 3 months for time never did seem so long to me before as it does now."[229] In addition to sharing their sorrows, some women also used their letters to express their frustration with their husbands' absences. Such was the case for Lizzie Howes, who bluntly declared in a letter to her husband, "I think a seafaring man should *never* marry."[230] Myra Weeks was of a similar mind, albeit a gentler tone, when she wrote to her husband in 1842 saying "I think that there must be some way to get a liveing without your always being away from your family and friends."[231] Faced with the burden of supporting their families and communities without the company of their husbands for years at a time, women in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities struggled to reconcile the tenets of domesticity with the realities of life within the whalefishery.

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[223] These couples found comfort through other means during their periods of separation. It was common for whalemen to engage native women in prostitution while in foreign ports; some even took "season wives" while at sea. It was far less common for whalemen to take their pleasure with men, though some cases of homosexual relations between whalemen do survive in the historical record. But what about their wives? Those who sought companionship outside of marriage were subject to potential divorce proceedings, and given period gender norms, surviving evidence as to the sexual practices of women in New England whaling communities is scant. However, ever since the discovery of what appears to be a phallic sexual aid in the chimney of a nineteenth century Nantucket home in the 1970s, the titillating (yet largely unproven) narrative about women in whaling communities' reliance on these "he's at homes" as sources of sexual pleasure persists in popular culture. See Margaret Creighton's thorough discussions of prostitution and homosexuality in *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870*. For further analysis of native prostitution in whaling ports, see Gregory Rosenthal's *Beyond Hawai'i: Native Labor in the Pacific World*. See Chapter 5 of this study for one noteworthy example of a whaleman taking a "season wife."

[224] Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife*, 120.

[225] *Godey's Lady's Book*, Vol 42 (January 1851), Project Gutenberg, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15080/15080-h/15080-h.htm.

[226] Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife*, 267.

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[227] In his analysis of gender and marriage in the antebellum American South, historian Steven Stowe argues letters were the basis of married couples' relationships when said couples were, "strained by distance, gender differences, or emotions." In the case of New England whaling communities, the extended periods of separation necessitated by whaling voyages led many married couples to rely on their letters as a means of sustaining their marriages. Steven Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of Planters* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 4.

[228] Susan Snow Gifford, November 15, 1859, 2017.47, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[229] Ruth Albert to William C. Albert, August 22, 1844, Mss. 80, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[230] Lizzie Howes to Abner Howes, Jr., October 2, 1854, Hamer Family Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

While the sentimental literature of this period is most commonly associated with women, men in New England whaling communities were also deeply impacted by domesticity and its incompatibility with the whalefishery's unique conceptions of gender. In a letter to his wife Eliza, first mate Charles Pierce implored her to remember that he had not forgotten her, "for my family is what I am working for, trying to live for."[232] Charles echoed these sentiments in a letter written several years later wherein he shared his guilt over the duration of the voyage and the burdens it had placed on his wife:

> I look back and see how much better it would have been if I had not left home at all...it was the farthest thing from my thoughts, when I left you, for you to support yourself and the Children, all this time."[233]

Captain William Ashley agreed with these sentiments, and after lamenting his separation from his wife, concluded "it does very well for single to be goin [whaling] a life time but I do not think it is healthy for the married ones."[234] Healthy or not, husbands from New England whaling communities continued to struggle with the physical and emotional burdens of living apart from their wives throughout the mid-nineteenth century. For most whalemen, the only possible remedies to this emotional toil was either earning enough money to retire, or finding work in other maritime industries. Both options were easier said than done. In a letter to his wife Susan written while aboard the New Bedford bark *John A. Parker* in 1856, Captain William Loring Taber promised his wife that his current voyage would be his last: "I do not think any one can offer me inducements enough to leave my family again, unless I meet with misfortunes that would bring them to want…if this voyage I well enough, I feel that I can stay at home."[235] It appears Captain Taber may have kept his word, for he does not appear in any subsequent whaling voyage records. However, most whalemen continued working in the fishery as long as they were physically able to do so out of financial necessity, as they struggled to fulfill their role as providers within the New England whalefishery.

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[231] Myra Weeks to William Weeks, July 10, 1842, Mss. 80, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[232] Charles Pierce to Eliza T. Pierce, June 27, 1870, Mss. 3, Sub-Group 3, Peirce Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[233] Charles Peirce to Eliza T. Peirce, March 29, 1874, Mss. 3, Sub-Group 3, Peirce Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[234] William A. Ashley to Hannah Ashley, September 23, 1864, Privately owned collection, as quoted in Norling, "Ahab's Wife," in *Iron Men, Wooden Women*, 89.

Faced with the impossible task of reconciling the tenets of domesticity with the realities of life within the whalefishery, beginning in the 1840s, men and women in New England whaling communities began exploring a different solution to their dilemma. If a woman's role was to support her husband, and a husband's role was to provide for his wife and family, why not allow him to do so with her at his side? Such was Abby Morrell's rationale when she pleaded with her husband Captain Benjamin Morrell to allow her to accompany him at sea during his next voyage. As he later recalled in a memoir published in 1832:

> she assured me she would not survive another separation. "Only take me with you, Benjamin," was her constant reply to all my expostulation against the measure, "and I will pledge myself to lighten your cares, instead of adding to their weight."[236]

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[235] William Loring Taber to Susan Taber, November 20, 1856, William Loring Taber Papers, Mattapoisett Historical Society.

[236] Benjamin Morrell, *A Narrative of Four Voyages to the South Sea, North and Pacific Ocean, Chinese Sea, Ethiopic and Southern Atlantic Ocean, Indian and Antarctic Ocean* (New York, NY: J & J Harper, 1832), 337.

Other whaling captains' wives expressed the desire to accompany their husbands at sea during this period, only to learn it would not be possible. In a journal entry from May 1864, Harriet Allen wrote forlornly of her chances in joining her husband David during his next voyage:

> I see how it will be. D. will go to sea, very likely this Fall. He thinks now, that he will not go without his family, but he will. He will not find ship owners willing to let us go, and he will go for three years...and I shall remain at home as I did this last voyage.[237]

Given the unique conceptions of gender that had sustained New England whaling communities for more than a century relied upon a gendered system of separate yet mutually supportive labor, the idea of a whaling captain's wife accompanying her husband at sea defied both industrial and community tradition. Yet, by the 1840s, a small number of whaling captains and their wives had begun taking the bold step of going to sea together aboard whaleships. In doing so, they not only transformed their communities' understanding of gender, but the New England whalefishery as well.

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[237] Harriet Allen, May 28, 1864, Log 401, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

CHAPTER 3

“IF THE SEA MUST BE YOUR HOME SO IT SHALL BE MINE”: NEW ENGLAND WHALING CAPTAINS’ WIVES[238]

For more than a century, the men and women of New England’s whaling communities abided by unique conceptions of gender shaped by the realities of life within the whalefishery; men hunted whales at sea, while women supported those efforts ashore. This mutually supportive gender system of labor remained the cornerstone of daily life within New England whaling communities until the mid-nineteenth century, when a small group of whaling captains’ wives accompanied their husbands at sea aboard whaleships. In doing so, these women defied longstanding gender norms not only within the whalefishery, but within their communities as well, as their presence aboard New England whaleships challenged the gendered tradition of wives serving as husbands in absentia in support of their families, communities, and the whalefishery. Between 1840 and 1870, a total of two hundred eighty-five whaling captains’ wives from more than twenty different New England communities accompanied their husbands at sea aboard whaleships.[239] Although their voyages amounted to less than six percent of the whalefishery’s total productivity during this period, these women were nevertheless important agents of historical change, as their experiences at sea challenged longstanding conceptions of gender within New England whaling communities.[240] This chapter will examine captains’ wives’ motivations for accompanying their husbands at sea, the social and industrial factors that enabled them to do so, and the ramifications of that decision on themselves, their families, and their communities. Furthermore, this chapter will also serve as an introduction to this dissertation's three case studies: Mary Brewster of Stonington, Connecticut; Susan Veeder of Nantucket, Massachusetts; and Elizabeth Marble of Fall River, Massachusetts. By examining these women through a collective survey as well as individual case studies, this chapter will demonstrate the historical significance of these remarkable women within the history of gender in nineteenth century New England.

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[238] Mary Brewster, December 31, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[239] See Appendix A.

[240] Out of the seven thousand thirty-six whaling voyages that departed from New England ports between 1840 and 1870, three hundred ninety-four involved a total of two hundred eighty-five individual whaling captains’ wives accompanying their husbands at sea. American Offshore Whaling Voyages: A Database, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.

"To Preserve Unbroken the Ties of Domestic Life": Captains' Wives and the Decision to Go to Sea[241]

In order to understand the historical phenomenon of women accompanying their husbands aboard whaling vessels during the mid-nineteenth century, one must first examine their motivations for going to sea. As this study has shown, changes in the business of whaling led to increasingly long whaling voyages— up to four years by the 1840s— so the longstanding conceptions of gender that had once sustained New England whaling communities became increasingly difficult for women to bear, particularly those who enjoyed companionate marriages with their husbands.[242] In her analysis of journals kept by New England whaling captains' wives during this period, sociologist Marilyn Porter argues that feelings of love and devotion served as the primary motivation for women going to sea.[243] Historian Lisa Norling also underscores the importance of marital affection in motivating a woman to accompany her husband at sea in her work on gender in New England whaling communities, arguing that conjugal love was one of the most common justifications for a woman going to sea during the mid-nineteenth century.[244] For many of these women, their relationships with their husbands were the most important in their lives. This was certainly the case for Mary Brewster, who wrote that she preferred her husband William's company "far more than to them who can be found at home," as well as Elizabeth Marble, who described her husband as "the best of husbands and my all."[245] Such feelings of love and devotion were also reciprocated by the husbands of women who went to sea. John Marble, Obed Swain II, and Jared Fisher all penned romantic verses to their wives within their logbooks and journals prior to their wives joining them at sea, proving that both husbands and wives struggled with the extended periods of separation from their spouse required by the whalefishery.[246]

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[241] "Lady Whalers," *Whaleman's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* ii, No. 48, February 1, 1853.
[242] Lisa Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1720-1870* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 212.
[243] Marilyn Porter, *"Not Drowning But Waving": Reading Nineteenth Century Whaling Women's Diaries* (Manchester, England: University of Manchester Sociology Department, 1989), 41.

Romantic love was not the only motivating factor for a woman to join her husband aboard a whaleship during the mid-nineteenth century. As this study has shown, the prescriptive ideology of the separate spheres reinforced the belief that a woman's duty was to serve as a source of comfort to her husband. In an 1859 letter to her stepmother written while at sea, Susan Norton of Martha's Vineyard justified her presence aboard the ship *Splendid* through this ideological lens stating, "my duty is here."[247] Coupled with the emergence of the middle class print culture of domesticity that placed great societal value on the home, this ideology made it increasingly difficult for women in New England whaling communities to reconcile their duties to their husbands with those to their families and the whalefishery. Sarah Howland of Dartmouth, Massachusetts described such difficulties in an undated letter to her husband Phillip wherein she wrote,

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[244] Norling, 238.

[245] Mary Brewster, June 4, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut; Elizabeth Marble, October 22, 1862, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[246] Evidence of John Marble's poetry about his wife Elizabeth can be found later in this chapter. Verses written by Obed Swain II to his wife Harriet appear in the margins of the Nantucket ship *Catawba* 1852-1857 voyage logbook, while Jared Fisher's love poems to his wife Desire are in the margins of the Fairhaven ship *Omega* 1850-1854 voyage log. Obed Swain II, April 25, 1855, Log 34, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts; Jared Fisher poetry as quoted in Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Beetle Hough, *Whaling Wives* (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1953), 77-79.

> I had hoped we would have enjoyed many years together and see our children grow up around us…and that we might have been partakers in that domestic happiness for which my heart has longed…I have always had a good home, but I have ever felt homeless.[248]

In keeping with their prescribed role as moral guideposts, some women also went to sea in the hopes of exerting a moral influence on their husbands' crew. After joining her husband Samuel aboard the ship *Addison* in 1856, Mary Chipman Lawrence sent her daughter Minnie into the ship's fo'c'sle to distribute "Bibles and Testaments" to the crew. To her delight, the child returned empty handed, leading Mary to declare "it may be we can do some good."[249] Motivated by the feelings of love, marital devotion, and moral duty, beginning in the 1840s, a small number of whaling captains' wives challenged prevailing gender norms within their communities by accompanying their husbands at sea.

Scant evidence survives detailing the process by which husbands and wives came to this decision, though in keeping with the legal tradition of coverture, it can be assumed that none of the women who went to sea did so without her husband's consent and support.[250] In Mary Brewster's case, the decision to sail was her own, one she came to after "much calm and sober thought," while Abby Morrell's husband Benjamin wrote in his memoirs that his wife "informed me that during my late absence she made up her mind to accompany me on my next voyage."[251] Other women may not have been so lucky, as their writings suggest their presence aboard ship was not entirely voluntary. Eliza Brock of Nantucket filled her journal kept aboard the ship *Lexington* with poetry lamenting her desire to return to her children, friends, and community, including this seemingly mournful verse: "home of my heart and friends adieu…how oft I shall remember you…send back a sigh to those I love, the loving and beloved few, who grieve for me; for whom I grieve."[252] Despite a journal entry written aboard the ship *Nantucket* in 1855 wherein Almira Gibbs decided "I think I shall stay and let them that wants to a whaleing, it is no life for me," she subsequently returned to sea with her husband aboard the ship *Norman* in 1860; it is unknown whether or not that decision was her own. These noteworthy examples aside, the majority of women who accompanied their husbands left no evidence of their decision making process. However, this lack of evidence in no way diminishes the historical significance of their experiences at sea, as their presence aboard whaleships challenged longstanding conceptions of gender within their communities and the New England whalefishery.

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[247] Susan Norton to Nancy Colt, August 6, 1859, Shubael Hawes Norton and Susan Maria Colt Norton Papers, Martha's Vineyard Museum, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

[248] Sarah Howland to Philip Howland, Mss. 135, Series C, Howland Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[249] Mary Chipman Lawrence, April 2, 1857, in Stanton Gardner, ed., *The Captain's Best Mate: The Journey of Mary Chipman Lawrence Aboard the Ship Harrison, 1856-1860* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1986), 22.

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[250] See Chapter 2 for a thorough discussion of coverture in the history of American gender norms.

[251] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut; Benjamin Morrell, *A Narrative of Four Voyages to the South Sea, North and Pacific Ocean, Chinese Sea, Ethiopic and Southern Atlantic Ocean, Indian and Antarctic Ocean* (New York, NY: J & J Harper, 1832), 337.

[252] Eliza Brock, Log 136, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts,

Regardless of whether or not the decision to accompany their husbands at sea was their own, the women who sailed aboard New England whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century were only able to do so thanks to several interconnected developments within the whalefishery. The first of these developments was growing industrial demand for proven captains. As the whalefishery expanded at unprecedented rates during the 1840s and 1850s, whaling corporations grew increasingly reliant upon knowledgeable, successful captains to safeguard their investments, as whaling agents "believed the choice of the captain…was immensely important to the success of a voyage."[253] In this scenario, a proven captain could wield considerable bargaining power in negotiating the terms of his employment with investors. In some cases, captains used that power to secure a place for their wives aboard their vessels, a practice that was begrudgingly tolerated by investors "as the price to pay for a good captain."[254] Of the nearly three hundred women who accompanied their husbands at sea aboard whaleships between 1840 and 1870, more than ninety percent were married to men with prior experience as whaling captains.[255]

In addition to increasing demand for proven captains, the emergence of shareholding captains within the whalefishery also enabled captains' wives to accompany their husbands at sea. Although no comprehensive survey of captains as investors throughout the whalefishery presently exists, the analysis of shareholding captains in New Bedford, Massachusetts conducted by Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and

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[253] Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter, *In Pursuit of Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1806-1906* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 182

[254] Norling, 89.

[255] Just twenty-five of the two hundred eighty-four women who sailed during this period accompanied a first time whaling captain, totaling less than nine percent of the women surveyed in this study. See Appendix A.

Karen Gleiter can be considered representative of the region given the Whaling City's dominance both in overall productivity and in the number of captains' wives who accompanied their husbands at sea during this period. According to Davis et. al., prior to 1836, only twenty-seven percent of New Bedford whaling captains owned shares in the vessels they sailed. Between 1836 and 1845, that number doubled to just under fifty percent, with an overall average of forty-one percent between 1840 and 1870.[256] As shareholders, captains gained additional financial windfalls from their voyages beyond their captain's lay, but more importantly, they also gained a stake in the planning and decision making processes leading up to a voyage. Although a lack of surviving documentation regarding ownership of whaling vessels in most whaling communities prevents a widespread survey of shareholding captains among the ranks of men whose wives accompanied them at sea, of the three women featured in this study, two were married to shareholding captains. Mary Brewster's husband William owned a share in the bark *Tiger* when they went to sea together in 1845, while Elizabeth Marble's husband John purchased his ownership share of the bark *Awashonks* just before his wife and son joined him aboard the vessel in 1860.[257] When combined with the percentage of husbands who had prior experience at the helm of whaleships prior to their wives accompanying them at sea, the significance of shareholding captains in the analysis of whaling captains' wives who joined their husbands at sea during the mid-nineteenth century cannot be understated.

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[256] Davis et. al., 390.

[257] Connecticut Ship Database 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum Inc., Mystic, Connecticut, https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/; *Ships Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts Volume II* (Boston, MA: National Archives Project, 1940), 24.

Given the vital role the whalefishery's unique conceptions of gender played in maintaining social and familial stability in New England whaling communities, it is not surprising that many women who went to sea aboard whaleships between 1840 and 1870 experienced resistance from their families, communities, and the whalefishery itself. As this study has shown, whaleships were physical manifestations of masculinity in New England whaling communities.[258] The presence of a captain's wife within this exclusively male domain therefore represented a source of ideological concern within the whaling industry. Deeply held superstitions against bringing women aboard ocean going vessels also played a role in the whalefishery's resistance against captain's wives going to sea, as women were believed to anger the jealous feminine sea and thereby risk the lives of all aboard.[259] Setting ideology and superstition aside, there were practical concerns regarding a woman accompanying her husband aboard a whaleship. As whalemen James Haviland put it in a diary entry written aboard the ship *Baltic* in 1856, "It is no place for a woman on board a whaleship."[260] Women could not perform any of the dangerous and physically demanding work of whaling, and yet, as passengers aboard the vessel, they would consume valuable provisions and thereby incur additional costs.[261] Investors also feared captains would not take the risks needed to catch whales if their wives were aboard ship.

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[258] Margaret Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 198.

[259] David Cordingly, *Women Sailors and Sailor's Women: An Untold Maritime History* (New York, NY: Random House, 2001), 11.

[260] James Haviland, November 3, 1856, Log 57, Nicholson Whaling Collection, Providence Public Library Special Collections, Providence Public Library, http://pplspc.org/nicholson/rj5_nicholson_57/html/rj5_nicholson_57r-0504.html.

[261] These costs were often passed on directly to the captain. Such was the case with Newport, Rhode Island resident Captain John DeBlois's investors. In a July 1860 letter to his wife Henrietta wherein John implored her to consider joining him at sea he asked, "do come with me if it is safe for you to come I don't mind what it will caust." John DeBlois to Henrietta DeBlois, July 8, 1860, John S. DeBlois Letters 1840-1860, Box 113, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island.

One particularly harsh example of these sentiments can be found in whaling investor Matthew Howland's 1860 letter to a business contact in Peru wherein he shared his concerns about one of his captains possibly ending a voyage early after the man's wife died aboard ship:

> We hope [he] will have no idea, and we can hardly imagine he will, of abandoning the voyage or delaying the Ship in Port longer than is really necessary…as considerable time & money have already been expended (perhaps necessarily) on account of his wife's illness.[262]

The potential for pregnancies posed an especially delicate issue within the whalefishery. As New Bedford agents Swift and Allen put it in a letter to one of their captains who sought permission to bring his wife to sea in 1861,

> Your wife like all *females* is much more likely to get sick than any *man* under ordinary circumstances and extraordinary ones are about sure to arise soon after she meets you…the like of which in two instances caused our ships to leave good whale ground in the midst of a season.[263]

Investors were not the only ones concerned about captains' wives becoming pregnant while at sea; crew members often resented the inconvenience of a pregnant woman aboard ship. After the ship *Eliza Adams* was forced to put into port four times over the course of six months due to the captain's wife's pregnancy and subsequent delivery, crewman Abram Briggs curtly noted, "by the time our voyage is at an end [the captain] will have a crew enough to mann a boat of his own."[264] It is likely Briggs's resentment toward his captain's wife resulted more from sexual frustration then any interruptions in whaling caused by her pregnancy. The privilege of bringing one's wife to sea was reserved exclusively for captains during the mid-nineteenth century, so while Captain Hamblin enjoyed his wife's companionship in the aft-cabin, Briggs and his fellow crewmen were left without an outlet for their own sexual needs. To rectify this situation, some whaling captains invited prostitutes— mostly native women— aboard ship to service their crews.[265] It is unknown whether or not Captain Hamblin permitted this aboard the *Eliza Adams*, though given Briggs's resentment toward Mrs. Hamblin, it is entirely possible her presence aboard ship brought this time-honored practice to an end. Therefore, the threat of moral policing of whalemen's sexuality by captain's wives—whether real or imagined—only added to the whaling industry's resistance against women accompanying their husbands at sea during the mid-nineteenth century.[266]

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[262] Matthew Howland to Grafton Hillman, August 7, 1860, Matthew Howland Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

[263] Emphasis in the original, Swift and Allen to Captain Chase, September 30, 1861, Mss. 5, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[264] Abram Briggs, September 27, 1873, ODHS Log 940, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

In addition to opposition from within the whalefishery, the women who joined their husbands aboard whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century also faced scrutiny from their friends and families. This was especially true for women who sailed during the 1840s, as they were among the first to challenge their communities' longstanding gender norms by going to sea with their husbands. Captain Benjamin Morrell initially objected to his wife Abby's request to join him at sea because of his "fear of slanderous tongues," while New Bedford resident Mary-Ann Sherman's family left little doubt as to their feelings about her presence aboard the ship *Harrison* with her husband when they erected a gravestone bearing her date of death as the day she went to sea.[267] In Mary Brewster's case, her decision to accompany her husband William aboard the ship *Tiger* came at great personal cost. As she noted in the opening entry of the journal she kept while at sea:

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[265] Mary Brewster made note of one such vessel during the winter of 1847 while cruising the Baja Peninsula. Mary Brewster, January 30, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut. For more on the role of sex in international maritime culture during the nineteenth century, see Brian Rouleau's *With Sails Whitening Every Sea: Mariners and the Making of an American Maritime Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 2014.
[266] Cartwright, 216.

> she who has extended a mother's love and watchfulness over me said her consent would never be given in no way would she assist me and if I left her…her house would never be a home for me again.[268]

Despite facing resistance from their families, communities, and the whalefishery, more captains' wives went to sea with their husbands with each passing year. Based on the findings of this study, just eleven vessels set sail from New England whaling communities with captains' wives aboard ship between 1840 and 1844. A total of twelve women sailed from New England ports in 1845, and that number steadily increased throughout the late 1840s. By the 1850s, an average of twenty-five women left New England whaling communities aboard whaleships each year. The year 1851 represents the high water mark for wife-carrying whaling vessels during the mid-nineteenth century, as a total of thirty-six women accompanied their husbands aboard New England whaleships that year. Although more women sailed from the port of New Bedford, Massachusetts than all other New England whaling communities combined, a total of twenty ports in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York are represented in this study's findings, proving that women throughout the region were challenging their communities' longstanding gender norms during this period.[269]

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[267] Mary-Ann Sherman therefore has two graves; the one her parents erected for her New Bedford, and the one that marks her final resting place on the island of Rarotonga (part of the Cook Islands) where she died on January 5, 1850. Benjamin Morrell, *A Narrative of Four Voyages to the South Sea, North and Pacific Ocean, Chinese Sea, Ethiopic and Southern Atlantic Ocean, Indian and Antarctic Ocean* (New York, NY: J. and J. Harper, 1832), 337, https://archive.org/details/anarrativefourv00morrgoog; Druett, 20.

[268] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[269] See Appendix B.

Of the two hundred eighty-five women who went to sea during this period, more than seventy percent did so only once.[270] The reasons for this are difficult to assess. For most of these women, little evidence survives of their experiences, save for cursory mentions in logbooks or crewman's journals. The personal accounts of just forty captains' wives who sailed during this period currently exist in publicly accessible archives. Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble are among those forty women, though as this chapter will demonstrate, determining their motivations for going to sea, identifying the forces that enabled them do so, and determining their role in the decision making process that resulted in their presence at sea has not proven as simple as the existence of documentary evidence might lead one to presume. Yet, by exchanging the safety and stability of their prescribed life ashore for a dangerous and difficult life at sea, Mary, Susan, Elizabeth, and the hundreds of other women like them defied the gendered status quo in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities and challenged longstanding traditions of gender within the whalefishery.

Mary Louisa Burtch Brewster

One of the first New England whaling captains' wives to accompany her husband at sea was Mary Brewster. Born Mary Louisa Burtch on September 22, 1822, Mary was the sixth of seven children born to Samuel and Mary "Polly" Burtch of Stonington, Connecticut.[271] After her mother's death of an apparent suicide in 1828, Mary was adopted by a fellow Stonington resident named Robert S. Bottom.[272] Though they bore no relation to the Burtch family, Robert and his wife Malvina raised Mary and her younger brother Charles as if they were their own children, providing them with love, comfort, and financial security.[273] A devout Baptist, Bottom served as a deacon in the Stonington Baptist Church, and was involved in the community's maritime industries.[274] Bottom served as captain of the coastal schooner *Betsey* in 1819, and later joined other Stonington businessmen who were investing in the community's growing whaling industry by purchasing ownership shares in several Stonington whaling vessels. By the 1840s, he owned a stake in four Stonington whaling vessels, placing him in the same social circles as a young local whaleman named William Brewster. [275]

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[270] A total of two hundred two captains' wives sailed on one whaling voyage out of a total of two hundred eighty-four women. Of the women who sailed on more than one voyage, twenty-one percent went to sea twice, while just seven percent ventured out to sea three or more times. The record for the most verified voyages by a single woman in this period goes to Nancy Grant, wife of Nantucket captain Charles Grant. Between 1840 and 1870, the Grants sailed on a total of six whaling voyages together. See Appendix A.

[271] Joan Druett, ed., *"She Was a Sister Sailor": The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster, 1845-1851* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 1992), 3.

Born on May 12, 1813, in Stonington, William Eldredge Brewster grew up in a family of mariners.[276] His father Stephen Brewster worked in the Stonington maritime industry, and two of his elder brothers eventually became captains in the New London and Stonington whalefisheries.[277] No records of William's earliest ventures at sea survive, though in keeping with the traditions of the whalefishery, he probably shipped aboard his first whaleship during this teenage years. He took his first command in July 1835 at the age of twenty-two as captain of the Stonington brig *Rebecca Groves*. After cruising the Southern Atlantic for over a year, William returned to Stonington in February 1837 with a catch of seven hundred fifty barrels of whale oil and five thousand pounds of whalebone.[278] Shortly thereafter, William joined the ranks of Stonington's whalefishery when he purchased an ownership share in the ship *Acasta*. As co-owner of a whaling vessel, William would have been introduced to members of Stonington's business community, including local whaling investors like Robert Bottom. Although the exact circumstances surrounding Mary and William's courtship are lost to history, given Robert Bottom's ties to the whaling industry, it seems likely he played the role of matchmaker for the young couple.[279] Having proven his merit within the whaling industry as both a captain and an investor, William received Robert Bottom's blessing to wed Mary, and the couple married on March 23, 1841, at the Stonington Baptist Church.[280] However, in keeping with the traditions of the whalefishery, William and Mary's newlywed bliss did not last long.[281]

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[272] *New Haven Columbian Register*, June 7, 1828.

[273] In his will dated in 1837, Robert Bottom proves the strength of his love for his adopted daughter stating, "I give and devise unto Mary L. Burtch my adopted daughter my dwelling house and lot to come into her possession after the death of my wife." This request comes immediately after Bottom's provisions for his wife and prior to provisions for his nephews. Robert S. Bottom, Final Will and Testament, *Probate Files Collection Early to 1880, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Connecticut.*

[274] Druett, *She Was a Sister Sailor*, 4.

[275] Connecticut Ships Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut, https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/.

[276] Stonington Borough Cemetery Record, *Charles R. Hale Collection of Connecticut Cemetery Inscriptions,* Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Connecticut.

[277] Brewster Family Record, Stonington Historical Society, Stonington, Connecticut.

After only three months of marriage, William Brewster left his new wife behind in Stonington and set sail as captain of the bark *Philetus* in July 1841 with a crew of twenty-three men.[282] Mary was far from the first New England whaling captain's wife to watch her husband go off to sea shortly after her wedding, as it was common for newlyweds to spend only a short time together before the husband returned to sea. It is unknown whether or not William and Mary established their own household in the weeks between their wedding and his departure aboard the *Philetus*. Women in Mary's situation usually remained with their parents until their husbands returned from sea, so it is likely she spent her first two years of marriage living in her childhood home.[283] When William returned to Stonington in May of 1843, he did so with a lucrative catch of over one hundred barrels of sperm oil, eighteen hundred barrels of whale oil, and fifteen thousand pounds of whalebone.[284] After spending just six weeks at home in Stonington, William returned to the helm of the *Philetus* and set sail for the Indian Ocean on July 12, 1843. It would be two more years before the Brewsters were reunited.[285] No personal writings from Mary or William survive from this period. However, if they were like the many other young New England couples that married for love during the mid-nineteenth century— and Mary's later writings strongly suggest that they were— spending less than six months together as husband and wife during their first four years of marriage undoubtedly proved to be a difficult burden for the young couple to bear.

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[278] American Offshore Whaling Voyage Database, Voyage ID AV12169, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org/av/voyages/.

[279] Mary's older brother Billings, a successful captain in the New London whalefishery, was a co-owner of the whaleship *Caledonia* with Robert Bottom, proving just how interconnected the Stonington whaling community was during the 1840s. Connecticut Ships Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/.

[280] *Connecticut Town Marriage Records Pre-1870, Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Connecticut.*

[281] Captaining the *Philetus* had become something of a Brewster family tradition, as two of William's elder brothers had brought the vessel back to Stonington with successful catches during the 1830s. Connecticut Ships Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut, https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/.

[282] American Offshore Whaling Voyage Crew List Database, Voyage AV11558, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org/av/crew/.

Although Mary was not the only Stonington whaleman's wife separated from her husband during the 1840s, her personal circumstances were unusual compared to other women in her community. Unlike many of her fellow whaling captains' wives, Mary remained childless during her first four years of marriage. Had she become pregnant after one of William's brief stays at home, Mary would have had the task of raising a child to distract her from her husband's absence. Motherhood was celebrated as a woman's most noble calling during the mid-nineteenth century, sentiments supported by Mary's Baptist faith.[286] With no evidence documenting this period in her life, Mary's feelings about her childlessness can only be speculated upon, though given her interest in children during her time aboard the ship *Tiger*, it probably was not a choice she and William made purposefully.[287] Mary's financial circumstances also made her different from other whaling captains' wives in Stonington. While William sailed the world in pursuit of whales, it appears that Mary continued living in her childhood home with Robert and Malvina Bottom.[288] Were she not fortunate enough to come from a family of means, she would have been forced to support herself financially in her husband's absence. Instead, she lived in the same wealth and comfort she had experienced for most of her life. It is not known how Mary occupied herself living apart from William, though if her later writings are any indication of her emotional state during her husband's absence, she spent much of her time pining for her husband's safe return.[289]

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[283] Norling, 181.

[284] Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery* (1877; reprint Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 407.

[285] Starbuck, 406.

After spending three and a half of their first four years of marriage apart, William and Mary Brewster were finally reunited in April 1845. Unlike his last stay in Stonington,

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[286] See Chapter 2 for an extensive analysis of the prescriptive literature of domesticity and its relationship to gender in nineteenth century New England whaling communities.

[287] Mary's journal includes many references to children, including this one from August 30, 1847: "I do dread leaving this family, they have all been so kind…the dear children I am much attached to and dear baby I would like to take with me- she says she is Aunt Brewster's darling and I think very much of her and shall long to see her when absent." Mary Brewster, August 30, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[288] Mary alludes to this in the opening entry of her journal written aboard the ship *Tiger* when she notes that her foster-mother said, "…her house would never be a home for me again if I persisted in coming." Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[289] Although no personal writings of Mary's from this period survive, a journal entry written aboard the ship *Tiger* on May 22, 1846 provides retroactive insight into her state of mind while William was away at sea: "I am far more happy here than when I was at home though it appeared to some I knew no sorrow then. Alas they could not see my feelings nor will they ever know of the many bitter hours I have experienced." Mary Brewster, May 22, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

William remained at home for six months after his second *Philetus* voyage. Given his success as captain and industry investor, it is doubtful William's lengthy stay at home was due to a lack of commissions.[290] Perhaps he too had felt the pains of absence from his spouse and simply decided to remain at home for six months to spend time with Mary. Or, perhaps William spent the summer of 1845 securing a new future for himself and his wife. In November 1845, William accepted a commission to captain the ship *Tiger*, a vessel newly added to the Stonington whaling fleet.[291] William also purchased an ownership share in the *Tiger* that fall, and together with his fellow investors, prepared the vessel for a whaling voyage. However, this voyage would be different than any other in William's career to date, for not only did the *Tiger* house himself, his officers and his crew, but his wife as well.

In contrast to most whaling captains' wives who accompanied their husbands at sea during the mid-nineteenth century, Mary Brewster outlined her role in the decision making process that led to her presence aboard the *Tiger* in her personal writings. She also noted the rationale and the ramifications of that decision. In the opening entry of the journal she kept while aboard the *Tiger,* Mary explained her reasons for going to sea with her husband: "I have chosen my own place of residence not from the impulse of the moment but after much calm and sober thought. In coming my own conscious tells me I was doing right."[292] A few days later, Mary continued her line of reasoning, using her duties as a wife as the justification for her presence aboard the Tiger:

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[290] Nine whaling vessels departed Stonington in the time William was home with Mary. Starbuck, 430-431.

[291] According to the Connecticut Ship Database, the ship Tiger was built in Portland, Maine in 1833, and did not enter the Stonington whaling fleet until 1845. Connecticut Ship Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/.

[292] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

> I am with my Husband and by him will remain. No seas can now Divide us. He can have no troubles no sorrow but what I can know and share. When perplexed with the duties of the shop and those with whom he is connected I can soothe all ruffled feelings take up much of his attentions and mind. If sick no hand like mind can soothe the sad heart and administer to his wishes. I am confident. Let what come I shall never regret coming on voyage with my Dear Companion's society also with the conviction in coming I did perfectly right…[293]

Mary provided further evidence of her rationale for joining William at sea in a journal entry written on New Year's Eve in 1846:

> Well do I recollect the feelings which a year ago this day pervaded my mind, that of my Husband's desired return, winter passed, spring came and with it brought his return. Then did I say we will part no more but if the sea must be your home it shall be mine. To that I clung and to this resolve I owe my present happiness.[294]

In the span of a few lines, Mary Brewster explained, defended, and proudly affirmed her decision to go to sea with William aboard the ship *Tiger*.[295] In doing so, she defied her community's centuries' old conceptions of gender, as well as her friends and family. "What do I care for the opinion of the world or what some who have always professed much friendship for me will say," she wrote, "with much opposition I left my native land few had to say one encouraging word."[296]

Among those who voiced opposition to Mary's decision to accompany William at sea was her foster mother Malvina Bottom. As Mary noted in her journal,

> She who has extended a mother's love and watchfulness over me said her consent would never be given, in no way would she assist me, and if I left her she thought me very ungrateful and lastly though not least, her house would never be a home for me again if I persisted in coming…[297]

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[293] Mary Brewster, December 26, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[294] Mary Brewster, December 31, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut

[295] It is important to note that Mary's explanations regarding her decision to accompany William at sea include no mention of religious or secular association membership as a potential source of influence. Furthermore, there is no evidence as to her membership in any local religious, abolitionist, temperance, or fraternal organizations in the historical record.

[296] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[297] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

Though she does not name Malvina directly in this passage, Mary nevertheless makes plain that her decision to go to sea with William came at great personal cost— the loss of her foster mother's love. It is unknown why Malvina Bottom objected so strongly to Mary accompanying William at sea; no personal writings of hers survive in the historical record. Perhaps she was concerned about Mary's safety and reputation. After all, whaling was a dangerous enterprise, and as Mary herself hinted, her reputation within the Stonington community was clearly at stake. Yet, upon closer inspection, there are other plausible explanations for Malvina's objections. After nearly twenty years of marriage, Robert Bottom died on July 29, 1843 at the age of forty-six.[298] No evidence of children being born to the Bottoms exists in the historical record, so in the wake of her husband's death, Malvina undoubtedly found comfort in her relationship with her foster daughter. It is therefore possible that Malvina Bottom's objections to Mary accompanying her husband at sea had little to do with Mary's reputation and everything to do with Malvina's newfound status as a widow. Setting speculation aside, whatever emotional duress Mary may have suffered in the wake of Malvina Bottom's response to her decision to go to sea was soothed by her husband's presence, for as she noted, "his society more than compensates for all I left behind."[299]

While it is important to recognize the significance of Mary's decision to join her husband at sea— she is the only woman surveyed in this study to have definitively done so— her choice was only made possible due to a series of external factors that existed within her marriage, her community, and the Stonington whaling industry itself. First and foremost, she had her husband's approval. Were William not supportive of Mary's desire to join him at sea, it would have been impossible for her to sail aboard the *Tiger*. Her presence is therefore evidence of a husband and wife's mutual desire to be together after so many years living apart. William then had to obtain his fellow investors' approval. Given his connections with these men— on investor worked with William on two prior voyages, while another was not only a fellow captain, but also his brother— it seems William received permission to bring his wife to sea by relying on his proven experience as a captain as well as his personal relationships within the Stonington community.[300] This leads to the third and final factor that helped enable Mary Brewster to go to sea: she was not the first Stonington woman to do so. Eliza Palmer, wife of the famed Captain Nathaniel Palmer, accompanied her husband at sea during a sealing voyage out of Stonington during the 1830s, and two other Stonington women, Mrs. John S. Barnum and Mrs. Henry S. Howland, went to sea with their husbands aboard whaleships in 1844.[301] With her husband's approval, the blessing of the *Tiger* investors, and the example set by other women in the community who sailed before her, Mary was able to justify her presence aboard the *Tiger*. As she noted in the opening entry of her journal, "well thank Heaven it is all past and I am board of the good ship Tiger and with my dear Husband."[302] It was this ardent love for her husband that would help her meet her greatest challenge yet— life at sea.

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[298] Interestingly, while Mary mournfully noted the third anniversary of Robert Bottom's passing in her journal, she made no mention of Malvina in that journal entry, or any other entry aside from her opening passage. Robinson Cemetery Record, *Charles R. Hale Collection of Connecticut Cemetery Inscriptions,* Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Connecticut; Mary Brewster, July 29, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[299] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845; January 2, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

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[300] Connecticut Ship Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/.

[301] Captain Palmer became an international celebrity when he discovered the continent of Antarctica during a sealing voyage aboard the Stonington sloop *Hero* in 1820. After he retired from captaining vessels, he purchased ownership shares in several Stonington whaleships, including the ship *Tiger*. As the husband with first-hand experience in bringing one's wife to sea, Captain Palmer likely proved sympathetic to the idea of Mary joining her husband aboard his investment. As for this own wife's experiences at sea, it is unknown what resistance, if any, his wife Eliza faced when she joined her husband at sea, though it is possible given his celebrated status in the maritime community, Captain Palmer and his wife were immune to the criticism the Brewsters faced. John R. Spears, *Captain Nathaniel Brown Palmer: An Old Time Sailor of the Sea*, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1922), 54; Connecticut Ship Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/ct-ships/.

Susan Austin Veeder

While Mary Brewster preserved her rationale for accompanying her husband at sea for posterity in her journal, the majority of the whaling captains' wives surveyed in this study were not so forthcoming. One such woman was Susan Austin Veeder. Born on August 3, 1816, Susan was the third child and first daughter born to George and Susan Creasy Austin of Nantucket.[303] Unlike members of the prominent Folger, Coffin, and Macy families who could trace their lineage back to Nantucket's first purchasers, the Austins were of "off-islander" or "coof" descent. These contemptuous terms were used throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to describe residents born off the island of Nantucket.[304] In the case of the Austin family, George Austin's father was listed as a "stranger" in his 1775 marriage record, and his mother's family first came to Nantucket in the 1750s.[305] Susan's mother's family came from similar circumstances, as the Creasy family did not appear in Nantucket's genealogical records until the 1760s. [306] Despite their "off-islander" status, the Austin children managed to advance themselves within Nantucket society. Both of Susan's brothers enjoyed successful careers in the whaling industry, while Susan caught the eye of Charles Veeder, a local whalemen with ties to the Swain family, one of the oldest on Nantucket.[307]

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[302] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[303] Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

[304] Both terms remain part of Nantucket parlance today. William Frances Macy and Roland B. Hussey, eds., *The Nantucket Scrap Basket: Being a Collection of Characteristic Stories and Sayings of the People of the Town of Nantucket, Massachusetts* (Nantucket, MA: The Inquirer and Mirror Press, 1916),160; Nathaniel Philbrick, *Away Off Shore: Nantucket and Its People* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2000), 10-11.

[305] Massachusetts Town and Vital Records, 1620-1888, 43, https://ancestry.com.

[306] Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

Charles Allen Veeder was born on August 2, 1809 to Peter and Rachael Veeder of Nantucket.[308] Although his father's family was of "off-islander" descent, Charles's mother was a Swain by birth, and could trace her ancestry back to John Swain, one of Nantucket's first purchasers.[309] Peter Veeder served as a whaling captain during the 1820s, though for unknown reasons, decided to move his family to rural Munroe County, New York at some point prior to 1830.[310] While the rest of his siblings joined their parents in New York, Charles Veeder remained on Nantucket. Given his later success in the whaling industry, it is possible the eldest of the Veeder children decided to stay on Nantucket to pursue a career in the same industry his father had chosen to leave behind. It is also possible Charles's decision to remain behind on Nantucket had something to do with a certain young woman who would eventually become his wife.

As in the case of the Brewsters, the timing and nature of Charles and Susan Veeder's courtship are lost to history. However, given the fact that Susan's brothers were involved in the whalefishery, it is likely Susan met Charles through one of them. At just seventeen years old when she and Charles wed on November 28, 1833, Susan was seven years younger than her bridegroom.[311] As with many newlywed women, Susan Veeder became a mother shortly after her marriage. The Veeders welcomed their first child, a son they named George, in September 1834 after just ten months of marriage.[312] A second son named Charles arrived in the spring of 1836.[313] It was during this period that the Veeder family moved to a house on Orange Street, an area where many of the island's prominent families kept their homes.[314] After working this way through the ranks of the whalefishery, Charles received his first commission as captain of a whaleship in the spring of 1838. Leaving Susan at home with the children, Charles sailed from Nantucket aboard the ship *Christopher Mitchell* on April [315] He returned three years later in April 1841 with a catch of nearly three thousand barrels of sperm whale oil, a significant achievement for a first time captain.[316] After spending some time at home with his family and subsequently welcoming he and Susan's third son David in 1842, Charles secured a commission as captain of the ship *Joseph Starbuck*, a vessel operated by George and Matthew Starbuck, sons of the famed Nantucket whaling magnate Joseph Starbuck.[317] This voyage should have served as Charles's entry to the ranks of Nantucket's whaling elite, yet his tenure as captain of the *Joseph Starbuck* was cut short after the vessel struck a sandbar just outside Nantucket harbor shortly after setting sail.[318] The reasons for the accident are unknown. However, because the sandbar had been common knowledge throughout the whalefishery for decades, this incident could have easily ended Charles's career on Nantucket.[319] Fortunately for the Veeders, the Starbucks gave Charles a second chance to prove himself when they commissioned him to captain the ship *Empire,* which set sail from Nantucket in May 1843.[320] Though it took more than four years to fill the *Empire*'s hold, Charles eventually returned to Nantucket in November 1847 with over two thousand barrels of sperm oil, thus solidifying his position within the whalefishery as a proven, competent captain.[321]

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[307] Susan's elder brother Edward captained at least four Nantucket whaling voyages, while her brother William's career in the industry was cut short when he died at sea in 1832. American Offshore Whaling Voyages Database, Master ID AM0200, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org; Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

[308] Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

[309] Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

[310] American Offshore Whaling Voyages Database, Master ID AM5140, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org; Ogden, Monroe County, New York, 1830 Census, 284, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.

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[311] Vital Records of Nantucket, Massachusetts to the Year 1850, 483, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

[312] Vital Records of Nantucket, Massachusetts to the Year 1850, 602, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

[313] Vital Records of Nantucket, Massachusetts to the Year 1850, 602, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

[314] Betsy Tyler, "Last Seen in Tahiti: Captain Charles Veeder Disappears," *Historic Nantucket* 62 No. 2 (Fall 2013): 10.

[315] Starbuck, 346-347.

[316] American Offshore Whaling Voyages Database, Voyage ID AV02861, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.

[317] Vital Records of Nantucket, Massachusetts to the Year 1850, 602, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts; Starbuck, 390; Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

Charles's professional success during this period paid dividends not just for his career, but for the Veeder family's lifestyle as well. It was during this time that their home on Orange Street became a proper middle class household complete with all the trappings of domesticity, including a pair of portraits painted by James Hathaway. One of Nantucket's most prolific portraitists, Hathaway painted members of the island's most influential families during the 1840s.[322] By joining Hathaway's clientele, the Veeders demonstrated their newfound wealth— portraits were an expensive luxury during the mid-nineteenth century— as well as their status within the community.[323] While Charles sailed the world's whaling grounds, Susan raised their three sons in comfort and financial security, until the fall of 1848, when she and two of those sons joined Charles aboard the ship *Nauticon*.[324]

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[318] Starbuck, 391.
[319] Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration of Massachusetts, *Whaling Masters* (New Bedford, MA: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1938), 11-12.
[320] Starbuck, 400.
[321] American Offshore Whaling Voyages Database, Voyage ID AV04456, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.
[322] The Nantucket Historical Association collection is home to twenty-eight portraits painted by James Hathaway during the 1840s, with subjects from Nantucket's leading families including the Coffins, Starbucks, Folgers, Swains, and Gardners.
[323] Ben Simon, *Island Treasures: Gifts of Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1986-2011* (Nantucket, MA: Nantucket Historical Association, 2011), 24.

The practice of a captain's wife accompanying her husband at sea was rare on Nantucket prior to Susan Veeder's voyage in 1848. According to the findings of this study, only two Nantucket women predated Susan at sea; Mrs. Calvin G. Worth and Mrs. Consider Fisher.[325] Although Susan kept journals while aboard the *Nauticon* and later in life, neither of these documents provide an account as to why she joined Charles at sea, leaving her motivations, rationale, and participation in that decision open to interpretation. With no surviving evidence as to Susan's membership in local religious or secular organizations such as abolitionist, temperance, or social reform societies, it is also difficult to determine what influence— if any— these external factors may have exerted in the decision for Susan to accompany her husband at sea. What is known about Susan Veeder's life in the fall of 1848 is that she had been married for nearly fifteen years at the time of her sailing aboard the *Nauticon*, she was the mother of three young children, and she was the caretaker of a fine home. She was also pregnant with her fourth child.[326] It is therefore possible that her presence aboard the *Nauticon* may not have been the fulfillment of her desires, but rather those of her husband. Perhaps Charles grew tired of living apart from his wife and requested she join him at sea. Further evidence suggesting Susan's presence aboard the *Nauticon* was the result of Charles can be found in her journal. Unlike other whaling captains' wives who addressed their husbands by their first names or by terms of endearment in their writings, Susan's use of "the Captain" to describe her husband suggests the Veeders may not have enjoyed a companionate relationship.[327] Therefore, it is plausible that when Susan Veeder left her family, friends, and community behind by going to sea aboard the *Nauticon* in the fall of 1848, she did so not out of love or devotion, but in fulfillment of her duty to her husband.

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[324] Susan's journal does not identify which of her children accompanied her and Charles at sea aboard the *Nauticon*. However, given her son Charles's appearance in his maternal grandfather's household in the 1850 census, it appears Susan and Charles chose to bring first born George and youngest son David to sea. Their reasons for doing so are unknown. Perhaps Charles wanted fourteen year old George to serve as an unofficial crewmember as part of his training to eventually enter the whalefishery. Perhaps Susan was not comfortable leaving two year old David at home with family members given his tender age. Perhaps Charles the younger was injured or ill at the time of the *Nauticon*'s departure and thus could not accompany his parents. Without definitive evidence, the explanation as to why two out of the three Veeder children joined their parents aboard the *Nauticon* in 1848 continues remains a mystery. Nantucket, Nantucket, Massachusetts, 1850 Census, 728, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.

[325] See Appendix A.

[326] It is unknown whether or not Susan knew of her pregnancy at the time of her sailing aboard the *Nauticon* as she made no mention of her pregnancy in her sea journal until the baby's birth. That child, a daughter named Mary Frances, was born January 29, 1849. Susan Veeder, January 29, 1849, Log 220, Ships' Log Collection, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

Elizabeth Church Wrightington Marble

The last of the women featured in this study is Elizabeth Marble. Born on August 9, 1825 in Fall River, Massachusetts, Elizabeth Church Wrightington was the eldest of Frederick and Mary Church Wrightington's six children.[328] First settled by Europeans in the 1650s, Fall River was a small village of less than two thousand residents in 1820.[329] Though it would eventually become one of the nation's leading textile manufacturing centers during the mid-nineteenth century, at the time of Elizabeth's birth, it was sawmills, not textile mills, that lined the banks of the Quequechan River.[330] It was within this industry that Frederick Wrightington supported his wife and children as a carpenter, eventually settling in a house off Bank Street on what is now known as Wrightington Place.[331] Little else is known about Elizabeth's childhood, though the family did attend services at the meeting house of the First Congregational Church, a religious community that included many of Fall River's founding families among its membership.[332]

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[327] See Chapter 5 for further evidence of issues within the Veeder marriage.

[328] Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[329] Henry Hilliard Earl, *Fall Rivers and its Manufactories*, 1803-1884 (Fall River, MA: Benjamin Earl & Son, 1884), 11.

[330] Meaning "falling river" in Wampanoag, the Quequechan River not only provided natural water power for saw and textile mills, but is also the source of the community's name. Henry Milne Fenner, *History of Fall River, Massachusetts (*Fall River, MA: Fall River Merchants Association, 1911), 12-20.

Despite the community's location along Mount Hope Bay at the mouth of the Taunton River, Fall River was never known for its maritime industry. However, beginning in the 1830s, some of Fall River's textile magnates sought to diversify their investments by establishing a commercial whalefishery. Eager to exploit growing demand for whale commodities, several prominent businessmen purchased Fall River's first whaleship in 1832, the aptly named *Gold Hunter*.[333] The vessel departed Fall River's wharves for the first time in June 1832, though its maiden voyage proved unsuccessful as the captain returned the ship to port the following spring with an empty hold.[334] Undeterred by this setback, the vessel's owners hired a new captain and sent the *Gold Hunter* back to sea in the summer of 1833.[335] After the vessel successfully returned with a catch of just under two thousand barrels of whale oil, several local whaling investors incorporated as the Fall River Whaling Company in 1836.[336] By the 1840s, more than a dozen Fall River whaleships were sailing the world in search of whales, and many of these vessels were captained by local men eager to make their mark in the fledgling Fall River whaling industry. One of these men was John Marble.

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[331] Fall River, Bristol, Massachusetts, 1850 Census, 122, *United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com; Marble Family Papers,* New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[332] Henry Hilliard Earl, ed., *History, Annals and Sketches of the Central Church of Fall River, Massachusetts A.D. 1842- A.D. 1905* (Fall River, MA: Printed by vote of the Church, 1905), 6.

[333] Judith Navas Lund, "Fall River Goes Whaling," *Coriolis Interdisciplinary Journal in Maritime Studies* 3, No. 2 (2012), 2.

[334] American Offshore Whaling Voyage Database, Voyage ID AV05837, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.

[335] Starbuck, 298-299.

[336] An Act to Incorporate the Fall River Whaling Company, April 8, 1835, State Library of Massachusetts, http://archives.lib.state.ma.us/actsResolves/1836/1836acts0188.pdf.

Born on October 31, 1813, in Freetown, Massachusetts, John Marble was the fifth of eight children born to James and Polly Tew Marble.[337] No evidence survives detailing how John got his start in the whalefishery, as he does not appear in industry records until 1842 when he served as first mate aboard the Somerset, Massachusetts bark *Pilgrim* at the age of twenty-eight.[338] The *Pilgrim* voyage proved to be unsuccessful. After the captain died of unknown causes while underway, the vessel returned to Somerset in July 1843 with less than three hundred barrels of sperm oil to show for their efforts.[339] Four months later, John received his first commission as captain of the bark *Leonidas*, a vessel owned and operated by the Fall River Whaling Company.[340] With a crew of thirty-five men, John set sail on November 7, 1843, bound for the Pacific whaling grounds, returning in June 1845 with a disappointing catch of just two hundred sixty barrels of sperm oil.[341] Despite this substandard performance, John nevertheless had cause for celebration in the summer of 1845, for just six weeks after returning from his first voyage as captain, John Marble married Elizabeth Church Wrightington on July 8, 1845 in Fall River.[342]

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[337] Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[338] American Offshore Whaling Crew Lists Database, Voyage ID AV11647, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.

[339] Starbuck, 393.

[340] Starbuck, 402; Lund, 2.

[341] American Offshore Whaling Crew Lists Database, Voyage ID AV08344, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org; Starbuck, 403.

[342] Massachusetts Vital Records, 1840–1911, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

As in the case of the Brewsters and Veeders, the details of John and Elizabeth Marble's introduction and courtship are lost to history. Whaling industry records indicate a sixteen year old Fall River man named William E. Wrightington served alongside John during the 1842 *Pilgrim* voyage, but it is unknown whether or not this man had any connection to Elizabeth's branch of the Wrightington family.[343] Despite the nearly twelve year age difference between husband and wife, by John and Elizabeth's own accounts, their marriage was a loving and happy one.[344] Like many newlyweds in New England whaling communities, the Marbles lacked the means to set up their own household at the time of their marriage, so the young couple moved in with Elizabeth's family at Wrightington Place after their wedding.[345] Elizabeth spent the first year of her marriage living together with her husband, a rarity for women in nineteenth century whaling communities. John was even present for the birth of their first child on October 10, 1846, a son they named George.[346] It was unusual for a whaling captain to remain at home for so long during the mid-nineteenth century. Perhaps John's disappointing performance aboard the *Leonidas* led local investors to question the young captain's abilities, making it difficult for him to secure a new commission. Illness or injury might also explain John's year-long stay in Fall River during this period. Or, perhaps the young captain simply preferred to remain at home with his new wife and family. Whatever the reason for his extended stay at home, just fourteen days after the birth of his son, John Marble left Fall River bound once more for the whaling grounds, this time as captain of the Fall River Whaling Company ship *Gold Hunter*.[347]

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[343] American Offshore Whaling Crew Lists Database, Voyage ID AV11647, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.

[344] See Chapter 4 for a thorough discussion of the Marble marriage as depicted in their surviving letters and journals.

[345] John and Elizabeth would soon be joined by another pair of newlywed Marbles when John's brother George married Elizabeth's sister Sarah in September 1848. Fall River, Bristol, Massachusetts, 1850 Census, 122, *United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com;* Massachusetts Vital Records, 1840–1911, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

[346] Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

While none of Elizabeth's writings from this period exist today, she and her son were never far from her husband's thoughts while he was at sea, for in addition to maintaining the *Gold Hunter* log in keeping with his duties as captain, John Marble filled its margins with love poems to his wife and child. In one entry written in March 1847, John writes to Elizabeth in the flowery language of nineteenth-century love:

> I think of thee, beloved one,
> When the shades of morning flee before the rising sun,
> Or when the moon shines through the darkness and wraps the world in light.
> My thoughts are with thee, and memories of those unforgotten hours.[348]

A few days later, John wrote of Elizabeth again, this time choosing to chronicle his decision to return to sea and her reaction to it:

> There was a stain upon her cheek,
> And the tears stood in her eyes,
> And the words she strove to speak,
> Were stiffled by her sighs
> But she raised her head at last,
> As she mustered strength to say,
> Trust not the ocean blast,
> Stay home dear John, stay.[349]

These odes to his wife were accompanied by verses about George, as John wrote of imaginary encounters between his son and crew. One such entry reads, "When George Frederick was a little boy, the urchin smiled so goofy, that men partook the social joy, and sported with him daily."[350] These verses serve as irrefutable proof of John Marble's love and devotion to his wife and son.

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[347] Starbuck, 440-441.

[348] John C. Marble, March 13, 1847, Log 491, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[349] John C. Marble, March 15, 1847, Log 491, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

While a homesick John searched the Pacific Ocean for whales by day and filled the log of the *Gold Hunter* with verse by night, Elizabeth faced tragedy at home. Little George Marble died on July 25, 1848, just three months shy of his second birthday.[351] It is not known what caused the child's death, how Elizabeth coped with her loss, or when John learned of his son's passing; the Marble family's surviving papers are silent on these tragic matters. What the records do show is that after John returned to Fall River in April 1849, he and Elizabeth welcomed a second child the following spring, a son they named George Frederick.[352] The Marble family spent the next four years together before John went to sea again in June 1853, this time aboard the Fall River Whaling Company bark *A. Houghton*. There are several potential explanations for this extensive four year gap in John's career. After enjoying a period of moderate success during the 1830s and 1840s, by the 1850s, Fall River's whalefishery had fallen into decline after several unprofitable voyages led many investors to withdraw capital from the fishery in pursuit of land-based economic ventures.[353] As a result, fewer and fewer whaleships departed Fall River for the whaling grounds each year, leaving career whalemen like John Marble with limited options by which to support their families. Given the nature of John and Elizabeth Marble's relationship, it is also possible this gap in John's career was the result of a conscious decision he made to remain at home with his wife and child. The timing and duration of John’s stay supports this theory, particularly when examined in conjunction with the loss of the Marbles’ first child. George Marble died just a few days prior to his third birthday while his father was away at sea. In the case of George Frederick, his father was not only present for his birth, but for the first three and a half years of his life. Perhaps John chose to remain at home with Elizabeth and their son in the hope that by doing so, his son would outlive his deceased older brother. Fortunately for the Marbles, George Frederick did live to see his third birthday, and shortly thereafter, his father returned to sea as captain of the bark *A. Houghton* in the summer of 1853.[354] Though the *A. Houghton* voyage was short by mid-century whaling industry standards at just over a year and a half, John nevertheless felt compelled to write about his wife and son during his time at sea. Just three months after setting sail from Fall River, John scrawled this short yet poignant note in the margins of the *A. Houghton* logbook, “O my Lizzie and George.”[355]

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[350] John C. Marble, April 8, 1847, Log 491, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[351] No evidence of John and Elizabeth's first son survives in vital records. The only evidence of his existence is a small headstone placed alongside the graves of his mother and father in Fall River's Oak Grove Cemetery listing his age at his date of death.

[352] Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[353] Lund, 2-3.

The year 1857 was a pivotal one for the Marble family. In addition to earning the rank of Master Mason at his local lodge, John made a decision that would change his life and the lives of his wife and son forever.[356] After more than ten years of service to the Fall River Whaling Company, John parted ways with the corporation and accepted a commission from the newly formed J. and W.R. Wing and Company in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Founded by brothers Joseph and William Ricketson Wing, the J. and W.R. Wing Company would eventually become the largest whaling firm in American history.[357] However, when the Wing brothers commissioned John Marble to captain their newest vessel, the bark *Kathleen*, in 1857, they were still making the transition from outfitting whaleships to owning them. As new players in the whaling investor market, it is possible the Wings struggled to secure a reliable New Bedford captain for the *Kathleen* voyage, and were therefore forced to pick from captains from other local ports. As this study has previously shown, proven whaling captains were in high demand during the mid-nineteenth century, so a man like John Marble would have been a highly desirable candidate given his prior experience. Although no records of the Wings' negotiations with John Marble survive, it appears John may have used this prior experience to his advantage, for he not only secured himself a commission as captain, but permission to bring his wife and son to sea as well.

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[354] Starbuck, 510.

[355] John C. Marble, September 10, 1854, Log 491, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[356] A certificate in the Marble Family Papers indicates John achieved the rank of Master Mason in the Mount Hope Lodge on August 21, 1857. Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

As in the case of so many other captains' wives, no evidence detailing Elizabeth Marble's motivations, rationale, or role in the decision making process that led to her joining her husband at sea aboard the *Kathleen* exists in the historical record. Like Mary Brewster and Susan Veeder, Elizabeth's participation in any local religious, temperance, abolitionist, or reform organizations is also unknown, so it not possible to assess what influence, if any, these organizations may have had in the decision for her to go to sea. The Marble family's surviving papers also provide no indication as to why Elizabeth and George Frederick accompanied John aboard the *Kathleen,* nor do they include any reference to the family facing resistance from family members, the community, or the whalefishery. This makes sense within the context of the New Bedford whaling industry. As this study has shown, the Whaling City was the epicenter of the wife-carrying phenomenon during the mid-nineteenth century. By the time Elizabeth and George Frederick joined John aboard the *Kathleen* in August of 1857, more than one hundred women had accompanied their husbands at sea aboard New Bedford whaleships.[358] However, it is important to remember that Elizabeth Marble lived in Fall River, not New Bedford, and was therefore the first captain's wife from her community to go to sea with her husband aboard a whaleship.[359] In contrast to Mary Brewster, whose decision to go to sea cost her the love of her foster mother, it appears Elizabeth's family was supportive of her decision to go to sea, as she wrote extensive letters to her mother with instructions that they be shared with her siblings and extended family.[360] Although these letters make no reference to her motivations for going to sea, given the nature of Elizabeth and John's relationship and the experiences they had weathered as a family, it is highly plausible that the decision to go to sea aboard the *Kathleen* with their son was a choice Elizabeth and John made together, one born of familial love and affection.[361]

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[357] Lance E. Davis et. al., 406.

Between 1840 and 1870, nearly three hundred New England whaling captains' wives accompanied their husbands aboard whaleships. In some cases, the historical record provides concrete evidence as to what motivated these women to go to sea. Such was the case for Mary Brewster, whose love for her husband William led to her decision to accompany him at sea, even at the cost of her foster mother's esteem. For many others, like Susan Veeder and Elizabeth Marble, their rationale for going to sea and their participation in the decision that led to their presence aboard their husbands' vessels remains open to interpretation. The extent to which religious beliefs, social reform, the women's movement, temperance, or abolitionism may have influenced these women is also a topic of speculation, as surviving evidence provides few clues as to the role these external factors played in a captains' wife accompanying her husband at sea. The issue of consciousness is also an important concept to consider when attempting to understand these women. Of the nearly three hundred captains' wives surveyed in this study, none of them left behind any evidence indicating they knowingly or purposefully challenged their communities' longstanding conceptions of gender by joining their husbands at sea. However, because their presence aboard whaleships challenged the longstanding gender norms that had served as the cornerstone of New England whaling communities for more than a century, the sister sailors were nevertheless agents of historical change, as their experiences represent a significant deviation from their communities' conceptions of gender. In the cases of Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble, subsequent chapters of this study will demonstrate that these experiences also proved to be life changing not just for their families and communities, but for themselves as well.

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[358] See Appendix A.
[359] This study found no evidence of a whaling captain's wife accompanying her husband aboard a Fall River whaleship between 1840 and 1870. See Appendix B.
[360] See Chapter 4 for a thorough discussion of the content of these letters.
[361] Given the fact that the Marbles lived in the Wrightington household prior to their departure aboard the Kathleen, it is unlikely they took their son with them to sea due to a lack of viable childcare in their absence.

CHAPTER 4

"I CAN SAY OF THE PAST IT HAS BEEN PROPERLY SPENT": THE SISTER SAILORS AT SEA[362]

Of the nearly three hundred New England captains' wives who accompanied their husbands at sea aboard whaleships between 1840 and 1870, only forty women's letters and journals written while at sea exist in publicly accessible archives today.[363] Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble are among these women, as they all used their personal writings to chronicle their experiences at sea. These documents offer invaluable insight into Mary, Susan and Elizabeth as women as well as agents of change, as their writings demonstrate their transformation from captains' wives to sister sailors during their time at sea. Originally used by Mary Brewster to describe a fellow captain's wife who had joined her husband at sea, the term sister sailor is an apt description for women like Mary, Susan, and Elizabeth, for their collective experiences at sea underscore their role as agents of historical change within the mid-nineteenth century New England whalefishery. By joining their husbands at sea and defying the longstanding conceptions of gender that had sustained their communities for generations, the sister sailors forged a new path for New England captains' wives that allowed them to support their husbands at home and at sea. Their time at sea also provided the sister sailors with opportunities beyond the reach of many mid-nineteenth century women, exposing them to people, places, and experiences unlike any they had ever known back home. Using the letters and journals of Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble as a point of departure, this chapter will examine the personal writings of the sister sailors within the context of nineteenth century women's journal literature and material culture in addition to highlighting commonalities and differences between the three women's experiences at sea. Furthermore, this chapter will compare Mary, Susan, and Elizabeth's experiences to those of their fellow sister sailors, and in doing so, provide an overview of the sister sailors' collective experiences at sea during the mid-nineteenth century.

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[362] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[363] See Appendix A.

Written at Sea: The Sister Sailors' Letters and Journals

In her analysis of American women's diary literature, historian Margo Culley argues that a woman's decision to keep a journal originated from "the urge to give shape and meaning to life through words, and to endow this meaning-making with a permanence that transcends time."[364] With roots in the tradition of spiritual reflection, during the nineteenth century, women's journals served a variety of purposes including asserting one's individuality, establishing emotional independence, and maintaining kinship and community ties, particularly when the writer was removed from her traditional social circle.[365] While some journals were private documents, during the nineteenth century many women intended that their writings to be read by family and friends.[366] In addition to providing insights into the writer's thoughts and feelings, women's journals also provide a window into their social circumstances, granting historians access to a wealth of knowledge regarding daily life during the nineteenth century. Their historic value notwithstanding, it is important to remember the limitations of women's personal writings. Keeping a journal required both literacy and leisure time, and as such, the practice remained outside the reach of many working class women and women of color during the nineteenth century.[367]

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[364] Margo Culley, ed., *One Day at a Time: The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present* (New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1985), xi.

[365] Elizabeth Hampsten, *Read This Only to Yourself: The Private Writings of Midwestern Women, 1880-1910* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), 3-4; Penelope Franklin, ed., *Private Pages: Diaries of American Women, 1830-1970* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1986) xix; Culley, 4.

[366] Lynne Z. Bloom, "I Write for Myself and Strangers," in *Inscribing our Lives: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries,* Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia May Huff, eds., (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 23.

For many of the sister sailors, the journals they kept at sea served as outlets of spiritual expression. Such was the case for Mary Brewster, as her journals written aboard the ship *Tiger* are filled with references to her Baptist faith. She dedicated nearly every Sunday to recording her weekly spiritual reflections, including this entry from December 1845:

> Another week has passed and I am permitted to see the light of a beautiful Sabbath…I have read some in the Bible and other good books and though denied the privilege of meeting…in the house of God I am fully satisfyed. He can be worshipped here also…and His children will not be forsaken whether on land or sea.[368]

Mary's faith also aided her in times of personal struggle. During a stay in Lahaina, Hawaii wherein she was separated from her husband for several weeks, Mary confided her prayers for his safe return to her journal: "I pray God we may not be forsaken now by Him but be protected from all harm ad permit us once more to meet," she wrote, adding, "praying that god would once more suffer us to meet and whilst absent keep him from all evil and every danger, hoping it may result in our good thus to part."[369] Henrietta DeBlois of Newport, Rhode Island also relied on her faith during difficult times while at sea. After suffering from debilitating seasickness, Henrietta declared "the Lord hath sustained me."[370] Other sister sailors shared Mary and Henrietta's piety. After unknowingly passing time sewing on deck during the Sabbath while aboard the bark *Nautilus* in December 1865, Harriet Bliven of New Bedford, Massachusetts regrettably recalled, "I went on deck and Sewed for about two hours before I knew it was the Sabbath."[371] Eliza Williams also kept the Sabbath while aboard the ship *Florida*, and was delighted when the crew stopped whaling on Sunday September 19, 1858 writing, "all is orderly and quiet on board; much more so than I expected among so many Men."[372]

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[367] Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia May Huff, eds., *Inscribing Our Lives*, 6; Catherine Hobbs, *Nineteenth Century Women Learn to Write* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1995), 10-12.

[368] Mary Brewster, December 7, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[369] Mary Brewster, April 7, 1845 and May 2, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

In addition to serving as outlets for personal piety, the sister sailors' letters and journals also provided them with a means of maintaining family and community ties back home. In keeping with the custom of sharing journals with family members, Elizabeth Marble provided her mother with specific instructions regarding the distribution of her writings. These instructions were outlined in a letter from September 1857: "I will send my journal with this as it is up to this date but I do not want you to let eney one see that or this out of the family for I have not written it for exhibition."[373] Whereas Elizabeth had strong feelings against her mother sharing her writings outside the family, Mary had no such qualms. In fact, in the first entry of her journal Mary noted, "should I live to return my friends can see what I have been doing, where we have been and perhaps by reading this form some correct ideas as regards my feelings whilst absent."[374] Henrietta DeBlois also intended that her journal be shared beyond her family, so much so she began her entries with the salutation, "Dear Friends."[375]

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[370] Henrietta DeBlois, September 25, 1856, John S. DeBlois Letters 1840-1860, Box 113, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island.
[371] Harriet Bliven, December 1850, Log 1803, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.
[372] Eliza Williams, September 19 1858, in *One Whaling Family*, Harold Williams, ed., (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), 7.
[373] Elizabeth Marble to Mary Wrightington, September 16, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.
[374] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

The issue of audience is an important factor to consider when examining the sister sailors' journals. As Margo Culley summarizes,

> the presence of a sense of audience…has a crucial influence on what is said and not said…it shapes the selection and arrangement of detail within the journal and determines more than anything self the kind of self-construction the diarist presents.[376]

Historians Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia Anne Huff underscore the importance of self-construction in women's journals, arguing that women journal keepers often leave out as much detail as they put in.[377] This was certainly the case for the sister sailors, whose personal writings contain many examples of self-censorship. While it is difficult to know what the sister sailor's unconsciously censored from their writings, there are several noteworthy examples of conscious self-censorship in their letters and journals. In keeping with mid-nineteenth century social and religious mores, the sister sailors' make no overt mentions of their sexual relations with their husbands, any birth control methods they may have employed while at sea, or the feminine hygiene practices they utilized aboard ship in their personal writings.[378] Another example of conscious self-censorship in the sister sailors' letters and journals is the issue of pregnancy. Susan Veeder made no mention of her condition in her journal until after her daughter's birth in Talcahuano, Chile, while Elizabeth Marble employed the period euphemism of "taken sick" to describe a fellow sister sailor's childbirth.[379] Potential censorship within the sister sailors' journals may also be the result of outside forces. Many of their writings were passed down through their families, and it is possible that their descendants altered, edited, or censored their writings prior to donating them to archives. It is not known whether the Brewster, Veeder and Marble family papers were censored in this way, though given the intimate personal details found within them and the existence of supplementary sources that verify their contents, it is unlikely that Mary, Susan, or Elizabeth's writings were censored by their descendants.

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[375] Henrietta DeBlois, November 20, 1856, Box 113, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island.

[376] Culley, 12.

[377] Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia May Huff, eds., *Inscribing Our Lives*, 19-20.

[378] Of the three women featured in this study, only Mary Brewster included veiled references to her and her husband's marital relations in her writings. In her December 11, 1847 entry Mary noted, "I have been busy all day and have made a muslin dress and tried it on. It sets finely and Mr. B is very much pleased with it as it was his choice when purchased—I have no lonesome feelings as there is sufficient business going on to make me merry." Another reference to sexual relations between she and William appears a few weeks later wherein Mary wrote, "husband and self are quite alone and we enjoy it much and anticipate much pleasure whilst the fish are catching." Mary Brewster, December 11, 1847 and December 31, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

Although the contents of the sister sailors' writings serve as the primary documentary source material for this study, it is also important to highlight the value of these objects as examples of material culture. As historian Jules David Prown has noted,

> Material culture as a study is based on the underlying premise that objects made or modified by man, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, reflect the beliefs of individuals who made, commissioned, purchased or used them, and by extension the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged.[380]

When the sister sailors' letters and journals are analyzed through the lens of material culture, they provide valuable insights into the women as well as their social circumstances. Thanks to the emergence of industrialized paper mills and bookbinderies, beginning in the 1830s, loose leaf paper and blank journal books became widely available to New England middle class consumers during the mid-nineteenth century.[381] Industrialization also led to the manufacture of commercially produced pencils, steel nib fountain pens, as well as ink during this period.[382] The sister sailors utilized all of these consumer goods while at sea in the practice of keeping journals and writing letters.

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[379] Elizabeth Marble, September 22, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[380] Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," Winterthur Portfolio 17, No. 1 (Spring 1982): 1-2.

The majority of the sister sailors' journals— including those of Mary Brewster and Susan Veeder— are bound, though some survive today as loose pages. Elizabeth Marble's journals written aboard the *Kathleen* and *Awashonks* fall into this latter category, though given the existence of four sets of holes in each of the pages, it appears the pages were originally part of a bound book.[383] Some of these books are adorned with decorative touches. Such is the case with Susan Veeder's journal; its light brown spine is offset by a cover made of green marbled paper. In keeping with nineteenth century bookbinding practices, the sister sailors' journals come in a variety of shapes and sizes. While the most common size is approximately eight inches by twelve inches high, Elizabeth Marble's *Awashonks* journal is the same size as ship logbooks, similar to modern legal size documents. The paper used within the journals also varies. While all three women's journals appear to have been made of wood pulp paper, the paper in Mary and Susan's journals is faded yellow and lined, while Elizabeth's *Kathleen* journal is made of yellow lined paper and her *Awashonks* journal is made of blue unlined paper. Despite the availability of pencils, all three women used pen while writing their journals, as evidenced by the occasional ink blot. In keeping with many of their fellow sister sailors, Mary and Susan also added personalized touches to their journals in the form of clippings and artwork. In Mary's case, she added newspaper clippings that were supportive of her decision to go to sea with her husband, while Susan included more than a dozen watercolor paintings of various whaling ports in her journal. Other evidence of personalization within the sister sailors' journals can found in the women's handwriting. In the case of Elizabeth Marble's journals, a telling change in handwriting appears when she begins describing her husband John's onset of illness. Her usual tight, rounded penmanship shifts into increasingly sloppy, slanted letters during these entries. As John's condition worsened, so too did Elizabeth's handwriting.

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[381] For a history of printing, see Adele Millicent Smith, *A History of Printing and Materials: Their Evolution* (Philadelphia, PA: Adele Millicent Smith, 1904), as well as Mark Kurlansky, *Paper: Paging Through History* (New York, NY: W. Norton and Company), 2017.

[382] Maygene Daniels, "The Ingenious Pen: American Writing Implements from the Eighteenth Century to the Twentieth," in *The American Archivist* 43, No. 3 (Summer 1980), 313-319.

[383] It is unknown who removed these pages from their binding or when said removal took place.

Along with keeping a journal, Elizabeth Marble also wrote extensive letters to her mother while at sea. Unlike journals, which remained with the sister sailors for the duration of their voyage, letters written at sea were often passed from vessel to vessel until they reached the mainland. Posting letters when ashore in foreign ports was a more reliable method, though even with advances in mail delivery during the nineteenth century, it still took months for letters to be delivered, if at all. In Elizabeth's case, her letters were written with an ink pen on blue lined paper measuring approximately eight inches by eleven inches. In an effort to maximize her use of this paper, Elizabeth wrote on both sides of the page, and in some cases, used a variation of cross hatching wherein she wrote sentences in the spaces between lines.

In addition to providing insight into the sister sailors' beliefs, personalities, and experiences at sea, Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble's personal writings also help place them within greater New England society. As the wives of whaling captains, all three women came from a middle class background. Their journals provide evidence of this socioeconomic status, as the literacy and leisure time required in keeping journals were important hallmarks of nineteenth century middle class culture. With its decorative binding and marbled cover, Susan Veeder's journal is the most elaborate of the three women, and supports surviving documentary evidence that suggests the Veeders were the most affluent of the three couples featured in this study at the time of their voyage together at sea. Susan's watercolors are further evidence of the Veeder family's socioeconomic status, as artistic study was part of a genteel woman's education during the nineteenth century.[384] Mary Brewster's journal also suggests she enjoyed a comfortable middle class background, as the book is bound with a faded burgundy cover. In contrast, Elizabeth's use of several different types of paper as well as cross hatching are suggestive of a less affluent socioeconomic status that forced her to make do with limited resources, one that is supported by documentary evidence.

The sister sailors' journals and letters are not just examples of material culture; they are also literary texts. According to Margo Culley, "the act of autobiographical writing, particularly that which occurs in a periodic structure, involves the writer in complex literary as well as psychological processes," while Lynn Z. Bloom suggests journal keepers utilize a variety of literary techniques to "develop and contextualize" their subjects, thereby "orienting the work to an external audience."[385] As examples of autobiographical writing, the sister sailors' journals must therefore be analyzed as works of literature. When examined from this perspective, the sister sailors' collective experiences at sea share a common thematic progression characterized by three distinct phases: adversity, acclimation, and adaptation. During their first few months at sea, the sister sailors faced emotional, physiological, and physical adversity as they were confronted with the stark and often times hostile realities of life aboard a whaleship. Once the initial shock of their new circumstances wore off, the women then entered into a period of acclimation as they attempted to familiarize themselves with their new surroundings. Only when the women reached a certain level of comfort with their situations did their writings begin to show evidence of adaptation. The writings of Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble demonstrate this progression, and when combined with the letters and journals of other New England women who joined their husbands at sea aboard whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century, these writings provide invaluable insight into the women's transformation from captains' wives to sister sailors.

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[384] Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 69.
[385] Culley, 10; Bloom, 29.

One of the first sources of adversity the women encountered while aboard ship was seasickness. Just a few days after the *Nauticon* left Nantucket, Susan Veeder expressed doubts as to her ability to continue with the voyage due to her condition, writing "we had another strong gale…I think that if I could of got on Shore I should of given up the voyage for I was very sick the ship rolled and pitched very much." [386] Mary Brewster faced equally difficult conditions aboard the *Tiger*. Her first several weeks of journal entries indicate she suffered several rounds of vomiting each day. Such was also the case for Elizabeth Stetson. "Old Swell on and seasick," she wrote while aboard the New Bedford bark *E. Corning*, "eat then vomit is the order of the day."[387] Jane Gelett of

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[386] Susan Veeder, September 24, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[387] Elizabeth Stetson, November 16, 1860, Log 503, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Fairhaven, Massachusetts suffered such terrible seasickness during the outbound passage of the ship *Uncas* that her husband Charles feared for her life. As he later recalled in his memoirs, "she was really so seasick I feared she would not live to reach Fayal [the Azores]."[388] Once they gained their sea legs, the sister sailors were confronted with the daunting prospect of spending the next several years living in extremely tight quarters. While their husbands had free reign to move about the ship, the sister sailors were primarily confined to the captain's aft-cabin, the forward cabin where the captain and officers took their meals, and the aft-deck. While the size and layout of captain's cabins varied from vessel to vessel, the aft-cabin aboard the *Charles W. Morgan* gives an approximation as to what the sister sailors experienced during the mid-nineteenth century. Home to a narrow sleeping berth, a sofa, a private head (or privy), and lots of built-in storage, the *Charles W. Morgan* aft-cabin measures less than one hundred square feet, a tight squeeze for one adult, let alone two. However, what the *Morgan* aft-cabin lacked in size it makes up for in comfort, as it was home to a gimballed, or self-leveling bed, as opposed to a standard berth. By swinging with the motion of the ship, gimballed beds spared their occupants the discomfort caused by the roll and pitch of passing swells. It is for this reason gimballed beds were prized luxuries aboard mid-nineteenth century whaleships. Another luxury the sister sailors cherished was the opportunity to venture above deck. If weather and whaling operations permitted, the sister sailors were sometimes granted access to the aft-deck, though only in areas where their presence would not hinder the crew in their work. With the exception of the pantry and galley, the rest of the ship remained off-limits to the sister sailors for the duration of their time at sea.

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[388] Charles W. Gelett, *A Life on the Ocean: An Autobiography of Captain Charles Wetherby Gelett, A Retired Sea Captain Whose Life Trail Crossed and Recrossed Hawaii Repeatedly* (Honolulu, HI: Hawaiian Gazette, Co., 1917), 51.

After coming to terms with their new living quarters, the sister sailors often struggled with the cleanliness of their new home, or lack thereof. As this study has shown, whaling was foul, filthy work. This led to the employment of stewards aboard nineteenth-century whaleships, men who were tasked with cleaning the captain's and officers' cabins.[389] However, because these men held duties traditionally performed by women, and because shipboard cleanliness standards rarely aligned with those of a proper middle class home, the sister sailors often found themselves at odds with the stewards. Elizabeth Marble described one such confrontation with the *Kathleen* steward in a letter to her mother dated September 14, 1857:

> I do not think we have had a dish washed as it should be since we left home. When he [the steward] takes them from the table he takes his dish cloth and gives them a wipe around and then they are ready for the next time and he does not change them for the second table generally and I had him to wash a plate for me and then wash a place in the flore and then wash another plate for me all in the same water and with the same rag.[390]

Mary Brewster echoed Elizabeth's sentiments in her journal, stating there was "dirt and dust everywhere behold filling up every crook and corner."[391] Maintaining shore side standards of cleanliness was a particular struggle while the vessel was trying-out. As Mary noted in a June 1846 journal entry, "I keep below nearly all the time and in my room as the decks are getting rather soiled and the try-smoke very disagreeable to my olfactory senses."[392]

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[389] Stewards and cooks were almost always men of color during this period. Margaret S. Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 30.

[390] Elizabeth Marble to Mary Wrightington, September 14, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[391] Mary Brewster, January 25 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

Keeping one's clothing from getting "rather soiled" also proved challenging to the sister sailors. With the constant processing of whales and the ever present dampness from spray and passing swells, any clothing the women brought aboard was subject to stain by grease, oil, and mold, leaving Sarah Cole to lament while aboard the bark *Viligant*, "it is no use for any one to bring anything nice to sea."[393] Lucy Ann Crapo concurred in a letter to her sister written aboard the bark *Louisa* stating "anything that will not show the direct is best for ship…I would like to have dresses made of dark goods and wear as long as decent and them leave them ashore…better than to wash."[394] Given the cramped, filthy environment that was whaleship *Cowper*, Susan Fisher suggested one wear "a Bloomer costume and high boots," if one wished to walk around on deck.[395] That's precisely what Harriet Bliven did in September 1865 while aboard the bark *Nautilus*; "Finished my Bloomer suit," she wrote, adding "I think I shall want all Bloomers if it continues to grow warm."[396] Harriet appears to have been the only sister sailor to adopt the Bloomer costume, as most women chose to wear "wash dresses" similar to those worn during shore side laundry days while at sea.[397] Many of the women also brought special attire to wear while in port or during gams. Mary Brewster spent several weeks making one such dress for herself to "wear on the islands" in September 1846, and subsequently wore it on several occasions while the *Tiger* was in port in Hilo in the Society Islands.[398]

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[392] Mary Brewster June 30, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[393] Sarah Cole, January 1860, Log 1952, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

[394] Lucy-Ann Crapo, March 1867, Log 80, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[395] Susan Fisher, August 2, 1864, in "Journal of a Whaling Cruise," *Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* 13, No. 4, March, 27, 1865.

[396] Harriet Bliven, September 11, 1865, Log 1803, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

[397] Joan Druett, *Petticoat Whalers: Whaling Wives at Sea, 1820-1920* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001), 70.

Maintaining shore side standards for personal cleanliness was also a challenge for the sister sailors. By the mid-nineteenth century, regular bathing had become routine in many middle class households thanks to the emergence of social hygiene movements that equated cleanliness with class status.[399] Such was the case for Augusta Penniman, who after living aboard the New Bedford bark *Minerva II* for over a month, gleefully noted in her journal that she finally "washed today for the first time," having ordered, "water to be heat to do my washing with."[400] Not all of the sister sailors were so fortunate. Given the importance of maintaining ample stocks of potable drinking water aboard ship, some women resorted to bathing with salt water, while others were forced to alter their preferred bathing schedule so as to meet the needs of the ship. As Almira Gibbs disgruntledly noted in her journal, "it is not so easy to wash here as it is at home the Capt thinks once a week is enough and I have to obey orders."[401]

Fortunately for the sister sailors, once they overcame the initial challenges of life at sea, they quickly settled into the second phase of their voyages: acclimation. By establishing routines, assigning themselves projects, and finding ways to keep busy, the women established patterns of behavior that gave meaning to their lives at sea. Journal and letter writing was one of these forms of meaningful employment, even if shipboard conditions sometimes made writing challenging. As Elizabeth Marble noted in a letter to her mother, "I have written this siting on a box down between John's chest and George D's state room fore this is the only place that I could keep steady enough to write."[402] Reading was another common pastime for the sister sailors. "If I could not read I don't know what I should do," Almira Gibbs admitted in a journal entry written aboard the ship *Nantucket* in November 1857, while Mary Brewster noted,

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[398] The Sandwich Islands are the historical name for the modern state of Hawaii. Mary Brewster September 7, 1846 and September 10, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[399] For an overview of the history of cleanliness in America, see Suellen Hoy, *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press), 1995.

[400] Augusta Penniman, November 16, 1864, *Augusta Penniman: Journal of a Whaling Voyage, 1864-1868*, Yvonne Crevier, ed., (Eastham, MA: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1988), 74.

[401] Almira Gibbs, February 26, 1857, Log 10, Nantucket Atheneum, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

> I desire to fill my mind with much knowledge which will be useful and constructive. Time spent with such books is not lost but profitable and advantageous to all who will read and be benefited by such reading.[403]

Needlework also played an important role in helping the women adjust to life at sea. In addition to maintaining their own wardrobes as well as those of their husbands and children, the sister sailors also sewed for the benefit of the crew. "Hemmed a dozen towels for the Bark and four napkins for myself," wrote Elizabeth Stetson in the fall of 1860, while Elizabeth Marble spent the better part of two weeks preparing costumes for the *Kathleen* crewmen's band in January 1858.[404] The sister sailors also partook in creative pursuits while at sea. Susan Veeder filled her *Nauticon* journal with stunning watercolors depicting panoramic views of various Pacific islands, while Eliza Brock and Betsey Tower included examples of their own poetry in their journals.[405]

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[402] Elizabeth Marble, September 15, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[403] Almira Gibbs, June 14, 1846, Log 10, Nantucket Atheneum, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[404] Elizabeth Stetson, November 21, 1860, Log 503, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts; Elizabeth Marble, February 12, 1858, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[405] Susan Veeder, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts; Eliza Brock, Log 136, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts; Betsey Tower, February 28, 1848, ODHS Log 581, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

In addition to finding meaningful ways to pass the time, the sister sailors also began taking note of what was happening outside the captain's cabin during the acclimation phase of their voyages. It was during this period that notations of the whaling process as well as the state of the vessel's catch first appear in their journals and letters. Harriet Swain had a particular interest in the cutting-in of whales, so much so that after the *Catawba* crew caught its first sperm whale in November 1853, she sat in a whaleboat tied to the ship in order to enjoy an uninhibited view of their work.[406] Most sister sailors were content to watch from the safety of the aft-deck. Susan Veeder was among them, noting "to day we saw sperm whales lowered our boats and got one, this is the first sperm whale I have seen it will make about 25 bbls."[407] Some of the women chose to document the methods used to hunt whales. While anchored off the coast of the Baja Peninsula in the winter of 1846, Mary Brewster described a particularly gruesome strategy used by whalemen to target California gray whales:

> These whales frequent this bay once a year to calve and can only be taken when they have a young one which they fasten to and by this means secure the mother who will never forsake it till dead but try every way to shield it from danger by taking it on her back and endeavor to help them along. When dead they tow the whale to the whale to the ship which always remains at anchor.[408]

Eliza Williams also commented on the practice of targeting calves in her journal:

> The first Mate came alongside with one, a cow whale…this one, the Mate told me, had a very small calf. I must say I was sorry to hear it. The poor little thing could not keep up with the rest, the mother would not leave it and lost her life."[409]

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[406] Harriet Swain, November 20, 1853, Log 33, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[407] Susan Veeder, June 1 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts

[408] Mary Brewster, December 31, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[409] Eliza Williams, November 9, 1858, in *One Whaling Family*, Harold Williams, ed., (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), 7.

Elizabeth Morey also felt sympathy for whale calves taken aboard the ship *Phoenix* writing, “Poor little creature, they kill’d it for the sake of its Mother…Oh! It does seem so Cruel.”[410] Fortunately for the sister sailors, as they grew more and more accustomed to the practices involved in commercial whaling, their journal entries shifted from shocked newcomers’ descriptions of the hunt to the concerns of established whalers as to the status of the vessel’s catch. Whaleships could not return to their home port until they were “full up” with the valuable commodities of whale oil, baleen, and spermaceti, and so the pressure to find and catch whales was felt by all aboard ship. Elizabeth Marble made note of this constant pressure in a journal entry written aboard the *Kathleen* wherein she noted, “three months to day since we sailed and no oil yet.”[411]

After the sister sailors acclimated themselves to their new home, their writings began to demonstrate their shift into the final phase of their voyages as they took steps to adapt various aspects of life at sea to meet their personal, emotional, and physiological needs. One of the most common areas of adaptation the whaleship itself. As this study has previously shown, by the time the sister sailors went to sea, whaleships were purpose built vessels designed for two things: catching whales and safely storing the resulting commodities aboard ship until the vessel was able to return home. In spite of this, the sister sailors’ writings provide ample evidence as to how they adapted these spaces to meet their needs. Mary Brewster adorned the *Tiger* aft-cabin with sweet smelling herbs such as balsam and spearmint during her first voyage, and a subsequent journal entry noted her distress over the status of a prized rose bush wherein she wrote “my *flowers* broke loose during the night and my cherished rose bush came tumbling down breaking and injuring it that I shall see no more roses this season."[412] In an attempt to make her daughter's sleeping arrangements more comfortable, Almira Almy sewed a set of curtains for her bed and subsequently reported "she is much pleased says it seems like a home bed."[413] Elizabeth Stetson saw to her own comfort when she employed the ship's carpenter to shorten the captains' bed— with the captain's permission, of course— while she busied herself with mending the canvas carpet on the aft-cabin floor.[414]

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[410] Elizabeth Morey, June 1853, Log 207, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[411] Elizabeth Marble, November 25, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Other husbands took a more proactive role in helping their wives adapt their living spaces. John Marble created a hammock for his son George Frederick to sleep in after his berth became infested with bedbugs. John also outfitted his wife's sleeping berth with fresh canvas smeared with paste to prevent future infestations.[415] Frederick Cole went one step further and installed a gimballed bed in the bark *Viligant* aft-cabin for his wife Sarah, while Richard Gibbs helped his wife Almira paint their aft-cabin: "We cannot make it look very nice," she noted in her journal, "but still a little paint improves it very much."[416] Deck houses and gamming chairs also provide evidence of husbands taking steps to ensure their wives' comfort while at sea. After spending her first voyage aboard the *Tiger* living below deck in the aft-cabin, Mary was treated to a custom built deck house by her husband William for her second trip aboard the *Tiger*.[417] Elizabeth Stetson did not have a deck house while aboard the *E.Corning*, though her husband did instruct the cooper to make her “a chair to be hoisted up and down in” during gams.[418] Gamming was a longstanding tradition within the whalefishery, as the practice provided opportunities for captains to exchange fishing reports, news, and letters without stopping in port. For the sister sailors, gams also represented a chance to interact with the world beyond the aft-cabin. In Elizabeth’s case, the gamming chair allowed the crew to lower her down to a whaleboat without the need to climb down the ship’s rope ladder. These examples of adapting the masculine domain of the whaleship to meet the needs of captains’ wives and children demonstrate how the sister sailors— and their husbands— took active steps in assuring their comfort during their time at sea.

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[412] Mary Brewster, March 6, 1847 and October 31, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[413] Almira Almy, June 12, 1855, Log 110, Nicholson Collection, Providence Public Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

[414] Elizabeth Stetson, May 22, 1861, Log 503, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[415] Elizabeth Marble, November 19, 1857 and November 29, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[416] Almira Gibbs, October 1857, Log 10, Nantucket Atheneum, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

In addition to adapting the physical space of the whaleship, the sister sailors also took steps to adapt themselves to life at sea. After declining several invitations to gam with visiting captains, Mary Brewster eventually warmed up to this time honored tradition and hosted her first gam aboard the *Tiger* in January 1847.[419] The sister sailors also participated in other whaling traditions during their time at sea. In December 1863, Lydia Beebe noted with some pride that she “learned to work the ship’s longitude and am in hopes to be of some help in future in that respect.”[420] Some of the women also helped their husbands fulfill their duty as the ship's doctor by nursing sick and wounded men while at sea, even those suffering from questionable illness. Elizabeth Stetson wrote that she aided a Mr. Sylvia through an unidentified "bad complaint," one that she categorized as "outrageous," while Harriet Allen attempted to cure an unnamed officer aboard the bark *Merlin* of alcohol induced vomiting, to no avail.[421] Other examples of the sister sailors adapting to life at sea can be found in their interactions with residents of foreign ports of call. In bustling ports such as Fayal and the Society Islands, the sister sailors took advantage of their husbands' need to procure water, provisions, and men by conversing with locals, particularly the wives of missionaries and diplomats. Some women also used port stops as a means of engaging in trade. Such was the case for Elizabeth Marble, who together with her husband John sold hoop skirts brought from home and beaded necklaces Elizabeth made at sea to locals in various whaling ports. "We done much better with our trade than I thought we should," Elizabeth wrote in a letter to her mother in April 1861, "I could have solde three times as many if I had them."[422] John praised his wife's business acumen in his account of their onshore trade writing:

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[417] It would have been unusual for a whaling captain to construct a deckhouse without first securing permission from the vessel’s owners. In William Brewster’s case, he was a *Tiger* shareholder, and counted his fellow shareholders among his close business associates, so it is doubtful he would have faced much resistance for his decision to build a deckhouse on the *Tiger*.

[418] Elizabeth Stetson, September 7, 1861, Log 503, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[419] Mary eventually came to enjoy this peculiar whalefishery custom, partaking in gams whenever the weather allowed. Mary Brewster, January 6, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[420] Lydia Beebe, December 10, 1863, Log 294A, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

> you would laft to see Lizzie tending store she is what I call a shrude little body….hoop skirts that cost 62 cents she had the face to take two dollars for and brestpin that cost 25 cents she would have $1.50 for…[423]

By adapting to the customs and practices of the whalefishery, women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble made the best of their time at sea. By recording these experiences in their journals and letters, these women also provided historians with rich, detailed accounts of three sister sailors' lives at sea.

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[421] Elizabeth Stetson, January 24, 1862, Log 503, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[422] Elizabeth Marble to Mary Wrightington, April 14 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[423] John Marble to "Mother," April 13, 1861, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

"My home is here": Mary Brewster's Experiences at Sea, 1845-1851[424]

Of the hundreds of whaling captains' wives who accompanied their husbands at sea during the nineteenth century, none were as charismatic as Mary Brewster. Articulate, outspoken, and possessing a delightful sense of humor, Mary's enthusiasm for life was exceeded only by her profound love of her husband William. Unlike many of her fellow sister sailors, Mary used her journals to chronicle her daily activities as well as vehicles for expressing her innermost thoughts and opinions. As such, her journals are the most extensive and detailed of the three women featured in this study. These deeply personal reflections are vital to understanding Mary as a woman and as an agent of historical change, for her experiences aboard the whaleship *Tiger* between 1845 and 1851 transformed her from a Stonington, Connecticut captain's wife into a veteran sister sailor.

Although she never could have known her life would one day become the subject of historical inquiry, the unapologetic confidence embedded in Mary Brewster's journal suggests she would be proud to be counted among these remarkable women. Her first journal entry speaks to this sense of self:

> I have thought best to keep some account of the time as it passes and should I live to return my friends can see what I have been doing, where we have been and perhaps by reading this form some correct ideas as regards my feelings whilst absent.[425]

Having faced fierce resistance from family and friends for going to sea with her husband, Mary obviously felt a need to justify her decisions, and over the course of her five years aboard the *Tiger*, her journal served as sword and shield against that resistance. In addition to establishing the purpose of her journal, Mary's first several journal entries also provide a glimpse into her personality, particularly her sense of humor. In an entry dated December 11, 1848, she wrote, "I feel well most of the time occasionally vomit just so as to keep in remembrance that I am on the sea."[426] Of all the facets of Mary's personality, none are more important to understanding her as a person and as a historical figure than her relationship with her husband. William was Mary's lodestar, the bright shining light by which she charted her course through life. He is mentioned in nearly every single one of her journal entries, including this one written on December 26, 1848:

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[424] Mary Brewster, December 31, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[425] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

> I am with my Husband and by him will remain. No seas can now Divide us. He can have no troubles no sorrow but what I can know and share. When perplexed with the duties of the shop and those with whom he is connected I can soothe all ruffled feelings take up much of his attentions and mind. If sick no hand like mine can soothe the sad heart and administer to his wishes. I am confident. Let what come I shall never regret coming on voyage with my Dear Companion's society…[427]

This deep, abiding love for her husband, along with her self-congratulatory determination to justify her presence at sea, her piety, and her effervescent sense of humor, are the core features of Mary Brewster's journals.

As the *Tiger* made its way across the Atlantic Ocean during the winter of 1845-1846, Mary's first task was to settle into her accommodations. William found the ship to be “very crank”— a maritime term for a vessel that makes long, slow rolls when returning to its vertical position after a swell— and Mary’s struggles to acclimate herself were undoubtedly caused by this feature of the ship’s design. Once her initial seasickness subsided, Mary quickly went to work establishing routines for herself and her shipmates. The cabin boy was given the task of scrubbing the aft-cabin twice a week, while Mary and William instituted what would become a regular custom: “We have tea at 6 after which I pass an hour or so in walking decks then come below and read aloud to each other until 9 o clock, Husband reading one evening myself the next.”[428] The ocean proved to be a source of annoyance to Mary— particularly when it disrupted her attempts at establishing a sense of normalcy in the aft-cabin— yet the ocean also provided her sole opportunity for interaction with the outside world while at sea: gams. The Brewsters hosted their first gam on January 9, 1849 when they invited the captain of the ship *Sheffield* aboard the *Tiger* for a dinner of codfish, potatoes, boiled rice with sauce, and gingerbread. The latter was made by Mary, so when the steward presented it to the diners as though he had made it himself, she later recalled, “I should have split my sides laughing.”[429] After the Brewsters hosted another whaling captain several months later, a Captain Tower of Nantucket, Mary wrote that he was “much surprised to see a lady on board.”[430] Though their visit was brief, Mary must have made a favorable impression on Captain Tower, for the next time he went to sea, he did so with his wife Betsy-Ann.

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[426] One of the best examples of Mary's wry sense of humor appeared in her May 28, 1846 journal entry wherein she described her distaste for early morning wake-up calls. "It is useless for me to think of sleeping much in the morning. I was awaoke by the discharge of a gun and hearing the noise did not know how to account for it. Soon Mr. B came down and said they had killed a seal and wished me to see it before it was skinned. I dressed then went up to see the wonder looked at it then came down below when casting my eyes to the watch saw to my consternation that it was scarcely half past 5, altogether to early for me so went to bed and slept til 8." Mary Brewster, May 28, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[427] Mary Brewster, December 26, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

After several weeks spent battling the treacherous waters off Cape Horn, the *Tiger* finally reached the Pacific Ocean in March 1846. Mary noted “all was commotion on board today" as the crew prepared for their impending stop at the island of Hawaii, then part of the Sandwich Islands.[431] The *Tiger* reached port on April 20, 1846, and later that afternoon Mary set foot on dry land for the first time over five months. The *Tiger* spent seven days in port, and during that time Mary made calls to local missionaries and interacted with native Hawaiians whom she described as "indolent…filthy…and very disagreeable."[432] Fortunately for Mary, her stay in Hawaii was cut short by the need to catch the outgoing tide. It was at this point in the voyage that Mary and William had their first discussion about whether or not she should remain in port while William took the *Tiger* for a cruise. Mary made no mention of William's thoughts on the subject in her journal, though she articulated her rationale for remaining aboard in a pair of entries written in May 1846:

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[428] Mary Brewster, December 8, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[429] Mary Brewster, January 9, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[430] Mary Brewster, July 28, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

> former separations have taught me to value my husband's society and I find it far more desirable to be with him on the sea than separated by the same from each other. Yes I am going and in the end I hope maybe be a useful companion… I have chosen my own destiny so it does not become me to complain as it was faithfully portrayed beforehand.[433]

In the end, Mary got her wish: she remained aboard the *Tiger* while the vessel spent the next four months cruising the Northwestern hunting grounds. By the time she turned twenty-three on September 20, 1846, the *Tiger* was once again ashore at Hilo, Hawaii for a quick provisioning stop before William turned the vessel south toward the Baja Peninsula. It would be here that William, a career whalemen, took up the occupation of gold mining.

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[431] Mary Brewster, March 30, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[432] Mary Brewster, April 25, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[433] Mary Brewster, May 2, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

During the winter of 1846-1847, William Brewster and the crew of the whaleship *Tiger* spent more time on land than at sea. After receiving a tip from a fellow whaling captain about the existence of gold on Santa Margarita Island, William sent several men on shore to dig for the precious metal. For her part, Mary seemed to lack her husband's sudden interest in mining. In a journal entry dated December 21, 1846 she wrote,

> this evening Capt Smith turned to me husband and said, Brewster, you must get more of that stone it will enrich you so you will not have to whale it any more. Thank God, says he, there will be on rich Brewster….I certainly begin to think that gold never was found in such vast quantities and that some will be disappointed.[434]

As her husband attempted to fill his vessel's hold with gold, Mary found herself entertaining a series of international visitors, including a Spanish couple who traveled thirty miles to meet her. According to Mary, the wife "could not speak a word of English or I of Spanish so the interview something like a Quaker meeting."[435] After securing "two tones of stone" over the course of several weeks, the *Tiger* returned to whaling in Magdalena Bay to take advantage of the California gray whale's seasonal migration.[436] Though the fishing was excellent— the *Tiger* took over five hundred barrels of oil in less than a month— Mary was eager to leave the area when she was discovered three New England whaling captains were keeping native women aboard ship. "Oh shame, shame is not felt here," Mary wrote, "If actions which are so public is what we must judge from, and they speak louder than words. Such individuals I look upon in a different view and wish to have no connection with their actions I abhor."[437] Utilizing the services of native prostitutes was not an uncommon practice within the whalefishery, though given the Brewsters' piety, it is unsurprising the *Tiger* left Magdalena Bay for the Sandwich Islands just a few days later. This experience clearly left its mark on Mary, for she continued her tirade against whalemen fraternizing with indigenous women several weeks later:

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[434] Mary Brewster, December 21, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[435] Mary Brewster, December 22, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[436] It is unknown whether or not these "stones" were gold or simply mere ballast.

[437] Mary Brewster, January 30, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut. New England whalemen often took advantage of indigenous women both in port and aboard ship. As one especially blunt captain noted in his journal, whenever his men went ashore they went to brothels with

> Some indeed act here as though their *wives* and children were not in the least regarded by them, and when out of their sight was truly out of mind. Such are not worthy of the appellations of *husband* nor as friend, should they be countenanced by those who profess good *morals* and principles, neither should they associate with them.[438]

Perhaps it was Mary's distress that led William to suggest she remain on shore for the vessel's upcoming Northwestern cruise. She would be safe and happy there, living in the company of missionary friends she and William had made the year before, albeit separated from her beloved husband. Mary made no mention of how or when it was decided, but in the end she remained behind in the Hawaiian port of Lahaina on the island of Maui when the *Tiger* set sail on April 7, 1847.

While William cruised the Northwestern Pacific during the summer of 1847, Mary suffered terribly in his absence. "Oh what is there which will fill this aching void," she wrote the day after the *Tiger* went to sea, "nothing but the presence of the dear object of my heart and affections."[439] Sentimental language was commonplace during the mid-nineteenth century, though given Mary's love for her husband, it is fair to suggest that the five months she spent in Lahaina were some of the most challenging in her life. In a journal entry from May 2, 1847, Mary confessed "I have felt particularly lonesome and

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native prostitutes only to return to ship, "fucked to death." Margaret Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 149.

[438] Mary Brewster, February 19, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[439] Mary Brewster, April 7, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

rather unreconciled to this separation."[440] Those feelings of loneliness were still troubling Mary two months after William's departure, as she noted in her journal,

> two months today since my dear *Companion* sailed. In three more months I shall look for his return. I pray kind Providence prosper and shield him from all danger and *soon, soon* return him to me.[441]

Despite her unhappiness, Mary had much to be thankful for. Not only was William enjoying a successful cruise, but her summer in Lahaina was spent in comfort as a guest of Dr. Charles Winslow, a Nantucket born physician who provided medical care to the hundreds of American whalemen who frequented Maui during the 1840s.[442] In addition to a busy social calendar, Mary also participated in missionary trips and weekly church services during her stay in Lahaina. Among the many friends Mary made during her stay was the Reverend Samuel Damon, pastor of the Honolulu Bethel Union Church and publisher of *The Friend*, a biweekly missionary newspaper. Mary's friendship with Reverend Damon is of particular importance, as he was one of the first vocal supporters of whaling captains' wives joining their husbands at sea during the 1840s and 1850s. In an undated newspaper clipping pasted into Mary's journal, Damon proclaimed,

> Of late a very sensible custom has arisen among the master of the vessels visiting the Pacific, that of being accompanied by their wives…the system works so well that we predict it will become more and more fashionable. You reader may not think so, well, wait and see![443]

Damon proved to be correct, for ten years later in the November 8, 1858 issue of *The Friend* he proudly noted, "A few years ago it was exceedingly rare for a Whaling Captain to be accompanied by his wife and children, but it is now very common."[444] It is unknown whether or not Mary's friendship with Damon influenced his opinion as to the legitimacy of petticoat whalers, though given the timing of Mary's summer on Maui, it is certainly a possibility.

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[440] Mary Brewster, May 2, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[441] Mary Brewster, June 7, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[442] Joan Druett, *"She Was a Sister Sailor": The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster 1845-1848* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc, 1992), 207.

[443] There is also a note written in Mary's handwriting that reads, "good Mr. Damon." Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

After being separated for five months, Mary and William Brewster were reunited on September 24, 1847. Much to Mary's delight, William had filled his hold during the summer cruise, which meant the *Tiger* was officially bound for home. On October 4, 1847 Mary noted "old habits are resumed, such as reading in the evening and what we have usually accustomed ourselves to during the voyage." [445] Soon the *Tiger* rounded Cape Horn and headed into the Southern Atlantic with Stonington listed as its next port of call. Mary and William reconnected with Captain Tower of New Bedford during this homeward passage, and Mary was delighted to learn the Captain had returned to sea with his wife Betsy Ann. "Went on board and passed the evening til nearly 12 o clock. I was happy to meet with a female acquaintance and was pleased with Mrs. Tower," she wrote, "Mrs. T said another of ladies were out this season with their husbands— I am glad they are following the late fashion."[446] Mary's entries begin to lose their characteristic depth and personality during this period. Perhaps she had grown tired of her life at sea and therefore became disengaged with writing in her journal. For months she wrote of little else but the vessel's position, wind and weather conditions, until Wednesday March 8,

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[444] "Forty-two Wives of Whaling Captains in the Pacific," in *The Friend* 8, No. 11, November 3, 1858 reprinted in Samuel C. Damon, *A Monthly Journal Devoted to Temperance, Seamen, Marine and General Intelligence Vol XV* (Honolulu, HI: Henry M. Whitney), 1858.

[445] Mary Brewster, October 4, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[446] Mary Brewster, December 18, 1847, Log 38, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

1848, when the *Tiger* finally dropped anchor in Stonington harbor. Mary and William were home at last.

While many captains' wives who joined their husbands at sea decided one voyage aboard a whaleship was enough, just three months after returning to Stonington, Mary Brewster set sail aboard the *Tiger* once more. Though her motives for accompanying William remained unchanged, the journal she kept during her second voyage aboard the *Tiger* differed dramatically from the one she had started just a few years earlier. The 1848 voyage journal is decidedly shorter than the one Mary kept during the 1845 voyage. Whereas she once felt the need to keep a daily chronicle of her experiences to justify her decision to accompany William at sea, this time she stated she had no intention of keeping a daily account of her time as she found the prospect of doing so "tedious and uninteresting."[447] Perhaps her first journal had served its purpose, proving to recalcitrant family and friends that she had indeed been "right in coming."[448] Or, perhaps her experiences at sea had transformed an excited, naïve captain's wife into a cool, seasoned sister sailor. Mary left no clear evidence either way, though a close examination of her 1848 *Tiger* journal suggests the truth was a little of both.

One of the most notable differences in Mary's daily life during the 1848 voyage was her use of the *Tiger* deck house. Also known as aft-houses, deck houses were small cabins built on the decks of whaleships. Originally, these houses were used by officers as a privy or as a shield during rough weather. Beginning in the 1840s, deck houses became sanctuaries for whaling captains' wives, as they allowed women an opportunity to go above deck while still maintaining privacy away from the crew. Mary's first mention of the *Tiger* deck house appeared in a journal entry dated October 1, 1847, so it can be assumed William installed the house while his wife was living in Lahaina during the summer of 1847.[449] However, the deck house did not become a subject of importance in Mary's journal until the 1848 voyage. In her opening entry dated July 13, 1848, Mary wrote there was "a new house on deck convenient and roomy where I am separated from all and can be alone which much pleasanter than formally. I have been below to eat thus far but we are prepared to live by ourselves when we wish."[450] This emphasis on privacy is repeated throughout the 1848 voyage, and based on Mary's commentaries, it appears she and William made good on their word, living separately from the crew in the deck house for the duration of the voyage. During a particularly violent summer gale, the Brewsters were asleep in the deck house when suddenly,

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[447] Mary Brewster, July 13, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[448] Mary Brewster, December 4, 1845, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

> the sea struck the house, stove in two boards on the side and filled it half full of water... From the noise on deck I thought everything had been washed overboard—made my way to the door and looked out…everything was confusion on deck when husband made his appearance and said, go right below, leave the house for that may go next…I went below—the sea had gone down and the cabin was half full of water then…I got into the berth and by holding on made out to keep there.[451]

Subsequent journal entries indicate Mary was initially distraught over the "sad array" of possessions left saturated with salt water from the gale. "I could have cried," she wrote as she surveyed the damage to the deck house, although she eventually determined she and William were fortunate to have been "kept from the danger the sea could have done to us."[452]

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[449] May Brewster, October 1, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[450] Mary Brewster, July 13, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[451] Mary Brewster, August 13, 1849, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[452] Mary Brewster, August 16, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

The other noticeable change in Mary as evidenced through her 1848 voyage journal was her growing distaste for whaling. On New Year's Eve 1848, Mary articulated this shift in opinion writing "how I long to see my husband free from this vexing business."[453] The following August she noted "I am very much disappointed at having to stay out another season," and on September 1, 1849, she stated "I'll never go to sea again in a dull ship, never can get anywhere, at any rate I will try and keep husband at home. Then there will be no fretting about passages being made."[454] During her first voyage aboard the *Tiger*, any mention of the challenges Mary faced while living at sea was quickly followed up by a renewal of her commitment to spend her days at William's side. Now Mary was writing of her plans to lobby her husband to remain at home for good. This change in tone and temperament can be attributed to the difficulties William faced managing his crew during the 1848 voyage. In a December 1849 journal entry, Mary wrote she was glad to leave the port of Honolulu:

> Mr. B took no peace while there. The crew acted like evil spirits and lastly refused duty—accordingly they were discharged and new ones shipped. California is the cry and all are anxious to get there and there is no peace of mind for a Master where he has 30 unruly men to look after and another Arctic season in view which is our situation.[455]

Gold fever was alive and well in the United States in 1849, and the potential of striking it rich in the California gold fields proved to be a serious temptation for several members of William's crew. We know little about Mary's experiences aboard the *Tiger* after these desertions, for her December 19, 1849 entry proved to be her last, even though she and

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[453] Mary Brewster, December 31, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[454] Mary Brewster, September 2, 1849, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[455] Mary Brewster, December 19, 1849, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

William did not return home to Stonington until May 1851.[456] Despite this anticlimactic ending to her second journal, the experiences chronicled by Mary Brewster during her time aboard the *Tiger* nevertheless demonstrate her transformation from captain's wife to sister sailor during her five years at sea.

"Nothing of any note": Susan Veeder's Experiences at Sea, 1848-1853[457]

In the opening entry of the journal she kept at sea**,** Susan Veeder wrote that **"**nothing of any note" occurred aboard the *Nauticon* after the vessel set sail from Nantucket on September 12, 1848.[458] This seemingly innocuous phrase would become a constant refrain throughout Susan's journal, for unlike Mary Brewster, Susan only chose to write about events and activities directly associated with the *Nauticon* and the whaling process during her time at sea. As a result, her journal reads more like a logbook than an account of personal experiences. There are several potential explanations for this. Even though Susan was one of the first Nantucket women to go to sea, perhaps she did not face resistance from family and friends for her decision, and therefore did not feel the need to keep a detailed account of her time aboard the *Nauticon*. Or, given the fact she was pregnant with her fourth child and caring for two young boys while aboard *Nauticon,* perhaps Susan was simply too busy to be bothered with extensive journal keeping. While the real explanation for the limited scope of Susan Veeder's writings remains unknown, it is important to note that her journal is not entirely without character. In addition to her dutiful record of port stops, gams, and weather conditions, Susan's journal also includes a series of watercolor paintings. This highly detailed artwork depicts scenes of various whaling ports visited by the *Nauticon* during Susan's time at sea. When juxtaposed with her scant journal entries, these paintings suggest Susan may have preferred to express herself through art as opposed to words. They also underscore the importance of analyzing her journal as a piece of material culture as well as a historical document, for Susan made the deliberate choice to chronicle her experiences at sea aboard the *Nauticon* through both written and artistic means.

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[456] Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery* (1877; reprint Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 459.

[457] Susan Veeder, September 13, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[458] Susan Veeder, September 13, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

The first several months of Susan's voyage aboard the *Nauticon* was characteristic of the sister sailors' collective experiences at sea on several accounts. She and her sons suffered from seasickness during their first weeks at sea, though by the time the *Nauticon* reached the calm, tropical waters surrounding the Cape Verde Islands in mid-October 1848, she and the boys felt well enough to enjoy a bounty of fresh figs and oranges collected by the crew.[459] Charles then steered the vessel south toward Cape Horn, and Susan noted the ship "crossed the line" of the Equator on November 1, 1848.[460] A month later, the *Nauticon* passed by Isla de los Estados off the coast of Argentina, and Susan prepared herself for their passage around the Horn. The conditions must have been treacherous, for in mid-December Susan noted she was "a bed about half of the day the Captain is all attention and very happy to think I am hear and encourages me by saying that he thinks I get along first rate."[461] This entry provides important clues as to the nature of the relationship between Susan and Charles Veeder. Unlike Mary Brewster who used phrases such as "my dear husband" and "my better half" when describing her husband, Susan refers to Charles throughout her journal as "the Captain." This formality is noteworthy, particularly when combined with the fact that Charles' attempt to comfort her during their Cape Horn passage proved to be one of the only documented examples of empathy within the Veeder marriage for the duration of the *Nauticon* voyage. Despite Charles's words of encouragement, Susan faced several more weeks of gales and heavy rain as the *Nauticon* made its way north along the South American coast toward Talcahuano, Chile. Home to a strong missionary presence and a United States Consul, Talcahuano was a popular port stop for New England whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century. The American presence in Talcahuano was of particular importance to the Veeders, for it was there that Susan would give birth to their fourth child.

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[459] Susan Veeder, October 11, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[460] Susan Veeder, November 1, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[461] Susan Veeder, December 13, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

The *Nauticon* reached Talcahuano on January 4, 1849, and shortly thereafter, the Veeders began the task of settling Susan in to what would be her home for the next several months. Charles did well by his wife in this regard, securing her accommodations in the home of the U.S. Consul William Crosby. Susan described her room as "very quiet and well furnished," and the warm welcome she received from Mrs. Crosby made her feel "very pleasant to be in their family."[462] Shortly after their arrival, the Veeders visited with fellow Nantucket resident Captain Samuel Wyer who was "very glad to see [them] for he had not heard anything of home in some time."[463] Charles ordered the *Nauticon* to go on a cruise while he stayed with Susan for the impending birth. They did not have too long a wait, for their daughter Mary Frances was born shortly thereafter on January 29, 1849.[464] The family remained together in the Crosby home for just over two weeks before Charles took the boys for a cruise aboard the *Nauticon*, leaving Susan to recover with their newborn daughter in Talcahuano.[465] Although this was common practice within the whalefishery, Susan's response to Charles's departure was less than understanding as she wrote, "I feel I am quite feeble to be left among strangers."[466] Fortunately, Susan and Mary Frances remained in good health, and soon enough Susan began making the rounds among Talcahuano society. Some of the first visitors Susan received after the birth of her child were Captain Asa Hoxie and his wife. The Hoxies left Nantucket aboard the whaleship *Pacific* just a few weeks after the *Nauticon* set sail, and after speaking with them, Susan wrote "it was pleasant to see an American lady."[467] Susan's social calendar remained busy throughout the months of February and March, as she noted "the ships are coming and going every day I have a number to call on every day all of the Captains especially."[468] Susan's stay in Talcahuano came to an end shortly thereafter, as the *Nauticon* returned to port just two weeks later. After packing her things and readying the baby, Susan rejoined her husband and sons aboard ship in the company of an unnamed fifteen year old Spanish girl who Susan employed as a nursemaid, and the Veeders set sail from Chile on March 25, 1849 bound for the Pacific hunting grounds.[469]

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[462] Susan Veeder, January 6, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[463] Susan Veeder, January 7, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts. Although is unclear what the exact nature of the Veeders' relationship with Captain Wyer was in 1849, given Samuel and Charles were both members of Nantucket's whaling community, they certainly were acquainted. Coincidently, both the *Nauticon* and the *Young Hero* were managed by the same agent, G & M Starbuck and Co. Druett, 199; Starbuck, 456 and 473.

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[464] Susan Veeder, January 29, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[465] Susan Veeder, February 17, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[466] Susan Veeder, February 18, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[467] Susan Veeder, February 22, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[468] Susan Veeder, February 28, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[469] Susan Veeder, March 25, 1849, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

Over the next six months, as the *Nauticon* crew busied themselves with the hunting and processing of whales, Susan began taking an interest in the many coral atolls and tropical islands that dotted the Pacific Ocean. In July it was Malpelo Island, Chatham Island, and the Galapagos; in November it was Washington Island and Peacock Island; by mid-December, the *Nauticon* was cruising the waters off Rarotonga in the Cook Islands. Many of these islands became the subjects of Susan's watercolors.[470] In addition to painting the lush, tropical vegetation and crystal blue water surrounding these islands, Susan often included other whaleships in her paintings. She was also careful to note the distances from which she painted the islands in her artwork; in some cases the *Nauticon* was less than a mile away from Susan's subject matter. Although her journal entries from this period also include reports of whaling activity and Mary Frances's growth spurts, it appears that during the summer and fall of 1849, Susan's art, rather than her journal writing, provided her with an outlet for creative self-expression as well as a sense of normalcy. Unfortunately, this would prove to be fleeting, as fate had other plans for the Veeder family.

After a successful season cruising the Pacific whaling grounds, the *Nauticon* made port at the island of Tahiti on February 22, 1850. [471] While Charles busied himself with provisions and recruiting, Susan took advantage of her time onshore, enjoying long walks through town, exploratory outings, and social calls.[472] Susan's respite from the challenges of life at sea did not last long. Just a few hours before the *Nauticon* was due to leave port, Mary Frances fell ill. According to Susan's journal, she and Charles assumed the child was teething, and sent for the local doctor in the hope he would lance the child's gums before sending them on their way. Instead, he diagnosed a cold and gave the child "a powder to take then and left one for [Susan] to give her at bed time." Susan followed the doctor's orders later that evening, giving Mary Frances the second dose just before her evening bath. Shortly thereafter the child began to convulse, so the Veeders

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[470] See Appendix D for an example of Susan Veeder's watercolor paintings.

[471] Susan Veeder, February 22, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

[472] Susan Veeder, March 5, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

> sent immediately for a physician and everything was done that could be done but all in vain she was poisoned no doubt by taking the second powder what can be done what can be done was all that we could say the thoat of losing our babe was more than we could bear to think of she was a fine child too good to live and at the 6th 11 o clock Am she breathed her last.[473]

Mary Frances's death was confirmed by a first mate James Roberts in the *Nauticon* logbook: "Died at 7 before 11 Mary Frances only daughter of Charles A & Susan Veeder aged 14 months."[474] Although the Veeders were undoubtedly devastated by the loss of their child, Susan's journal offers little insight as to her state of mind during this tragic time, as she chose to write about more practical—albeit painful—matters:

> What shall be done with our darling was the next question with us both. Could we think of burying her at Tahita no we could not we must take her with us away. So we have had a lead coffin made and the corpse embalmed to take home with us.[475]

Two days later, the *Nauticon* set sail from Tahiti with Mary Frances's coffin aboard ship.[476] Though she would spend the next three years living alongside her daughter's remains, Susan never mentioned her or the tragic events of March 1850 again.

It is striking how quickly Susan's journal entries returned to normal following the death of her child. Five days after Mary Frances died, Susan wrote "all well and nothing of any note."[477] Given the child mortality rate during the mid-nineteenth century, it is possible Susan was able to emotionally detach herself from her daughter's death, having suffered similar losses in the past. Perhaps she determined the best way to manage her grief was to reestablish normality not just for her sake, but for her husband and children. In any case, the cursory nature and limited scope that characterized Susan Veeder's journals prior to her daughter's death became ever more pronounced after Mary Frances's passing, leaving the reader with little more than a series of entries defined by the ever present phrase "nothing of any note." Over time, even the watercolors disappear from Susan's journal, and when she made her final entry on December 20, 1852, all she decided to record was the *Nauticon*'s latitude and longitude. In total, Susan Veeder spent just under four and half years at sea aboard the *Nauticon*, and although her journal lacks the emotional depth and resonance of her predecessor Mary Brewster, it nevertheless proves her experiences at sea transformed her from a captain's wife to a sister sailor.

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[473] Susan Veeder, March 6, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[474] Susan Veeder, March 6, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts; Log of the *Nauticon*, 1845-1848, Log 500, Nicholson Collection, Providence Public Library.
[475] Susan Veeder, March 6, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[476] Mary Frances Veeder is buried in Newton Cemetery on Nantucket with her mother and siblings.

"Rite me all the perticulars": Elizabeth Marble's Experiences at Sea, 1857-1862[478]

Elizabeth Marble spent a total of four years at sea aboard the barks *Kathleen* and *Awashonks*, and her personal writings from these voyages provide a rich, detailed account of her experiences at sea. Elizabeth's letters also make her unique among the three women featured in this study, as she was the only one to supplement her journal with letters to her family. Both Elizabeth's letters and her journals share the same audience, as she addressed all of her writings to her mother, Mary Wrightington. Her writings also share common evidence of Elizabeth's personality quirks. For example, her letters contain many charming examples of consistently misspelled words. When examined concurrently, Elizabeth Marble's personal writings provide a comprehensive account of her experiences at sea with her husband and son.

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[477] Susan Veeder, March 11, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[478] Elizabeth Marble to Mary Wrightington, April 4, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Elizabeth's voyage aboard the bark *Kathleen* began on August 25, 1857, when the Marble family set sail from New Bedford under a light wind and sunny skies.[479] This fair weather did not last long however, for Elizabeth's journal indicates the *Kathleen* faced several gales after leaving port. The worst came on September 14, 1857, when Elizabeth wrote

> we had another gale the last 24 hours with the vesel a rolling so that we had to hold on for our lives with both hands and then sometimes we would be thrown headformast acrost the cabin…it blew so hard we could not lay in our berth.[480]

Rough seas were not the only challenge Elizabeth faced aboard the *Kathleen* that fall. After just one month aboard the *Kathleen*, Elizabeth noted she had lost "ten pounds of flesh" since leaving New Bedford, and while her struggles with seasickness undoubtedly contributed to this sudden weight loss, Elizabeth laid the majority of the blame on the vessel's cook and steward.[481] In a journal entry dated September 4, 1857, Elizabeth described the steward as "two durty to live. John says he shall get another when he gets to the Islands and I hope he will or I shall starve."[482] A few weeks later, Elizabeth complained, “oh I am sick with want of something decent to eat,” though she warned her mother not to tell anyone as much “for I dont want it known that this is what I came a whaling for I could live beter out of your swill pale at home.”[483] Fortunately for Elizabeth, her relationships with other members of her husband’s crew were far less troublesome. Her brother-in-law (known as George D. in her writings so as not to be confused with her son George Frederick) served as John’s first mate aboard the *Kathleen*, while Elizabeth described the remaining officers as “a fine set.”[484] Elizabeth also had her ten year old son to keep her busy while settling into life aboard the *Kathleen*, as she noted George Frederick enjoyed “every quantity of freedom given him on shore.”[485]

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[479] Elizabeth Marble, August 25, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[480] Elizabeth Marble, September 14, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[481] Elizabeth Marble, September 27, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[482] Luckily for Elizabeth her personal stores of preserved meats, cheese and fruits kept her going until John replaced the steward a few weeks later. Elizabeth Marble, September 4, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

After a short trip across the Atlantic, the *Kathleen* made its first port stop at the island of Fayal in the Azores. Elizabeth’s seasickness was temporarily cured by this brief respite from the sea, but by the time the *Kathleen* reached the Cape de Verde islands a few days later, Elizabeth noted that “John wants me to stop on shore when we get to New Holland while he nocks a cruise and see if am not better but I cant tel what I shall do yet it is so far a head.”[486] John’s concern for his wife’s well-being prompted him to cook for her so she might have something decent to eat, taking time away from his duties as captain to bake Elizabeth some fresh bread.[487] This act of kindness was just the first of many Elizabeth recorded in her journal. Whether it meant staying up all night with Elizabeth when storms kept her awake, dressing her sunburns with milk soaked cloth after a trip ashore, or helping her wash the family's clothes, John's willingness to help his wife cope with the challenges of life at sea indicate the Marbles shared a deep, mutual affection for one another.[488] It also speaks highly of John's character, for his wife's struggles aboard the *Kathleen* came at particularly challenging time for him as a captain. As Elizabeth herself wrote in on Christmas Day 1857, "four months since we sailed and still no oil yet."[489] Whaling captains were under constant pressure from investors to fill their holds as quickly as possible, and given the *Kathleen* voyage was John's first commission aboard a New Bedford whaleship, the lack of oil in the ship's hold was undoubtedly a source of tension. Rather than take out his frustrations on his wife and son, John celebrated the Christmas holiday with Elizabeth, George Frederick, and George D. in the aft-cabin. After enjoying a maritime feast of fresh beef, mincemeat, and pumpkin pies prepared by Elizabeth, the Marbles watched little George open his Christmas presents before listening to a concert performed by the ship's crew.[490]

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[483] Elizabeth Marble to Mary Wrightington, October 23, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[484] Elizabeth Marble, August 30, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[485] George’s mischief is a common theme throughout the *Kathleen* journal and letters. For example, in late September the boy was caught sneaking pockets full of sugar from the ship’s pantry. However, little George wasn’t entirely without virtue. As Elizabeth noted with motherly pride, “G.F has got some new business to day he is going to learn Peoder George's bot stearer to read.” Elizabeth Marble, September 4, 1857 and October 12, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[486] Elizabeth Marble, September 28, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[487] Elizabeth Marble, October 17, 1857 and October 29, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

One of the most appealing aspects of Elizabeth Marble's personal writings is her pleasant, conversational tone, and while her journal and her letters both share this trait, her descriptions of her experiences in foreign ports are the most engaging of all her writings. According to historian Joan Druett, Elizabeth was one of the first New England whaling captains' wives to visit the port of Vasse in southwestern Australia when the *Kathleen* docked there in late January 1858.[491] Initially, Elizabeth was not impressed with the port, describing Vasse as nothing more than "sand with a few huts called hoses."[492] However, after making the rounds with the local residents, Elizabeth noted, "I have almost as much attension as the Presidant could have from the ladies and gentlemen."[493] Elizabeth's excursions on the Indonesian island of Lombok in June 1858 were also included in her *Kathleen* journal. When she and George F. first arrived in the port of Bally town, Elizabeth wrote the native people "ware very kind but we ware such a sight and followed us in droves evry step we went." Whereas Mary Brewster shunned the native peoples of the Pacific Islands, Elizabeth seemed to enjoy her encounters with the people she called "Maylays." Her journal and letters describe bamboo houses, men in loincloths, and the Lombok islanders' Muslim faith. When a group of local men offered to give Elizabeth and George Frederick a tour of the island, she heartily accepted. It was during this tour that Elizabeth experienced a remarkable cross-cultural interaction wherein a native man "put his hand on [her] waste and said, to small very small, Maylay more big, Maylay very big." After asking if they could keep George Frederick in exchange for one of their boys, Elizabeth's indigenous hosts gave her a bouquet of flowers and returned the Marbles to the ship amused and unharmed.

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[488] Elizabeth Marble, December 12 1857 and January 2, 1858, KWM Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[489] Elizabeth Marble, December 25, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[490] Christmas presents were hard to come by aboard a whaleship, yet Freddie nevertheless found a can of pineapples, a bottle of cider, some rations in white sugar, popcorn, and $1.25 in his stocking on Christmas Eve, with Elizabeth, John, Uncle George, and Mr. Butts, the Kathleen's first mate, playing the role of Santa Claus. Elizabeth Marble, December 26, 1857, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

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[491] Druett, 95.

[492] Elizabeth Marble, February 2, 1858, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[493] Elizabeth Marble, February 10, 1858, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Although Elizabeth would remain aboard the *Kathleen* for another year and a half, her Lombok island entry proved to be the last in her journal. One can assume that the pleasant nature of the first half of the voyage continued for the remainder of Elizabeth's time at sea, for when the *Kathleen* finally returned to New Bedford in January 1860, the vessel contained just under one thousand barrels of sperm oil and over four hundred barrels of whale oil.[494] Using historian Alexander Starbuck's pricing index as a guide, the *Kathleen* catch earned John's investors a gross revenue of over fifty-five thousand dollars in 1860 currency.[495] John put his earnings from the *Kathleen* voyage to good use. After fifteen years spent living with Elizabeth's parents, John finally secured a home for his family. Located on Second Street in Fall River's Corky Row district, the house appears to have been rented, as John's listing in the 1860 Federal Census does not include any mention of real estate ownership.[496] However, with a personal property valuation of one thousand dollars and the presence of a twenty-five year old, African-American domestic servant named Sarah Stevens in the household, it seems the Marble family was living comfortably in the summer of 1857.[497] In addition to providing a home for his family, John also used his earnings from the *Kathleen* voyage to purchase an ownership share in his next commission, the J. and W. R. Wing and Company bark *Awashonks*. As in the case of the Brewsters, the combination of John's proven experience and his ownership share undoubtedly played a role in securing a place for Elizabeth and George Frederick aboard the *Awashonks*. After spending nine months in their new home, the Marbles set sail from New Bedford on September 6, 1860 with every intention of recreating the personal and financial successes they enjoyed aboard the *Kathleen*.

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[494] Starbuck, 594.

[495] A barrel of oil contained 35 gallons, and according to Starbuck, the average price per gallon of sperm oil in 1860 was $1.41. The average price for a gallon of the lesser quality whale oil that same year was $0.49 per gallon, thus providing John Marble and his fellow investors a handsome profit. Starbuck, 660.

[496] In an odd twist, the Marbles did not live in Fall River, Massachusetts that summer, but rather in Fall River, Rhode Island. Due to an act of the Rhode Island General Assembly in 1856, the southerly portion of present day Fall River, Massachusetts became part of Rhode Island, forming a new town of Fall River that bordered its namesake town in Massachusetts. After years of confusion, the area of Fall River, Rhode Island rejoined Fall River, Massachusetts in April 1862, thus ending this bizarre chapter of Fall River's history. Arthur Sherman Phillips, *The Phillips History of Fall River* (New York, NY: Dover Press, 1944), 17-19.

[497] Fall River, Newport, Rhode Island, 1860 Census, 35, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com

As it turned out, fate had other plans for the Marbles, as the *Awashonks* voyage was plagued with hardship from the very beginning. After battling a head wind and "every prospect of a storm" as they sailed from New Bedford harbor, John and his crew faced what would be the first of many failed attempts to secure a whale. According to Elizabeth's journal, on the morning of September 22, 1860 the crew of the *Awashonks*,

> raised sperm whales lowered and the mate struck one the first iron missed but the second held for a while the other boats could not get near him he run some 6 miles to windward and then the iron drawered and perhaps it is best that it did for the other boats had lost sight of them and if they had held on they might have all ben lost…we lost some sixty bbls of oil by the operation.[498]

Adverse conditions continued during the vessel's first port stop on the Azorean island of Terceria later that month. Rather that filling the hold with fresh fruit, water and other necessary provisions, Elizabeth noted the crew "could not get much for they [the residents] ware almost in a state of starvation and what they did have they asked very high."[499] This lack of provisions led to further problems later in the voyage, forcing the cook to slaughter one of the vessel's pigs earlier than anticipated in order to keep the ship's pantry stocked.[500] On January 13, 1861, one of the boatsteerers was struck by a sperm whale during a failed hunt, leaving him with a shattered collarbone. John made a valiant effort to set the young man's bone, for it would be a month until the *Awashonks* reached the port of New Holland on the western coast of Australia.[501] After several more months of poor fishing, the *Awashonks* nearly lost another crew member when an unnamed Portuguese seamen fell overboard in the middle of the night. Elizabeth described the frightening event in a journal entry dated July 14, 1861:

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[498] Elizabeth Marble, September 22, 1860, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[499] Elizabeth Marble, September 23, 1860, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[500] Elizabeth Marble, October 24, 1860, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

> Last night about eleven o clock we all receved a shock by hearing the watch on deck ring out a man over bord I was a wake and I jumped up in a hurry (John was up for he does not go to bed when we are near land but lays on the berth with his clothes on for he is on deck ever little while he was on deck in a moment he got the life buoy here and threw it over board and sung out to him to not be frightened for we would be to him in a minute but it was so dark he did not see the buoy and we lost it.[502]

As if the potential loss of a crewman were not stressful enough, just a few days later Elizabeth wrote of John awaking in the middle of the night with fears that the ship was dragging. He proved to be correct, "for she had draged and was clost to the rocks they let go the other anchor sent down some of the yards but stil she draged a nearer to the rocks he has hove over the ledge now but if the wind continues we must go on shore."[503] Fearful the ship would run aground, John ordered the distress flag raised on the *Awashonks* ensign, but no help arrived. In the end, it was a change in tide that saved the vessel, allowing John to steer the *Awashonks* away from danger. Still, none of these close calls would compare with what awaited the Marble family in the fall of 1861.

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[501] Elizabeth Marble, February 3, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[502] Though they managed to rescue the man, another crew member went overboard only a few weeks later. Elizabeth Marble, July 4 1861 and August 15, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[503] Elizabeth Marble, July 24, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

It began on October 13, 1861 when Elizabeth wrote "John has been sick with disentary since last wednesday…to day he cannot sit up."[504] Despite having been at sea with her husband for more than three years, this entry marked the first time Elizabeth ever mentioned John suffering from poor health. Two days later she added "nothing I can do seams to give him any relief."[505] By the end of the week, the officers had turned the *Awashonks* due east towards Australia as John was "sinking fast."[506] According to the logbook kept by third mate George L. Bowman, on the morning of October 22, 1861, he and the other officers were summoned to the aft-cabin. Their captain was dying. As Bowman later recounted:

> He told me that I was almost gone that he could not live until morning. He told that he was resisgned…but his wife and child it was hard to leave them almost as it was among strangers he had a few more words with me in which he asked me to be kind to his wife and then he requested the officers all be called down…he first gave directions concerning his corpse his wish to have his remains preserved in liquor and that it should be carried home in the vessel and that Mr Cleavland should go in to port and then proceed home with the vessel that he should also write to the agent of the Bark and also that he should take good care of his wife and child which Mr Cleaveland promised to protect with his own life he closed by saying that he was in so much pain that he could say but little…I believe that all which stood around his death bed shead tears of sorrow for him.[507]

Despite her grief, Elizabeth also managed to record John's death in her journal writing, "Oh how can I write to night for John is gore and I am alone yes he is gorn. The best of husbands and my all is gorn."[508] Over the next several days, as the crew hurried to prepare John's coffin, Elizabeth continued to add heart wrenching entries to her journal, even as she tried to regain a sense normalcy in the aft-cabin. "I have been trying to wash up some of the clothes," she wrote, "this is the first time on this voiage I have washed and not had John to help me but I have got to do evry thing myself now for he has helped me for the last time."[509] Luckily for Elizabeth, she did not have to do everything herself, for George Bowman and the other officers kept their word to the late captain: Mr. Cleveland visited Elizabeth in the aft-cabin every night following John's death, and one of the other crewmen told her that "John seamed more like a father to him than any thing and he realizes his loss more than he did his own father for he was not at home much at the time of his death."[510] While the crew attempted to comfort Elizabeth, she attempted to comfort her son. It took a week for her and George to return to the aft-cabin after John died, "for George did not want to go in there to sleep again but I knew we must and the longer we kept away the harder it would be but he has such a dread of the room."[511] Caring for her son would become Elizabeth's sole focus for the remainder of the voyage. After making two brief provisioning stops in Vasse and Freemantle Australia, Mr. Cleveland turned west and sailed for home. On March 22, 1862, Elizabeth solemnly noted in her journal, "it is five months to day since John died oh what months they have ben to me."[512] It would take another two weeks for the *Awashonks* to reach New Bedford, finally bringing the tragic voyage— and Elizabeth's journal— to an end.[513]

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[504] Elizabeth Marble, October 13, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[505] Elizabeth Marble, October 15, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[506] Elizabeth Marble, October 20, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[507] October 22, 1861, George Bowman, Log 53, Nicholson Collection, Providence Public Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

[508] Elizabeth Marble, October 23, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

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[509] Elizabeth Marble, October 26, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[510] Elizabeth Marble, October 28, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[511] Elizabeth Marble, October 29, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[512] Elizabeth Marble, March 22, 1862, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

The letters and journals written by Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble aboard New England whaleships provide invaluable insight into their experiences at sea. As historical documents, literary works, and examples of material culture, these writings demonstrate that these three women possessed very different personalities, came from very different socioeconomic backgrounds, and were in very different places in their lives when they joined their husbands at sea. Mary's journals served as repositories of her inner most thoughts, fears, and triumphs, as well as detail her wit, intellect, and captivating sense of humor. In contrast, Susan Veeder's journal is formal and repetitive, yet surprisingly home to dozens of stunning, deeply detailed watercolor paintings, proving there was more to Susan than her dry prose would suggest. Unlike her fellow sister sailors, Elizabeth Marble chose to document her experiences at sea in both journal and letter form, and although these writings are littered with misspelled words and inconsistent grammar, they nevertheless present a charming portrait of a loving family's adventures together at sea. Despite their differences, the personal writings of Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble share one important commonality: they are representative of three women's experiences living aboard New England whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century. By exchanging the time honored role of captain's wives for that of a sister sailor, Mary, Susan, and Elizabeth defied their communities' longstanding conceptions of gender, and as the final chapter of this study will show, their experiences at sea not only had a lasting impact on themselves and their families, but on their communities and the New England whalefishery as well.

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[513] Starbuck, 575.

CHAPTER 5

“FOR THE VOYAGE IS DONE AND THE WINDS DON’T BLOW, AND IT’S TIME FOR US TO LEAVE HER”: CHANGING TIDES IN NEW ENGLAND WHALING COMMUNITIES[514]

As this study has shown, Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble defied longstanding social and industrial norms that defined gender in separate yet mutually supportive configurations within New England whaling communities by accompanying their husbands at sea aboard whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century. In doing so, they joined the ranks of the sister sailors, a small yet historically significant group of women whose experiences at sea left an indelible mark on their lives, their communities, and the New England whalefishery. For most women, their first voyage aboard a New England whaleship also proved to be their last. Such was the case for Susan Veeder, Eliza Brock, and Elizabeth Waldron. Others, like Mary Brewster, Elizabeth Marble, and Almira Gibbs, accompanied their husbands two or more times, while some women, including Nancy Grant and Sarah Gray, spent more than twenty years living aboard New England whaleships.[515] Regardless of the duration of their time at sea, the sister sailors’ letters and journals provide ample evidence as to their encounters with foreign locales, cultures, and traditions. These writings also chronicle the emotional and physical challenges the sister sailors faced during their time at sea, challenges that ranged from the discomforts of seasickness and loneliness to the harrowing experiences of childbirth, disease, and death. These experiences impacted the women in deeply and profoundly personal ways while also providing opportunities for the sister sailors to influence their communities and the whalefishery. As this chapter will demonstrate, the women featured in this study played a vital role in changing public opinion as to the legitimacy and respectability of wives accompanying their husbands aboard whaleships, thereby enabling other women to go to sea. They also helped form a community of like-minded men and women within the whalefishery that provided support to couples who sought to live together at sea. Therefore, the sister sailors' experiences at sea not only affected them on a personal level; they also effected real and lasting change within their communities and within the New England whalefishery. This chapter thereby seeks to explore the transformative nature of the sister sailors' experiences at sea as well as measure the impact of these experiences on their communities and the New England whalefishery. By following Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble back to shore and examining their lives after their life-changing experiences at sea, this chapter will demonstrate the lasting impact they and their fellow sister sailors made on their communities and the New England whalefishery.

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[514] The title of this chapter comes from the whaling chanty “Leave Her Johnny” traditionally sung by whalemen at the conclusion of a voyage. The “her” refers to the whaleship. See Chapter 1 for a discussion of gender and the maritime tradition.

[515] See Appendix A.

Changed Lives

Although their experiences at sea differed, when Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble returned home, they all shared an important commonality; their time at sea had impacted their lives in deeply personal ways. The letters and journals they wrote at sea demonstrate the transformative nature of these experiences. In Mary's case, life aboard the ship *Tiger* changed a naïve, headstrong girl into a mature, confident woman, one whose early enthusiasm for life aboard a whaleship waned after more than five years at sea. The contrast in her journal between her first and second voyage provides evidence of this shift. During her first voyage aboard the ship *Tiger*, Mary often felt the need to hedge complaints with clarifying statements. For example, in May 1846 Mary began a journal entry with the following statement: “Found the weather this morning far from being good.” Whereas other sister sailors were content to simply complain about foul weather, Mary felt the need to add, “Well, I have chosen my own destiny so it does not become me to complain as it was faithfully portrayed beforehand.”[516] More than two years later, she had this to say at the onset of her second voyage: “I long to see my husband free from this vexing business.”[517] A few months later Mary noted she would “never go to sea again,” and that she was actively planning how she might “keep [her] husband at home in the future.”[518] Mary’s willingness to express such opinions without clarification demonstrates a shift in her personality. As a veteran sister sailor with two years’ experience at sea, Mary obviously felt confident enough to speak her mind, even if her opinions were not entirely supportive of her husband’s chosen career. This newfound confidence demonstrates her personal growth and maturity. It also demonstrates the transformative nature of her experiences at sea, for Mary’s time aboard the ship *Tiger* helped her find her voice both as a loving wife as well as a strong, confident woman.

It is the absence of journal entries, not the inclusion of them, that demonstrate the extent to which Susan Veeder’s experiences at sea affected her. After the death of her daughter Mary Frances in March 1850, Susan never mentioned her in her journal again. Given childhood mortality rates of the period, it is possible Susan managed her grief due to a lack of emotional attachment to the child. However, a close examination of her journal suggests otherwise. For a woman who rarely included references to her children in her journal, Susan mentioned Mary Frances five times between her birth in January 1849 and the onset of her fatal illness the following March.[519] Furthermore, the entries wherein Susan describes Mary Frances's death are the only instances in which she uses terms of affection for any of her children, calling the late Mary Frances "our darling" and "our little one."[520] Within this context, Susan's decision to not speak about her daughter's death is indicative of the deeply personal feelings of grief as well as the transformative nature of her experiences at sea, for as this chapter will show, Susan's silence about her daughter's death continued for the rest of her life.

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[516] Mary Brewster, May 22, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[517] Mary Brewster, December 31, 1848, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.
[518] Mary Brewster, September 2, 1849, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

Death also affected Elizabeth Marble during her time at sea. In her letters and journal written during the *Kathleen* voyage and the early months of the *Awashonks* voyage, Elizabeth used her writings to chronicle her experiences at sea for her mother and family members. This all changed when her husband John fell ill in the fall of 1861. Suddenly, Elizabeth's journal transformed into an outlet for her innermost thoughts, fears, and prayers. After John's death on October 22, 1861, Elizabeth's entries become melancholic and reflective: "I have been trying to wash up some of the clothes this is the first time on this voiage I have washed and not had John to help me," she wrote a few days after John's death, "but I have got to do evry thing myself now for he has helped me for the last time."[521] These mournful entries continue for a few weeks until the journal's tone and scope shifts again. From late November 1861 to the journal's final entry in April 1862, Elizabeth's entries consist of little more than notations of weather and the ship's position as the *Awashonks* made the long voyage back to New Bedford, a far cry from the lengthy, descriptive letters she wrote only a few months earlier. While her early experiences at sea had been enjoyable, the death of her husband aboard the *Awashonks* changed Elizabeth from a doting wife to a grieving widow, a transformation that would have lasting consequences for both herself and her son.

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[519] In comparison, Susan Veeder mentioned her sons George and David, whom she refers to as "the boys" a total of eight times in her journal, while she made no mention of her son Charles whom is believed to have been left at home with his grandparents during the *Nauticon* voyage.

[520] Susan Veeder, March 5, 1850 and March 7, 1850, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

As evidenced by their letters and journals, Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble's experiences at sea impacted their lives in deeply personal ways. For Mary, her time at sea helped support her personal growth both as a loving wife and as a strong, confident woman. For Susan and Elizabeth, whatever happiness they enjoyed during their time at sea was overshadowed by the untimely deaths of beloved family members. The transformative nature of the sister sailors' experiences at sea is also supported by the historical record of their lives after they returned home. Though limited evidence detailing Mary Brewster's life after her time at sea survives, she eventually got her wish when her husband William retired from maritime service in April 1856. The loss of her daughter during the *Nauticon* voyage proved to be only the first in a series of tragedies that plagued Susan's Veeder's later years; she would also lose another child as well as her husband, the latter via questionable circumstances. Elizabeth Marble faced the dual challenge of preserving her late husband's legacy and raising her son after she returned home from sea, though as this chapter will show, despite her heartbreak at the loss of her husband, it appears Elizabeth managed quite well as the matriarch of her family. While the details of their later lives varied, Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble continued to be impacted by their experiences at sea long after they returned home, thereby demonstrating the personal significance of their time at sea.

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[521] Elizabeth Marble, October 25, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

For a woman whose journals provide a wealth of historical and personal information, precious little evidence survives about Mary Brewster's life after she returned to Stonington in the spring of 1851. In fact, aside from her appearance in the federal census, Mary is almost completely absent from the historical record. She does not appear in the records of any abolition, temperance, or social reform groups, and there is no evidence to support her involvement in any local civic organizations. However, it appears she was at least partially successful in her mission to keep William on dry land. After returning to Stonington in May 1851, William sold his ownership share of the *Tiger* and walked away from his twenty year career as a whaling captain.[522] Although Stonington would continue to send whaling vessels to sea on a sporadic basis for the next forty years, by the early 1850s, its whalefishery was past its peak. Recognizing the industry was in decline, William chose to sell his interests while they were still profitable. Yet, despite Mary's hopes, her husband was not quite done with the sea.

According to Stonington tax rolls, Captain William Brewster's total assets were worth just under three thousand dollars in 1851.[523] While this was no small sum in the mid-nineteenth century, it was not enough for William to retire and support Mary in the level of comfort to which she was accustomed. William's whaling career had helped him establish himself personally and financially; now he needed to ensure he and his wife could enjoy a comfortable living in his retirement. Using his business connections with fellow Stonington whaleman Captain Nathaniel Palmer, William secured a commission as captain aboard the newly built cargo clipper *Contest*— a vessel in which Palmer was an investor— and set sail from New York City in November 1852.[524] After completing an impressive one hundred day run to San Francisco, California, William returned to New York just six months later. He set sail again shortly thereafter, first to San Francisco, then to Honolulu and Tahiti to load cargo for the return passage back to New York. William took the *Contest* back to sea again in May 1854, and after another stopover in San Francisco, William sailed to Shanghai and Hong Kong, returning to New York in April 1856.[525] These clipper voyages helped William build upon his financial successes in the whaling industry, which finally allowed him to retire after nearly thirty years at sea.[526]

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[522] According to the Connecticut Ship Database, William was an owner of the *Tiger* from 1845-1851. Connecticut Ship Database, 1789-1939, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut.

[523] Joan Druett, *"She Was a Sister Sailor": The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster 1845-1848* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 1992), 407.

The Brewsters put the wealth William accumulated during his maritime career to good use in the years following his retirement. They built a stately home on Elm Street in Stonington Borough's most affluent neighborhood sometime during the late 1850s, and the 1860 Federal Census valued that property at over five thousand dollars.[527] William and Mary also employed a young Irish woman named Margaret Shaw as a domestic servant that year, further cementing their ascension into Stonington's wealthy elite. By

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[524] *New York Herald*, October 11, 1852.
[525] Druett, 407.
[526] Where Mary lived while William sailed these voyages is a mystery. Malvina Bottom lived until 1858, so it's possible the two women reconciled and Mary resided with her foster mother during this period.
[527] Stonington, New London, Connecticut, 1860 Census, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.

1870, the Brewsters' assets had swelled to over fourteen thousand dollars in personal estate in addition to the house on Elm Street.[528] The couple remained faithful congregants at the First Baptist Church in Stonington throughout the 1860s and 1870s, and these records, as well as the Stonington vital records, lack any mention of a child being born to the couple during their marriage. [529] Therefore, when it came time for Mary to draft her will in November 1876, she bequeathed all her property and possession to her "beloved husband William."[530] She died two years later on April 8, 1878, just a few weeks shy of her and William's thirty-seventh wedding anniversary. Although William later remarried, Mary nevertheless shares her beloved husband's headstone in Stonington Cemetery with an epitaph that reads "Mary L Burtch, wife of William Brewster."

While Mary Brewster joined her husband at sea for two consecutive whaling voyages, Susan Veeder's 1848 voyage aboard the *Nauticon* proved to be her only experience living aboard a New England whaleship. When Charles Veeder returned to sea aboard the Nantucket ship *Ocean Rover* in July 1855, Susan did not accompany him. Instead, she dedicated herself to raising her three sons and maintaining the family home on Nantucket. Although there is no evidence of Susan's participation in any of Nantucket's abolition, temperance, or social reform organizations during this period, she nevertheless remained busy as the Veeder household grew in the summer of 1856 when Susan and Charles adopted their six year old niece— Susan's namesake— after her mother died of a sudden illness.[531] It was during this period that Susan experienced the loss of another child; her youngest son Charles died at sea sometime during the mid-1850s.[532] Charles Veeder Sr. returned to Nantucket in October 1858, and the success of the *Ocean Rover* voyage allowed Captain Veeder to retire after more than twenty-five years in the Nantucket whalefishery. It was shortly thereafter that the Veeders received an unexpected surprise when their daughter Marianna was born in April 1860.[533] Susan was forty-three at the time of Marianna's birth, an old age for childbirth even by modern standards, so this might explain why a domestic servant named Elizabeth Coffin appears in the Veeder household's census records for the first time in 1860.[534] With a husband, two grown sons, an adopted niece, and a newborn to care for, it is understandable that Susan might have needed help in managing her domestic duties. It is also a sign of the Veeder family's upward mobility, as domestic servants were a luxury on Nantucket in the mid-nineteenth century. The Veeders' status in the community continued to rise when Charles was elected selectman in 1865, though by that time the once bustling house on Orange Street had grown quiet as George had married and moved away and David had tragically died at sea.[535] Despite having lost three of her five children, Susan had not seen the last of her troubles, as far more distressing circumstances still awaited her.

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[528] Stonington, New London, Connecticut, 1860 Census, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.
[529] Druett, 407.
[530] Mary Burtch Brewster Last Will and Testament, Signed November 3, 1876, Recorded February 26, 1878, Stonington Town Clerk, Stonington, Connecticut.

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[531] According to the Barney Genealogical Record, Eliza Austin Foster died on June 5, 1865 at the age of 30. Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

[532] No death records exist for David S. Veeder except for one entry in the Barney Genealogical Record simply reads, "Lost at sea." Eliza Starbuck Barney, Barney Genealogical Record, Nantucket Historical Association, https://www.nantuckethistoricalassociation.net/bgr/BGR-o/index.htm.

[533] *Massachusetts Death Index, 1901-1980, Vol. 63, 205,* New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

[534] Nantucket, Nantucket, Massachusetts, 1860 Census, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.

[535] Betsy Tyler, "Last Seen on Tahiti: Captain Charles Veeder Disappears," *Historic Nantucket* 63, No. 2 (Fall 2013): 10-15.

It began in August 1868 when Charles came out of retirement and took a position as captain aboard the New Bedford bark *William Gifford*. After the Great Fire of 1846 destroyed most of the island's whaling industry, Nantucket's remaining whalemen were forced to pursue their livelihood on the mainland. Charles Veeder was fifty-eight years old in the summer of 1868. He had been retired for nearly ten years and his family lived in comfort. There was seemingly no reason for him to take on another whaling voyage, and yet, according to the journal Susan began keeping in the fall of 1868, she and Marianna traveled to New Bedford to bid Charles farewell, writing "this morning at half past 7 o'clock my husband left home to sail on a whaling voyage in Bark William Gifford with a fair wind and fine weather at 3 p.m. The pilot left them all well."[536] It would be the last time either of them ever saw him.

Over the next three years, Susan kept a dutiful account of her daily activities while Charles was at sea. The journal's overall tone and style is similar to the journal she kept aboard the *Nauticon*, including references to household chores, family members' comings and goings, and social calls made at the house by members of the Nantucket community. The journal also references letters Susan wrote to her husband while he was at sea, as well as Charles's replies to those letters. For the first several years of the *William Gifford* voyage, Charles maintained regular contact with his wife, providing her with updates about the status of the voyage. According to a journal entry dated April 23, 1871, Susan received a letter from Charles stating the *William Gifford* had secured over a thousand barrels of oil.[537] Her June 26, 1871 entry included another report from her husband; “this afternoon got a letter from Charles from Tahiti last date the 5 of May. Al well would leave soon for the Paumota Group.”[538] Another letter, dated May 18, 1871, arrived in mid-July. This letter was the last Susan received from her husband. After several more months of semi-regular entries, her journal ended with a September 30, 1871 entry containing her often-used phrase, “All well, nothing of any note.”[539] But all was not well aboard the *William Gifford*.

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[536] Susan Veeder, August 1, 1868, Mss. 482, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[537] Susan Veeder, April 3, 1871 entry, Mss. 482, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

Until recently, the circumstances surrounding Charles Veeder’s death were shrouded in mystery. *The Whalemen’s Shipping List* indicated the *William Gifford* returned to New Bedford in early February 1873 without Captain Veeder at the helm, but included no mention of his whereabouts.[540] Neither the New Bedford nor Nantucket press ever printed a death notice or obituary for Charles Veeder, and he was not declared legally dead until 1878.[541] Fortunately, the New Bedford Whaling Museum’s recent acquisition of a series of journals kept by a young New Bedford whaleman named Edwin J. Kirwin while he was living aboard the *William Gifford* between May 1871 and January 1873 has shed some much needed light on Charles Veeder’s mysterious disappearance. These journals paint a disturbing portrait of Charles Veeder’s descent into alcohol-fueled debauchery that ended with him being stripped of his command before he disappeared in June 1872.

While the cause of Charles Veeder’s bizarre behavior in the period leading up to the summer of 1872 is unknown, Kirwin’s journals portray the *William Gifford* voyage as a personal pleasure cruise for Charles, his officers, and the native women they lived with aboard ship. In an entry dated August 5, 1871 Kirwin wrote, "we lowered our boats but did not get any [whales]. Capt in his top house playing with the women all the times the boats were down.[542] An entry from October 13, 1871 stated that Captain Veeder was "much taken with his mistress that he could not listen to a man ashore who was trying to tell him where he seen whales a day or two ago."[543] By early January 1872, all whaling operations had ceased as Charles had his men building shutters for his mistress's house.[544] On January 9, Kirwin noted with indignation that the captain returned to the ship with his mistress after being away for several days so that he could "wash her clothes as the water ashore was not good enough for her to wash in but fit enough for us to drink."[545] Charles gave up the wash a few days later, preferring to spend his time lounging in the deck tub with his mistress, much to the horror of Kirwin and the crew.[546] In addition to halting whaling operations, Charles also took advantage of his authority over the ship's finances to amuse his mistress and her guests. Several of Kirwin's journal entries state that Charles detonated expensive bomb lances as though they were fireworks, and funds for purchasing four dogs and several dresses were apparently taken from the ship's coffers during this period.[547] After witnessing their captain's increasingly erratic behavior for nearly a year, Kirwin and his fellow crew mutinied against Charles, took control of the vessel, and sailed to Tahiti to present their case to the local authorities. United States Consul Dorance Atwater subsequently relieved Charles of his command, and in his report to the Secretary of State, wrote; "I have good reason to believe he is so far lost to self-respect and decency that he will remain at one of these Islands with the native woman whom he had on board his vessel as his mistress."[548] After declining an offer for passage back to the United States, Charles Veeder took accepted a payment of five hundred dollars in gold and disappeared, never to be seen again.[549]

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[538] Susan Veeder, June 26, 1871, Mss. 482, Nantucket Historical Association.

[539] Susan Veeder, September 30, 1871, Mss. 482, Nantucket Historical Association.

[540] *The Whalemen’s Shipping List and Merchants’ Transcript* 30, No. 51, February 11, 1873.

[541] According to his official death record, Charles died in the Society Islands sometime in 1878. Massachusetts Vital Records, 1840-1911, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

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[542] Edwin J. Kirwin, August 5, 1871, Log 452, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[543] Edwin J. Kirwin, October 13, 1871, Log 452, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[544] Edwin J. Kirwin, January 4, 1872, Log 452, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[545] Edwin J. Kirwin, January 9, 1872, Log 452, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[546] Edwin J. Kirwin, February 1, 1872, Log 452, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[547] Edwin J. Kirwin, November 4, 1871, Log 452, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

It is not known whether Susan Veeder ever learned the truth of her husband's disappearance, as no personal writings by her from this period survive. However, given Nantucket's close-knit community, it is difficult to imagine that such a scandal would remain quiet for long. Still, no evidence confirming Charles Veeder's behavior aboard the *William Gifford* survives other than the Kirwin journals and the Counsul report, so it is possible that Susan spent the rest of her life unaware of the Charles's behavior prior to his disappearance.[550] The 1880 Federal Census listed her as a widow living with her daughter at the Veeder home on Orange Street, though within a few years Marianna was a married woman living in New Bedford with children of her own.[551] After spending her entire life on Nantucket, Susan moved to New Bedford sometime after Marianna's marriage. The

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[548] Tyler, 15.

[549] Tyler, 15.

[550] Given mid-nineteenth century Anglo-American attitudes regarding the racial inferiority of Pacific Islanders, it would have undoubtedly been devastating for Susan to learn of her husband's relationship with a native Pacific woman. For more on the role of sex in the Pacific maritime world, see Chapter 5 of Bradley Ray Cartwright's "Pacific Passages."

[551] Although Marianna's husband Charles was not a whaling captain himself, his father captained New Bedford whaleships for more than thirty years. Zephaniah W. Pease, History of New Bedford Volume III, (New York, NY: The Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1918), 4.

1897 New Bedford City Directory listed her as living at 56 Foster Street, just a few blocks away from the remains of the Whaling City's once mighty whaling fleet.[552] Susan's final years were spent in the company of her daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren, and she died on June 16, 1897 at the age of 81. Her headstone in Nantucket's Newtown Cemetery stands beside stones marking the final resting place of her son George and her daughter Mary Frances, while the whereabouts of her husband's grave remains unknown to this day.

Unlike her fellow sister sailors, the impact of Elizabeth Marble's experiences at sea were immediate, for when she returned to New Bedford in the spring of 1862 she was neither a captain's wife nor a sister sailor— she was a widow. John Marble died intestate, so upon her return to Fall River, Elizabeth petitioned the court to be named executrix of her late husband's estate. Granted this status in May 1862, she oversaw the subsequent probate inventory of John's assets conducted that fall. On October 3, 1862 the Fall River probate court granted Elizabeth control of eleven thousand dollars in assets including the Marble family home on Second Street, its personal effects, cash and bank accounts, as well as John's ownership share in the *Awashonks*. These assets made Elizabeth a wealthy woman and provided a comfortable living for her and her son for the next thirty-five years.[553]

The Marble family papers portray Elizabeth as a faithful widow and devoted mother in the years following her husband's death. After purchasing a plot in Fall River's scenic Oak Grove Cemetery, Elizabeth interred John's remains beneath a striking granite obelisk that celebrated his accomplishments and mourned his untimely demise.[554] When John's former employers asked Elizabeth to sell his *Awashonks* share to the vessel's new captain "so he might feel the greater interest in the voyage," Elizabeth agreed, and the revenue earned from the sale helped provide for her son's education.[555] When George turned seventeen in the spring of 1867, Elizabeth sent him to a school run by the Reverend J.E. Woodbridge in the village of Auburndale, Massachusetts. Period advertisements for the school described it as having "some features of excellence that commend it to the patronage of parents," and the institution charged an annual tuition of four hundred dollars per year.[556]

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[552] *New Bedford Directory of the inhabitants, business firms, institutions, streets, and societies* (New Bedford, MA: W.A. Greenough & Co, 1897), 666.

[553] John C. Marble Probate Record, B*ristol County Massachusetts Probate Records 1690-1881, https://ancestry.com.*

With her husband's legacy and her son's well-being secured, Elizabeth spent much of the 1860s actively corresponding with close friends and family, particularly Andrew Hamblin and George Bowman, two officers whom she befriended during the *Awashonks* voyage. The close, intimate nature these friendships is detailed in their surviving letters. George Bowman called Elizabeth "Dearest Sister Lizzie", while Andrew Hamblin asked her to write to John's former employers on his behalf after they questioned his part in the decision to end the *Awashonks* voyage after John's death:

> yesterday I was over to New Bedford and hear attain with several agents in regards to going mate of a whaleship and they seemed to think that I done wrong in coming home in the Awashonks that I ought to have…left you at St. Helena…so was there seems to be a chance for me to go mate if I can get a recommendation to that affect.[557]

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[554] This monument includes a ten foot tall white granite obelisk carved with maritime gravestone iconography including an anchor draped with cloth and reads, "Capt. John Marble, died October 22, 1861, age 48." See Appendix D.

[555] *Ships Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts*, (Boston, MA: The National Archives Project, 1940), 483.

[556] J.E. Woodbridge to Elizabeth Marble, September 15, 1868, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts; E. Littel, ed., *Littel's Living Age Third Series Volume XV*, (Boston, MA: Little, Son, and Company, 1861), 96.

[557] Andrew Hamblin to Elizabeth Marble, September 18, 1866, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Elizabeth's friendship with Bowman and Hamblin also extended to their wives, who maintained close correspondence with Elizabeth while their husbands were at sea. In a letter from June 1867, Eliza Hamblin apologized for her delay in responding to Elizabeth's last letter and included the revelation that she was "expecting a little addition to the family in a short time."[558] A few months later she wrote thanking Elizabeth for the list of baby names she sent, and described her childbirth in vivid detail, thereby confirming the close, intimate nature of their friendship.[559]

Elizabeth's friendship with George and Celia Bowman is of particular interest, as their letters underscore a unique dynamic between the captain's widow, the younger whaleman, and his wife. After Bowman shipped aboard the bark *Albion* in December 1867, Celia wrote to Elizabeth how she regretted that they had not been able to visit her before George's departure. Celia then relayed her sorrows at the loss of her husband's company writing, "I trust I may find you a sympathetzer as you know something of the sorrows of this life."[560] While his wife confided in Elizabeth from the Bowman's home in Falmouth, Massachusetts, George Bowman shared feelings of more romantic nature with Elizabeth in letters written while at sea. In a letter from November 1868, George revealed the true nature of his feelings for Elizabeth:

> Lizzie if you had been a poor woman without a dollar in the world I think I know a man that would have made you an offer but I cannot tell you his name... I think he liked you well enough to have loved you as one should have loved another. I suppose one thing kept him from proposing was this. If he had and you had accepted he thought the world would say he married you for what you was worth

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[558] Eliza C. Hamblin to Elizabeth Marble, June 1867, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.
[559] Eliza Hamblin to Elizabeth Mable, September 23, 1867, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.
[560] Celia Bowman to Elizabeth Marble, December 22, 1867, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

> and if you did not accept he probably thought you would think it was your property he was after more than it was you but I have no doubt in my own mind what his intentions would have been as honorable as a man's could have been. Please never mention this to no one and perhaps sometime I will tell you who it was for I believe he is married now and loves his little wife dearly.[561]

It is unknown whether or not Elizabeth responded to this stunning confession, though given the nature of his subsequent correspondence, it appears her relationship with George remained close, albeit platonic. If Celia Bowman ever learned of her husband's feelings for their mutual friend, there is no evidence that she ever spoke of them to Elizabeth, leaving many unanswered questions about this chapter of Elizabeth Marble's life.

After nearly twenty years living in the family home on Second Street, Elizabeth moved to the village of Florence, Massachusetts sometime after 1880. The reason for this decision is lost to history, though the 1880 Federal Census lists Elizabeth as maintaining a household in that community that included three boarders and her unmarried son.[562] George's marital status changed the following year when he married Minerva Northup in nearby Hatfield, Massachusetts in May 1881. Two years later, Elizabeth purchased a home on North Maple Street in Florence from a woman named Adeline Gibbs.[563] Elizabeth shared this home with George and Minerva, their daughters, and several boarders for the next thirteen years. Although no evidence of her membership in any local social reform organizations survives, Elizabeth did join the Williamsburg, Massachusetts chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star in 1881.[564] First established in the 1850s under the auspices of providing aid to the widows of Masons, by the mid-1880s the Order of the Eastern Star was a thriving auxiliary body of Freemasonry with over three hundred chapters and fifteen thousand members nationwide.[565] As the widow of a Master Mason, Elizabeth was permitted to join the Order of the Eastern Star, and maintained an active membership in the Williamsburg chapter until her death on December 26, 1894 at the age of sixty-nine.[566]

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[561] Emphasis is his own. George Bowman to Elizabeth Marble, November 4, 1868, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[562] It is unknown whether Florence, Massachusetts's history as a utopian community played a role in Elizabeth's decision to move there as she does not appear in the historic records of the Northampton Association of Education and Industry. For an period account of Florence's utopian history see Charles A. Sheffield's *The History of Florence, Massachusetts Including a Complete Account of the Northampton Association of Education and Industry* (Florence, MA: Charles A. Sheffield), 1895. For a scholarly analysis of the Northampton Association see Christopher Clark and Kerry W. Buckley's *Letters from an American Utopia: The Stetson Family and the Northampton Association, 1843-1847* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press), 2004.

[563] This house would eventually become known as Marble Place and remained in the family for over fifty years. Hampshire County Land Records, Box 382, Pages 203-204, Hampshire District Registry of Deeds, Northampton, Massachusetts.

Elizabeth's final wishes were well documented in her will, a document she signed on March 13, 1891. Her first request focused on the Marble family plot in Fall River. Elizabeth directed her executor to

> place at the head of my grave a headstone similar to that at my husband's grave…remove the stone of my son's grave and replace it…also have the lettering on the monument cut in the same style as those now cut thereon.[567]

Elizabeth's will also included provisions for granddaughters. Sara Marble was granted a writing desk made by her grandfather, Mary Marble received a box made by her grandfather that contained over three thousand pieces of seashell, while her youngest granddaughter Ella— a toddler when Elizabeth drafted her will— was given a gold watch. The rest of her personal effects including "all articles bought by me in foreign ports," were to be distributed equally among her granddaughters.[568] The remainder of her estate was to be held in trust for George for the duration of his life, though Elizabeth also included a provision for her granddaughters' education in her will, requesting that her executor "hold the residue of my estate for the benefit of my grand-daughters and especially for their advancement in educational pursuits (and it is in my preference in schools in Massachusetts)."[569] Dedicated to preserving her husband's legacy and to ensuring her family's comfort and well-being even in death, Elizabeth Marble's will demonstrates the lasting impact her experiences at sea had on her life.

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[564] Conversation between Amanda L. Goodheart and Ellen McKay, Past Grand Matron and Secretary, Bethlehem Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, Massachusetts Grand Chapter, November 11, 2014.

[565] Willis Darwin Engle, *A General History of the Order of the Eastern Star* (Indianapolis, IN: Willis D. Engle, Publisher, 1901), 339; Mary Ann Clawson, "Nineteenth-Century Women's Auxiliaries and Fraternal Orders," *SIGNS* 12, No. 1 (Autumn 1986), 47-49.

[566] Emma I. Cook to George F. Marble, December 27, 1894, Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[567] Elizabeth C. Marble Probate Record, Hampshire *County Massachusetts Probate Records Vol. 84-87, 1894-1895, https://ancestry.com; Northampton, Hampshire, Massachusetts,* 1900 Census, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.

Changed Communities

As impactful as their time at sea was for themselves and their families, Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble's experiences at sea also helped bring about significant change in their communities. By defying the whalefishery's longstanding conceptions of gender, these women not only changed the communities they called home, but the greater New England whaling community as well. In some cases, their experiences at sea directly impacted other whaling captain's wives. By setting a positive example during her time at sea, Susan Veeder helped make wife-carrying vessels socially acceptable on Nantucket, which in turn allowed other several other captain's wives to go to sea. Mary Brewster and Elizabeth Marble's interactions with captains from neighboring ports also influenced popular opinion, while all three women contributed to a community of support that included sister sailors, supportive captains, and sympathetic agents within the whaling industry. As more women accompanied their husbands to sea during the mid-nineteenth century, this community continued to grow. Between 1840 and 1870, nearly three hundred captains' wives from twenty New England whaling communities had gone to sea, and this small yet significant minority helped change conceptions of gender within the New England whalefishery.[570] When women first began accompanying their husbands to sea aboard whaleships in the 1840s, they faced disapproval, even disownment, from their friends and families. Thirty years later, wife-carrying whaling vessels, though still relatively rare, were an acceptable practice within the New England whalefishery. This shift in gender norms can be attributed to women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble, whose experiences at sea helped change longstanding conceptions of gender within their communities.

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[568] At the time of Elizabeth's death she had a fourth granddaughter named Louise who is not mentioned in Elizabeth's will. Marble Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[569] It is unknown why Elizabeth included this provision in her will. As a woman with limited education, it possible she wanted her granddaughters to have better opportunities than she did at their age. No evidence survives in the Marble Family Papers as to whether or not her granddaughters took advantage of this provision, though the 1900 Federal Census listed then thirteen-year old Mary and ten-year old Ella as being in school at the time of the census. Elizabeth C. Marble Probate Record, Hampshire *County Massachusetts Probate Records Vol. 84-87, 1894-1895, https://ancestry.com; Northampton, Hampshire, Massachusetts*, 1900 Census, United States Census Bureau, https://ancestry.com.

While all three women prompted change in their communities by going to sea, Susan Veeder made the most direct impact on her home community of Nantucket. Susan was among the first Nantucket captain's wives to sail aboard a whaleship, and over the course of her four year voyage aboard the *Nauticon*, she interacted with dozens of captains hailing from whaling ports throughout New England. Among these captains were fellow Nantucket residents Samuel Wyer, George Palmer, and Obed Swain II. None of these men were accompanied by their wives when they met with Susan during her time aboard the *Nauticon*. Yet, in all three cases, their next voyage included th their wives, as

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[570] See Appendix A.

Mrs. George Palmer, Charlotte Coffin Wyer, and Harriet Swain all went to sea aboard Nantucket whaleships in the years immediately following their husbands' encounter with Susan aboard the *Nauticon*. Mrs. Palmer sailed with her husband on the *Navigator* in August 1849, Charlotte Coffin Wyer joined her husband Samuel aboard the *Young Hero* in November 1850, and Harriet Swain accompanied her husband Obed aboard the *Catawba* in December 1852.[571] The G. & M. Starbuck Company served as the agent for the Veeders' *Nauticon* voyage as well as the Wyers' voyage aboard the *Young Hero*.[572] Susan was first of the Starbuck Company's captains' wives to accompany her husband at sea, which implies that their experience with her must have been positive, as they permitted the Wyers to go to sea together aboard the *Young Hero* just two years later.

Mary Brewster also helped a fellow captain's wife become a sister sailor. After meeting Captain William Tower of the New Bedford, Massachusetts ship *Moctezuma* during a gam in July 1846, Mary described him in her journal as being "much surprised to see a lady on board."[573] Captain Tower returned to New Bedford the following spring, and during subsequent negotiations with his agents and fellow owners West & Paine, he secured the right to bring his wife Betsy Ann aboard the *Moctezuma* during its next voyage.[574] While it is unknown whether Captain Tower had requested to have his wife join him at sea prior to his encounter with Mary, the fact that Betsy Ann Tower was West & Paine's first captain's wife to accompany her husband at sea proves that the two women's experiences are undeniably connected.[575] Coincidentally, Mary Brewster and

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[571] See Appendix A.
[572] See Appendix A.
[573] Mary Brewster, July 28, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut.
[574] *Ships Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts*, (Boston, MA: The National Archives Project, 1940), 222.
[575] See Appendix A.

Betsy Ann Tower actually met face to face when the *Moctezuma* and the *Tiger* crossed paths while cruising the Pacific Ocean in December 1847. In her recollection of their encounter Mary wrote, “Mrs. T said a number of ladies were out this season with their husbands—I am glad they are following the late fashion.”[576] Betsy Ann Tower’s observation proved to be accurate, as the number of New England whaling captains’ wives accompanying their husbands at sea continued to increase throughout the late 1840s and 1850s.

When these individual examples of historical impact are compared to all of the New England whaling captains’ wives voyages that took place between 1840 and 1870, several important patterns emerge. Although the vast majority of women who went to sea with their husbands during this period did so only once, twenty-eight percent participated in two or more whaling voyages.[577] Mary Brewster and Elizabeth Marble’s experiences align with this minority group, as they each went to sea with their husbands twice. This pattern is true for whaling agents as well. Of the one hundred seventy-six whaling agents who allowed captains’ wives to accompany their husbands at sea during this period, sixty percent did so only once.[578] Interestingly, the number of agents that had three or more wife-carrying voyages between 1840 and 1870 exceeds the number who only allowed two captains’ wives to sail.[579] This implies that while the majority of whaling agents were only involved with one wife-carrying voyage during the period covered by this study, those that permitted multiple captains to bring their wives to sea did so frequently.

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[576] Mary Brewster, December 18, 1847, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut.

[577] See Appendix A.

[578] See Appendix A.

[579] Among the whaling agents and firms including in this study, New Bedford agents Charles R. Tucker, Edward C. Jones, and Jonathan Bourne Jr. had the highest numbers of wife-carrying vessels under their auspices. Tucker managed sixteen wife-carrying voyages between 1840 and 1870, while Jones managed fifteen and Bourne managed eleven. See Appendix A.

Despite the oft cited fear that captains' wives would hinder their husbands' ability to successfully manage whaling operations, in general, wife-carrying whaleships did not suffer from reductions in productivity in the years between 1840 and 1870. On the contrary, the voyages overseen by William Brewster, Charles Veeder, and John Marble while accompanied by their wives all turned a profit for their investors.[580] Some of these investors became vocal supporters of wife-carrying whaling vessels. In a diary entry from July 1849, New Bedford whaling magnate Charles W. Morgan argued "there is more decency when women are on board."[581] Other agents, like New Bedford's Jonathan Bourne Jr, were slow to warm up to the practice. Despite having seven successful wife-carrying voyages under his belt as an agent, in 1858 Bourne wrote "we unanimously believe a whaling voyage is wholly unsuitable for a female to encounter."[582] These personal misgivings aside, Bourne nevertheless continued to allow his captains to bring their wives to sea, as the practice was becoming more and more common during the 1850s. Once a few brave couples like the Brewsters, Veeders, and Marbles were able to prove to investors that captains' wives did not hurt the bottom line, they put their colleagues in a much better position to negotiate the right to bring their wives to sea. In doing so, they helped erode the longstanding conceptions of gender that had maintained New England whaling communities for more than a century, and contributed to a shift in gender norms that made it socially acceptable for captain's wives to accompany their husbands at sea.

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[580] Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whalefishery* (1877; reprint Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989), 430-431; 456-457; 458-459; 548-549.

[581] Charles W. Morgan, July 25, 1849, Coll. 27, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

[582] Jonathan Bourne Jr. to Mrs. John D. Willard, March 6, 1858, Mss. 18, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

In addition to helping win over skeptical agents and investors, women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble impacted their communities by creating a support system for themselves within the New England whalefishery. From visiting one another during gams, to passing letters and gifting foodstuffs, to nursing one another during sickness, and making introductions for one another in foreign ports, the sister sailors created a community of support that helped sustain them during their years at sea. This community also received support from the sister sailors' husbands, missionaries, American diplomats, and sympathetic whaling agents. Ample evidence of this support system can be found in Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble's journals. In an entry dated October 26, 1846, Mary describes meeting a Captain and Mrs. Beck from New London when their vessel came in contact with the *Tiger*. After William went aboard to meet the captain, he quickly sent for Mary as Captain Beck was gravely ill. Although the Becks were complete strangers, Mary nevertheless remained aboard the vessel all day to help nurse the sick captain. She later wrote this of the encounter: "Mrs. Beck was tired out having all the care of her husband who was very sick. I set up with him in hope she would get some rest…got back on board just as the sun was setting."[583] On March 20, 1849, Susan Veeder wrote that she, Charles, and all of the other New England whaling captains and wives in Talcahuano attended a funeral for Captain and

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[583] The Brewsters later learned that despite Mary's efforts, Captain Beck died and Mrs. Beck returned home to New London, Connecticut aboard another vessel. Mary Brewster, October 26, 1846, Log 38, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Connecticut.

Mrs. West of Mystic, Connecticut after their child died during a port stop.[584] Though they did not know the Wests, the Veeders nevertheless mourned with their fellow community members. Tragically, Susan and Charles were on the receiving end of this kindness just one year later when their daughter Mary Frances died. Elizabeth Marble also benefited from this community of support. In a series of journal entries from January 1858, Elizabeth noted she received a variety of gifts from visiting captains including peanuts and a pet monkey for her son George Frederick.[585] In an April 1861 letter, Elizabeth wrote of meeting a Mrs. Gifford of Westport, Massachusetts after arriving in the port of Vasse. Mrs. Gifford then introduced Elizabeth to five other whaling captains who were in port that day before making three social calls with her, thereby introducing Elizabeth into Vasse society.[586] Despite the widespread nature of this community of support, no surviving evidence suggests this mutual aid network was consciously created to effect social and industrial change within New England whaling communities. Nevertheless, the existence of this community of support proves that change was underway within the New England whalefishery, as the men and women in this unique situation were actively supporting one another's decisions to defy the New England whaling industry's longstanding conceptions of gender.

Women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble also influenced popular opinion within their communities. During the 1840s, when few women accompanied their husbands at sea, Mary Brewster was disowned by her foster mother for her decision to sail aboard the *Tiger*. Eight years later, in February 1853, the *Whalemen's Shipping List*— the industry's leading periodical— published an article in support of captains' wives accompanying their husbands at sea. In the article, the *Shipping List* estimated that one-sixth of all New England whaling captains were accompanied by his wife that year. The *Shipping List* also took the bold position of supporting the captains' wives stating,

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[584] Susan Veeder, December 13, 1848, Log 347, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, Massachusetts.
[585] Elizabeth Marble, January 28, 1858 and January 29, 1858, Log 493, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.
[586] Elizabeth Marble to Mary Wrightington, April 14, 1861, Log 494, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

> The enterprising ladies not only preserve unbroken the ties of domestic life that would otherwise be sundered; not only cheer by their presence the monotony and discomforts of long perilous voyages; not only exercise a good influence in the discipline of the ship, but they make capital correspondents…and keep us well posted up in the catch and prospects of the season.[587]

Additional support for these "enterprising ladies" came from the missionary community. In the November 8, 1858 issue of the *Honolulu Friend*, the Reverend Samuel Damon wrote in ardent support of the sister sailors,

> Of late years a very sensible custom has arisen among the masters of vessels visiting the Pacific; that of being accompanied by their wives. We have heard of some close-fisted and niggardly owners who object to the custom, but everybody knows that their objections are founded upon the lowest principle of selfishness…the system…works so well, that we predict it will become more and more fashionable.[588]

That same year the American Seamen's Friend Society began advocating that the practice of wife-carrying be extended to all mariners arguing,

> most of those among seamen of have families do not seen them oftener than once in two, three or four years…we hope the time may come when every married man in this part of the world will be accompanied by his wife.[589]

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[587] *The Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* 11, No. 48, February 1, 1853.
[588] *The Friend* 8, No. 11, November 8, 1858.
[589] "Wives at Sea," *Sailor's Magazine* 30, No. 7 (March 1858), 210.

This radical shift in popular opinion within the greater New England whaling industry can be attributed to the experiences of women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble, whose presence aboard New England whaleships helped change conceptions of gender within their communities.

A Changed Industry

As this study has shown, the years between 1840 and 1870 marked a pivotal time for the New England whalefishery, with record profits for industry leaders and increased competition for industrial capital, labor, and whale commodities. At the same time, a series of social, political and industrial changes were underway in American society that would have lasting impacts on the whaling industry.[590] These changes helped contribute to the decline and eventual demise of the New England whalefishery, and have been studied by generations of historians specializing in the history American whaling. What remains unexplored are the connections between these developments and the hundreds of whaling captains' wives who accompanied their husbands at sea during the same time period.

Until now, gender has largely been omitted from the list of factors impacting the New England whalefishery during the mid-nineteenth century. However, when examined in conjunction with the social, political, and industrial changes underway in mid-nineteenth century New England whaling communities, it is clear that the sister sailors were an integral part of the changing tides within the New England whalefishery. More than half of the women who sailed during the period covered by this study did so between 1850 and 1860, a period of tremendous growth and profitability within the whalefishery.[591] Although the total number of whaling voyages in which the sister sailors participated amounted to just under six percent of the total number of whaling voyages, their presence aboard New England whaleships during the industry's peak years is highly significant. By successfully defying the longstanding conceptions of gender that had sustained New England whaling communities for more than a century during a period of economic growth and prosperity within the fishery, women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble effected change within their communities and the New England whalefishery as a whole. It is for this reason that they and their fellow sister sailors should be included in the list of important developments within the mid-nineteenth century New England whalefishery.

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[590] The social and cultural influences of abolitionism and the women's movement on the New England whaling industry, while hugely significant to this time period, lie outside the scope of this study. For a thorough study on abolitionism in New England whaling communities see Kathryn Grover, *The Fugitive's Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford Massachusetts* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001). For a valuable analysis on the connections between the women's movement and whaling communities, see Jeffrey Kovach, "'Nantucket Women': Public Authority and Education in the Eighteenth Century Nantucket Quaker Women's Meeting and the Foundation for Female Activism," (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015).

In addition to the emergence of captains' wives accompanying their husbands at sea, several other factors were beginning to impact the New England whalefishery during the mid-nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1840s, the establishment of textile mills in many New England whaling communities led to increased competition for investment and labor within the whalefishery. Several large mill complexes were built in New Bedford during this time period, while Stonington capitalists invested in a variety of industries including the manufacture of cotton thread.[592] New England whaling ports also faced competition for labor from the goldfields of California, as an entire generation of Americans found themselves caught up in the nation's collective gold fever.[593] The discovery of petroleum in 1859 struck another blow to the New England whalefishery, as kerosene began supplanting whale oil as the nation's chief source of light. However, none of these factors exerted more influence over the fate of the New England whaling industry then the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861.

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[591] See Appendix A.

[592] Kingston William Heath, "Whalers to Weavers: New Bedford's Urban Transformation and Contested Identities," in *IA: The Journal for Industrial Archaeology* 40, No. 1/2, (2014), 12; Richard Anson Wheeler, *History of the Town of Stonington County of New London Connecticut from its First Settlement in 1649 to 1900*, (New London, CT: The Press of the Day Company, 1900), 144-145.

The Civil War's effect on the New England whalefishery was swift and devastating, contracting the industry by nearly fifty percent in just a few years.[594] There are several reasons for this. In whaling communities like New Bedford, war meant a reduction in labor and inflated insurance costs, while a dramatic decrease in demand for whaling products left whaling investors with diminished returns on their investments.[595] It was this dismal market that led many whaling agents to sell their vessels to the federal government in part of what became known as the Stone Fleet. In an attempt to disrupt the Confederacy's highly effective network of blockade runners based out of Charleston, South Carolina, the United States Navy amassed a fleet of thirty-eight aging New England whaleships, loaded them with granite and fieldstone, and sunk them in the mouth of Charleston's harbor during the winter of 1861-1862.[596] According to one *New York Times* writer, the Stone Fleet was comprised of "short, broad square-sterned, bluff-bowed, queer old tubs," adding, "the fortunes of the Tabers, the Howlands, the Swifts,

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[593] Malcolm J. Rohrbough, "The California Gold Rush as a National Experience," *California History* 77, No. 1, (Spring 1998), 19.

[594] Starbuck, 692-694.

[595] Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Karin Gleiter, *In Pursuit of Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1806-1906* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 447-450.

[596] Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), 312-313.

Coffins, Starbucks, and many other New England families have been created from their voyages."[597] The Stone Fleet mission proved to be a failure, as powerful currents and marine worms made quick work of the scuttled whaleships, though the Stone Fleet vessels were not the only New England whaleships sunk during the Civil War. Between 1862 and 1865, Confederate ships harassed New England whaling vessels as part of the Confederate Navy's campaign against the Union's maritime commerce, and the C.S.S. *Shenandoah* proved to be the most successful of these raiders. After receiving orders to "proceed…into seas and among the islands frequented by the great American whaling fleet, a source of abundant wealth for our enemies and a nursery for their seamen," in December 1864, the *Shenandoah* terrorized the whaling fleet during the last few months of the Civil War, a practice that led to the destruction of twenty-five New England whaleships before the end of war in April 1865.[598]

Although several communities attempted to restart whaling operations after the Civil War, the fishery entered into a period of steady decline from which it would never recover. The 1870s were marked by a series of challenges including the loss of the Arctic fleet in 1871 and introduction of steel in ladies' undergarments which led to a drop in consumer demand for baleen.[599] In a desperate attempt to cut costs and salvage profits, many New England whaling investors moved their vessels to San Francisco, California, in the hope that the port's proximity to the Pacific and Arctic whaling grounds would help boost the floundering industry. These efforts failed, and in 1914, the year the *Whalemen's Shipping List* ceased publication, less than a dozen whaleships set sail from New England ports in pursuit of whales.[600] By 1920, the whaling industry was all but dead, and its remaining whaleships relics of a bygone era. The age of the New England whalefishery was over.

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[597] "The Sunken Fleet," *New York Times*, December 26, 1861.

[598] John T. Mason, 'The Last of the Confederate Cruisers," *Century Magazine*, Vol. XXXIV (May 1898-October 1898), 600-610.

[599] In the fall of 1871, thirty-three New England whaleships were forcibly abandoned and their crews evacuated after fast moving Arctic ice engulfed them. Twenty-two of these vessels were from New Bedford. For more on the lost fleet of 1871, see John R. Bockstoce, *Whales, Ice, and Men: The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press), 1995.

As this chapter has shown, the nearly three hundred women who accompanied their husbands aboard New England whaleships between 1840 and 1870 underwent transformative experiences at sea that had lasting impacts on themselves, their communities, and the New England whalefishery. The personal effects of the sister sailors' time at sea is evidenced in their letters and journals. After spending five years aboard the ship *Tiger*, Mary Brewster returned to Stonington with the newfound self-assurance of a mature, tested woman, one confident enough in herself and her marriage to urge her husband to retire from his maritime career, a decision he eventually made. The impact of Susan Veeder's time at sea centers on the tragic loss of her daughter Mary Frances, whose death proved to be merely the first in a series of personal hardships Susan faced later in life that culminated in the scandalous disappearance of her husband in 1872. Death also defined Elizabeth Marble's experiences at sea, for despite the happy times she and her family enjoyed during their voyage aboard the bark *Kathleen*, the loss of her husband in October 1861 transformed Elizabeth from a beloved wife to a grieving widow. Yet, the sister sailors' experiences at sea did not just impact themselves and their families, but their communities and their whalefishery as well. As this chapter has demonstrated, the sister sailors played a vital role in changing popular opinion as women's role within England whaling communities, thereby enabling more and more women to join their husbands at sea. The sister sailors also created communities of support within the whalefishery. With help from their husbands, sympathetic whaling captains and agents, as well as missionaries and American diplomats, the sister sailors used these communities to provide support and assistance to one another while at sea. These efforts underscore the transformative nature of their experiences at sea, as those experiences effected real and lasting change not only on themselves, but on their communities and the New England whalefishery as well.

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[600] *Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* 72, No. 52, December 29, 1914.

CONCLUSION

Though it had greased the wheels of economic change for more than two centuries, by the early-twentieth century, the New England whalefishery had slipped into obscurity as modern, steam powered factory ships from Norway and Denmark replaced American whaleships in the world's whaling grounds, leaving New England's once bustling wharves quiet and empty. Quiet, but not forgotten, for it was during this period that the New England whalefishery found new champions in the form of antiquarians. In an era of industrialization, immigration, and urbanization, many Americans, particularly members of the middle and upper classes, began taking an interest in their nation's past.[601] In whaling ports like New Bedford and Nantucket, this movement gave rise to newfound public interest in whaling, as local residents took steps to preserve their communities' legacies through the celebration of the once mighty New England whalefishery.

The origins of these early preservation efforts can be found in the establishment of antiquarian organizations such as the Nantucket Historical Association and the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, now known as the New Bedford Whaling Museum. Founded in 1895 and 1903 respectively, both organizations still exist today, and their founders helped preserve the history of the New England whalefishery. Women played a vital role in these efforts. In her first report to Nantucket Historical Association members in 1895, Mary Eliza Starbuck— a direct descendent of Nantucket's most famous whaling family— urged her fellow islanders to

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[601] Local examples of this early historic preservationist movement can be found in the establishment of organizations such as the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association in Deerfield, Massachusetts in 1870 and the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in Boston, Massachusetts (now Historic New England) in 1910.

> make an active search for all sorts of relics, especially manuscripts, before it is too late and these valuable mementos are carried away from the island as trophies, or by progressive housewives "cast as rubbish to the void."[602]

With the island's historical treasures secured, the Association opened its first museum in 1904, and over the past century, has acquired more than twenty-five historic properties on Nantucket. The Nantucket Whaling Museum, housed in a former candle factory, opened in 1930, and remains one of the country's most important repositories of whaling ephemera. The Old Dartmouth Historical Society followed a similar course, housing their collection in a former bank near New Bedford's old wharves for the first several years of the organization's history. This changed in January 1915, when local philanthropist Emily Howland Bourne notified the Society of her desire to finance the construction of new building in honor of her late father, New Bedford whaling magnate Jonathan Bourne, Jr. This building would house the Society's collection of whaling artifacts as well as a half size model of a whaleship, as Bourne felt it was "eminently important that in some such way the old traditions and activities of the city should be perpetuated, and put in a form to be easily recognized by its future inhabitants."[603] Dedicated in November 1916, the Bourne Building and its *Lagoda* ship model remain part of the New Bedford Whaling Museum's campus to this day. Other preservation efforts in the Whaling City during this period include the construction of *The Whaleman*, a bronze sculpture depicting a whaleman throwing a harpoon above a plaque bearing Herman Melville's famous quote, "A dead whale or a stove boat!"[604] First unveiled in 1913, today the

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[602] Aimee E. Newell, "'That pride in our Island's history": The Nantucket Historical Association," *Historic Nantucket* 49, No. 1 (Winter 2000).

[603] Emily Howland Bourne to William C. Crapo, January 4, 1915, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

[604] James M. Lindgren, "'Let Us Idealize Old Types of Manhood': The New Bedford Whaling Museum 1903-1941," *The New England Quarterly* 72, No. 2 (June 1999), 176-179.

Whaleman Memorial stands just a few steps away from the New Bedford Whaling National Park, a historic district operated by the National Parks Service, the city of New Bedford, local non-profit organizations, and private land owners.

In addition to collecting historical objects and erecting public monuments, New England antiquarians also published histories of the whalefishery during the early-twentieth century. These nostalgic accounts glorified the Yankee whale hunt while underscoring the vital role the whalefishery played in the development of American industry as well as its cultural heritage. “No phase of our national life had a flavor and color more distinctly American,” wrote one historian, adding “whaling should be remembered because…it widened our national horizons, and because in the dangerous pursuit of Leviathan, this country excelled all other nations.”[605] This call for remembrance was echoed by other period historians, including New Bedford author A. Hyatt Verill who heralded Yankee whalemen as “pioneers of civilization, leaders in exploration, and founders of commerce.”[606] These histories, combined with the establishment of historical societies, museums, and public monuments, contributed to the construction of a public memory of the New England whalefishery that even today remains part of what historian Eric Jay Dolin has aptly called “America’s mythic past.”[607]

While the work of these early-twentieth century antiquarians has proven invaluable to the preservation of the New England whalefishery’s history— the extensive collections of the New Bedford Whaling Museum and the Nantucket Historical

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[605] Foster Rhea Dulles, *Lowered Boats: A Chronicle of American Whaling* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1933), 10.
[606] A. Hyatt Verrill, *The Real Story of the Whaler: Whaling Past and Present* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1916), 248.
[607] Eric Jay Dolin, *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), 373.

Association are a testament to their efforts— the historical narrative they crafted has come under scrutiny in recent years. In keeping with the greater antiquarian movement of the early twentieth century, the mythic narrative of the white Yankee whalefishery ignores the invaluable contributions made by Native Americans, people of color, and members of immigrant communities to the New England whaling industry.[608] With its emphasis on widow's walks and sailor's valentines, this romanticized version of New England's whaling history also downplays women's vital contributions to the whalefishery. This sentimentalization has had lasting consequences on the study of American whaling, as it has relegated the sister sailors to the status of quaint, historical oddities whose time at sea warrants a mere footnote in the narrative of the New England whalefishery. Yet, as this study has shown, the nearly three hundred women who accompanied their husbands at sea aboard whaleships during the mid-nineteenth century were far from mere oddities. On the contrary, their experiences at sea had lasting impacts on themselves, their communities, and the New England whalefishery.

By defying the New England whaling industry's longstanding conceptions of gender, women like Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, and Elizabeth Marble effected real and lasting change not only on themselves and their families, but on the communities they called home and the fishery that sustained those communities. Together with their fellow sister sailors, these women supported one another while at sea and won over skeptics within their families, communities, and the whaling industry itself. They set positive examples that opened up opportunities for other women to go to sea, and thereby contributed to changing gender norms within mid-nineteenth century whaling communities. However, because the voyages in which they participated represent less than six percent of the total productivity of New England whalefishery during the period examined in this study, and because of the lasting effects of early-twentieth century sentimentalization on the study of the New England whalefishery, the sister sailors have largely been excluded from the historical narrative of the nineteenth century New England whaling industry. This study rectifies this omission, and in doing so, demonstrates that Mary Brewster, Susan Veeder, Elizabeth Marble, and their fellow sister sailors were not merely historical oddities or participants in a "failed experiment of combining maritime work and home life," but rather agents of important and significant change, as their experiences at sea left lasting impacts on their lives, their communities, and the New England whalefishery.[609]

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[608] The work of historians including Nancy Shoemaker and W. Jeffrey Bolster, as well as ethnographic studies of immigrant communities funded by New Bedford Whaling National Park have rectified this omission in recent years.

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[609] Lisa Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1720-1870* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 261.

APPENDIX A

PRELIMINARY LIST OF WHALING CAPTAINS' WIVES WHO ACCOMPANIED THEIR HUSBANDS AT SEA ABOARD NEW ENGLAND WHALESHIPS, 1840-1870

Year	Port	Vessel	Rig	Captain/Wife	Agent	Wife's Writings
1841	New Bedford, MA	Mars*	Bark	Allen Brownell/Eliza Brownell*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1842	New Bedford, MA	Midas*	Ship	Avery Fortunee Parker	John Coggeshall	
1843	Fairhaven, MA	London Packet*	Ship	Jabez Howland*	Jenney & Tripp*	
1843	New London, CT	Benjamin Morgan*	Ship	Christopher Pendleton	Perkins & Smith*	
1843	New London, CT	Nantasket	Ship	Parker Hempstead Smith	Havens & Smith*	
1843	Providence, RI	South America	Ship	Nathaniel W. Sowle	Thoams Fletcher	
1844	Greenport, NY	Lucy Ann	Ship	Edwin Peter Brown	W. Parsons & Cook*	
1844	Stonington, CT	Warsaw	Bark	John S. Barnum	Pendleton & Stant	
1844	New Bedford, MA	South Carolina	Ship	William B. Gardner	J.D. Thompson*	
1844	New Bedford, MA	Marcia	Ship	Henry S. Howland	E. W. Howland	
1844	Stonington, CT	Newburyport*	Bark	Slumon L. Gray*	Pendleton & Trumball	
1845	New London, CT	Charles Henry	Ship	Gurdon L. Allyn*	Perkins & Smith*	
1845	New London, CT	Atlantic	Ship	William Beck/Hannah Beck	Miner, Lawrence & Co*	
1845	Stonington, CT	Tiger*	Ship	William E. Brewster/Mary Brewster*	J.F. Trumball*	Mystic Seaport
1845	New Bedford, MA	Robert Edwards*	Ship	Nathaniel Burgess*	J & J Howland*	
1845	Sag Harbor, NY	Ontario	Ship	Barney R. Green	Post & Sherry*	
1845	New Bedford, MA	Harrison	Ship	Abner D. Sherman/Mary Ann Sherman^	Abraham Ashley*	
1845	Stonington, CT	Cynosure	Bark	Walter Simonds	J.F. Trumball*	
1845	New Bedford, MA	Saratoga*	Ship	John R. L. Smith	Abraham Ashley*	
1845	Mystic, CT	Globe	Bark	William West	Joseph Avery	
1845	Nantucket, MA	United States	Ship	Calvin G. Worth	Barrett & Upton	
1845	New Bedford, MA	Alfred	Schner	John Pope Davenport^	Pope & Morgan*	
1845	New Bedford, MA	Smyrna	Bark	Grafton Hillman^	B. Ricketson*	
1846	New Bedford, MA	Chase	Bark	Allen Brownell/Eliza Brownell*	B. Ricketson*	
1846	New Bedford, MA	Nassau	Ship	George H. Dexter	Jireh Perry*	
1846	New Bedford, MA	Uncas*	Ship	Charles W. Gelett/Jane Gelett	A.H. Howland	
1846	Warren, RI	Powhattan	Bark	William Mayhew Jr./Caroline Mayhew	Burr & Smith	
1846	New Bedford, MA	Canada	Ship	William Hathaway Reynard	B. Ricketson*	
1847	Nantucket, MA	Peru	Bark	Consider Fisher	R. F. Gardner	
1847	New London, CT	Lark	Bark	Reuben Kelley*	Stoddard & Learned	
1847	New Bedford, MA	Draper	Ship	Gardner T. Lawton	Joseph Dunbar & Co*	
1847	New London, CT	Charles Carroll*	Ship	Thomas W. Long*	Perkins & Smith*	
1847	New Bedford, MA	Emerald*	Ship	John Munkley	Joseph Dunbar & Co*	
1847	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Huntsville*	Ship	Freeman H. Smith*	John H. Jones*	
1847	New Bedford, MA	Moctezuma	Ship	William E. Tower/Betsy Tower	West & Paine	NBWM
1847	New Bedford, MA	Fortune	Bark	Ebenezer Woodbridge*^	Gilbert Hatheway	
1847	New Bedford, MA	Abigail*	Ship	George E. Young^	Pope & Morgan*	
1847	New London, CT	Jefferson*	Ship	Slumon L. Gray*	William P. Benjamin	
1847	Fairhaven, MA	London Packet*	Ship	Jabez Howland*	Gibbs & Jenney*	
1847	Greenport, NY	Roanoke	Bark	Baldwin Smith	Wiggins & Parsons	
1848	New Bedford, MA	William & Eliza	Ship	Francis Allen^	Henry Taber & Co*	
1848	New Bedford, MA	Isabella	Ship	John E. Brayton	L.P. Ashmead	
1848	Stonington, CT	Tiger*	Ship	William E. Brewster/Mary Brewster*	J.F. Trumball*	Mystic Seaport
1848	New Bedford, MA	Cowper*	Ship	Theodore Cole	B, B. Howard	
1848	Newport, RI	Margaret	Ship	Nathan Fales Jr.	J.S. Munroe	
1848	New Bedford, MA	Pacific*	Ship	Asa Hoxie	Jireh Perry*	
1848	New London, CT	Dover	Ship	Charles Jeffrey	Benjamin F. Brown*	
1848	Nantucket, MA	Massachusetts*	Ship	Seth Nickerson	Zenas Adams	
1848	Warren, RI	Luminary*	Ship	John O. Norton/Charity Norton*^	Joseph Smith	
1848	New Bedford, MA	Nimrod*	Ship	Wanton G. Sherman/Marianna Sherman	B. Ricketson*	PPL
1848	New Bedford, MA	Copia*	Ship	Daniel Taber/Sarah Taber*	Lemuel Kollack*	Mariner's Museum
1848	Nantucket, MA	Nauticon	Ship	Charles Veeder/Susan Veeder	G.M. Starbuck & Co*	NHA
1848	Fairhaven, MA	Adeline Gibs*	Ship	Edward Weeks	Gibbs & Jenney*	
1848	Sag Harbor, NY	Elizabeth Frith	Bark	Jonas Winters	Post & Sherry*	
1848	Nantucket, MA	Charles Carroll*	Ship	Josiah Long	W. C. Swain	
1848	New Bedford, MA	Marengo*	Ship	Zebedee Augustus Devoll	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1848	New Bedford, MA	Valparaiso*	Bark	William Cleveland/Clarissa Cleveland*^	Hathaway & Luce	
1849	New Bedford, MA	Robert Edwards*	Ship	Nathaniel Burgess*	J & J Howland*	
1849	New Bedford, MA	Lewis	Ship	William W. Clement^	I.H. Bartlett & Sons*	
1849	New Bedford, MA	Uncas*	Ship	Pardon C. Edwards*	A. H. Howland*	
1849	New Bedford, MA	Emily Morgan*	Ship	Prince Ewer*	William J. Rotch*	
1849	Nantucket, MA	Potomac*	Ship	Charles Grant/Nancy Grant*	I. & P Macy*	
1849	New London, CT	Hannibal*	Ship	Slumon L. Gray*	Ben. F. Brown & Sons*	
1849	Falmouth, MA	Commodore Morris*	Ship	Lewis Lawrence/Eunice Lawrence*^	Oliver C. Swift*	

1849	Providence, RI	Lion	Ship	James Nichols*	Lloyd Bowers	
1849	Nantucket, MA	Navigator*	Ship	George Palmer	M. Crosby	
1849	New London, CT	Jefferson*	Ship	James T. Skinner*	Miner, Lawrence & Co*	
1849	New Bedford, MA	Newton	Bark	William Watson^	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1849	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Huntsville*	Ship	Freeman H. Smith*	John H. Jones*	
1849	New Bedford, MA	Peri	Bark	Elihu Russell*	R. French	
1849	Nantucket, MA	Potomac*	Ship	Charles Grant/Nancy Grant*	L. & P. Macy	
1850	New Bedford, MA	Champion	Ship	Joseph Bailey	J.D. Thompson*	
1850	New London, CT	Peruvian	Ship	William R. Brown	E.V. Stoddard*	
1850	Nantucket, MA	Columbia	Ship	William Cash/Azubah Cash	C.G. & H Coffin	NHA
1850	New London, CT	John & Elizabeth	Ship	William M. Chappel	Williams & Haven*	
1850	New Bedford, MA	Governor Troup*	Ship	Edward Coggeshall/Hannah Coggeshall*	Edward C. Jones*	
1850	Fairhaven, MA	Mary Ann*	Ship	Thomas Dallman*^	L.C. Tripp*	
1850	Nantucket, MA	Monticello*	Ship	John Folger/Eliza Folger	J.H. Shaw	
1850	New London, CT	W. T. Wheaton	Bark	James M. Green*	James Green *	
1850	New Bedford, MA	Courier	Ship	Charles F. Howland	O & G.O. Crocker	
1850	Stonington, CT	Eugene	Bark	Edmund Pendleton^	C.P. Williams	
1850	New Bedford, MA	William Hamilton	Ship	Humphrey Shockley	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1850	Nantucket, MA	Mohawk*	Ship	Oliver C. Swain	I & P Macy*	
1850	Providence, RI	Ocean*	Ship	Edward A. Swift	Edward Pearce	
1850	New Bedford, MA	Gladiator	Ship	James Kempton Turner	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1850	Nantucket, MA	Young Hero	Ship	Samuel Wyer/Charlotte Coffin Wyer	G.M. Starbuck & Co*	NHA
1850	New London, CT	Alert	Ship	John Bolles	Williams & Haven*	
1850	Greenport, NY	Caroline	Ship	Hedges Babcock	Ireland, Wells, & Carpenter	
1850	New London, CT	Lark	Bark	Reuben Kelley*	Perkins & Smith*	
1850	New London, CT	North Star*	Ship	Robert Wilcox Brown	Williams & Barnes*	
1850	New London, CT	William T. Wheaton	Bark	H.S. Comstock^	James Green*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	William C. Nye*	Ship	Charles Henry Adams	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Rodman	Ship	William R. Allyn	C.W. Morgan	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Messenger*	Ship	Amos Crowell Baker Sr.	J.R. Thorton*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Massachusetts*	Ship	James Ellis Bennett/Dorra Maria Bennett	W.F. Dow	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Sea Flower	Bark	Joseph L. Bolles	Charles Almy*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Barnstable*	Ship	Roswell M. Coon	William F. Dow	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Janus II	Ship	Joseph H. Cornell	T & A. R. Nye*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	George Washington	Ship	Pardon C. Edwards*	C. Hitch*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Cowper*	Ship	Nehemiah C. Fisher/Susan Fisher*	Benjamin B. Howard	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Zephyr	Ship	Thomas M. Gardner/Mary Gardner^	Alexander Gibbs*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Natchez	Ship	Worthen Hall	S. Thomas & Co*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Uncas*	Ship	Clark James	A. H. Howland*	
1851	New London, CT	Clement	Bark	Orlando Lane	Miner, Lawrence & Co*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Florida*	Ship	Joseph Little*	Edward C. Jones*	
1851	Westport, MA	Sea Queen	Brig	Joseph Marshall/Malvina Marshall*	Andrew Hicks*	NBWM
1851	New London, CT	Julius Ceasar	Ship	Ebenezer Morgan/Elizabeth Morgan	E.V. Stoddard*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Kutusoff	Ship	Abraham W. Pierce/Harriet Pierce*	H.F. Thomas	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Benjamin Tucker	Ship	John R. Sands	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1851	New London, CT	Issac Hicks	Ship	James T. Skinner*	Miner, Lawrence & Co*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Mary & Martha	Ship	Frederick Slocum/Sarah Jane Slocum*	B. Ricketson*	Mystic Seaport
1851	Mattapoisett, MA	Sarah*	Ship	Ezra Smalley	Loring Meigs	
1851	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Splendid*	Ship	Richard P. Smith*	John H. Jones*	
1851	Fairhaven, MA	Northern Light*	Ship	William J. Stott	Edmund Allen*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Alice Frazier*	Bark	Daniel Taber/Sarah Taber*	Lemuel Kollack*	Mariner's Museum
1851	New Bedford, MA	South America	Ship	Washington Walker	W. O. Brownell	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Sarah Sheafe	Bark	Thomas Wall	Cranston Wilcox*	
1851	New London, CT	Franklin*	Schner	Henry S. Williams^	Perkins & Smith*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Alice Mandell	Ship	Peleg Wing/Eliza Jane Wing	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Eugenia	Bark	William Wood/Eliza Wood	Swift & Allen*	
1851	New London, CT	Benjamin Morgan*	Ship	Edward Chapel	Perkins & Smith*	
1851	New London, CT	Corinthian	Ship	Erasmus Darwin Rogers^	Perkins & Smith*	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Frances Henrietta	Ship	George Swain	Samuel W. Rodman	
1851	Mystic, CT	Hellespont	Ship	John Manwaring	Randall, Smith & Ashley	
1851	New Bedford, MA	Ionia	Bark	Edward Coggeshall/Hannah Coggeshall*	Cranston Wilcox*	
1851	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Nathaniel P. Talmadge	Ship	Henry H. Edwards	John H. Jones*	
1851	Sag Harbor, NY	Nimrod	Bark	James M. Green*	Charles T. Dering	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Lafayette	Bark	Charles Edmund Allen*	I.H. Bartlett & Sons*	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Abigail*	Ship	Francis Drew*^	William G.E. Pope*	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Polar Star*	Ship	Joseph Holley/Lucy Holley	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Anaconda	Bark	Thomas Lawrence/Mercy Lawrence*	I. B. Richmond	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Copia*	Ship	Charles H. Newell*	Lemuel Kollack*	
1852	Warren, RI	Covington*	Bark	Allen Newman/Abby Newman*^	C.T. Child*	
1852	Fairhaven, MA	John Coggeshall	Ship	John O. Norton/Charity Norton*	Reuban Fish	
1852	Nantucket, MA	Mary	Ship	Benjamin Sayer	Edward W. Perry	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Hydaspe	Bark	Russell E. Snow	James B. Wood & Co*	
1852	Nantucket, MA	Catawba	Ship	Obed Swain II/Harriet Swain	Unknown	NHA
1852	Nantucket, MA	Gazelle*	Ship	William Upham	G.M. Starbuck & Co*	

1852	Warren, RI	Bowditch	Ship	Nelson Waldron/Elizabeth Waldron	S.P. Child*	NBWM
1852	New Bedford, MA	George Howland	Ship	David C. Wight	G. & M. Howland*	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Rambler*	Ship	James M. Willis*	F. & G. R. Taber*	
1852	Fairhaven, MA	Amazon	Ship	Edward H. Barber^	Nathan Church	
1852	New Bedford, MA	Mary Wilder	Ship	James F. Cleaveland/Mary Cleaveland*	Charles Almy*	
1852	New London, CT	Nathaniel S. Perkins	Bark	Gurdon L. Allyn*	Unknown	
1853	Nantucket, MA	Potomac*	Ship	Enoch Ackley	I & P Macy*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Junior	Ship	Samuel H. Andrews	D. R. Green & Co	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Othello	Ship	John N. Beckerman/Ann Beckerman	T & A. R. Nye*	
1853	Nantucket, MA	Lexington	Ship	Peter C. Brock/Eliza Brock	Perry & McCleave	NHA
1853	New Bedford, MA	Gideon Howland	Ship	Charles R. Bryant*^	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1853	Falmouth, MA	Hobomok	Ship	Peter E. Childs*	Oliver C. Swift*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Morning Star*	Bark	William Cleveland/Clarissa Cleveland*	S. Thomas & Co*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Rebecca Sims*	Ship	Samuel Gavitt	William R. Rodman	
1853	Fairhaven, MA	Speedwell*	Ship	Benjamin Gibbs*	Stephen C. Gibbs*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Montreal	Ship	Slumon L. Gray*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1853	Fairhaven, MA	Arab*	Ship	Edwin Grinnell*^	Ezekiel Sawin*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Eliza F. Mason*	Ship	Nathaniel Jernegan/Abigail Jernegan	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Robert Edwards*	Ship	John A Kelley/Maria Kelley^	J & J Howland*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Lagoda	Ship	Benjamin Lamphier	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1853	Falmouth, MA	Commodore Morris*	Ship	Lewis Lawrence/Eunice Lawrence*	Oliver C. Swift*	
1853	Stonington, CT	Tiger*	Ship	Leverett Lax	J.F. Trumball*	
1853	Fairhaven, MA	Harvest*	Bark	William Layton^	Jabez Delano, Jr	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Florida*	Ship	Joseph Little*	Edward C. Jones*	
1853	Nantucket, MA	Phoenix	Ship	Israel Morey/Elizabeth Morey	Gardner & McCleave	NHA
1853	New Bedford, MA	Sea Gull*	Ship	Charles Nichols*	J.R. Thorton*	
1853	Nantucket, MA	Ganges	Ship	John B. Nickerson	Meader & Easton	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Superior	Bark	Charles Norton	James B. Wood & Co*	
1853	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Splendid*	Ship	Richard P. Smith*	John H. Jones*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	James Arnold*	Ship	Thomas Sullivan*	Henry Taber & Co*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Joshua Bragdon	Bark	Benjamin Swain*	Lawrence Grinnell	
1853	Mystic, CT	Shepherdess	Bark	Woodbrige Watrous	Charles Mallory	
1853	New London, CT	Jefferson*	Ship	James M. Williams	Miner, Lawrence & Co*	
1853	New Bedford, MA	Metacom*	Ship	Ebenezer Woodbridge*	James B. Wood & Co*	
1854	Dartmouth, MA	Cape Horn Pigeon	Ship	William H. Almy/Almira Almy*	William Potter*	PPL
1854	New Bedford, MA	Emily Morgan*	Ship	Joseph Chase	William J. Rotch*	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Matthew Luce	Bark	James Coon	William Hathaway Jr*	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Magnolia	Ship	G.L. Cox	William G. E. Pope*	
1854	Fairhaven, MA	Mary Ann*	Ship	Thomas Dallman*	L.C. Tripp*	
1854	Sag Harbor, NY	Black Eagle	Bark	Edwards	Thomas Brown	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Stephania*	Ship	Matthew Fisher*	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1854	Nantucket, MA	Mohawk*	Ship	Charles Grant/Nancy Grant*	I & P Macy*	
1854	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Huntsville*	Ship	William J. Grant	John H. Jones*	
1854	Cold Spring Harbor, NY	Sheffield	Ship	James M. Green*	John H. Jones*	
1854	Dartmouth, MA	Benjamin Cummings*	Bark	Spooner Jenkins	Tucker & Cummings	
1854	Provincetown, MA	Rienzi	Schner	Thomas Long*	J.E. & G. Bowley	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Dunbarton	Bark	Joseph P. Nye/Mary Nye*	W. & G. D. Watkins*	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Peri	Bark	Elihu Russell*	Rodney French*	
1854	Fairhaven, MA	Ansel Gibbs*	Ship	Charles Stetson/Elizabeth Stetson*	Gibbs & Jenney*	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Fabius	Ship	Lyman Wing*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1854	New Bedford, MA	Harvest*	Bark	Frederick Winslow	Lorenzo Pierce*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Baltic	Bark	Leonard B. Brownson*	Alexander Gibbs*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Seconet	Ship	James F. Cleaveland/Mary Cleaveland*	Charles Almy*	
1855	Fairhaven, MA	Japan*	Ship	Francis L. Dimon	William G. Blackler*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Francis Henrietta	Bark	Francis Drew*	William G.E. Pope*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Congaree*	Bark	James T. Eldridge*	Thomas Wilcox*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Henry Taber*	Bark	Prince Ewer*	Henry Taber & Co*	
1855	New London, CT	Corea	Ship	Gilbert W. Fish	Frink & Prentis	
1855	New London, CT	North Star*	Ship	Silas Fish	Williams & Barnes*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Barnstable*	Ship	Nehemiah C. Fisher/Susan Fisher*	David B. Kempton*	
1855	Nantucket, MA	Nantucket*	Ship	Richard Gibbs/Almira Gibbs*	Perry & Dunham	PMB
1855	New Bedford, MA	Stella	Bark	Richard Hathaway	Cook & Snow*	
1855	New London, CT	Vesper	Ship	John Hempstead/Harriet Hempstead*	Williams & Barnes*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Alice Frazier*	Bark	Charles H. Newell*	Lemuel Kollack & Sons*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Marengo*	Ship	James T. Skinner*	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Congress II	Ship	Francis Stranberg	Gideon Allen & Sons*	
1855	New Bedford, MA	Nautilus*	Bark	Charles C. Swain/Mary Swain*	Gideon Allen & Sons*	
1855	Fairhaven, MA	Clifford Wayne	Ship	William Swain	Ezekiel Sawin*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Reindeer*	Ship	Edward R. Ashley/Adra B. Ashley*	Edward W. Howland	PMB
1856	New London, CT	Hannibal*	Ship	Christopher B. Chapel	B. Brown's Sons	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Silver Cloud*	Bark	Edward Coggeshall/Hannah Coggeshall*	Russell Maxfield	
1856	Stonington, CT	Newburyport*	Bark	Jared Crandall	J.E. Smith & Co	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Lancer	Ship	Aaron C. Cushman/Mary Cushman	Richmond & Wood	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Merlin*	Bark	John S. Deblois/Henrietta Deblois	W. & G.D. Watkins*	NHS

1856	Fairhaven, MA	Arctic	Ship	Charles A. Evans/Sarah Evans	Edmund Allen*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Florida*	Ship	Coddington P. Fish*	Edward C. Jones*	
1856	Stonington, CT	Tybee	Bark	Charles Freeman	J. E. Smith & Co	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Ocean*	Ship	Ezra Gifford*	J.R. Thorton*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Courser*	Bark	S. Henry Gifford	B. Franklin Howland	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Mars*	Bark	Gerardus Harrison	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Niger*	Ship	Nathan Jernegan/Charlotte Jernegan	William Hathaway Jr*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Addison*	Ship	Samuel Lawrence/Mary C. Lawrence	Issac B. Richmond*	PPL
1856	Westport, MA	Aurora	Bark	Joseph Marshall/Malvina Marshall*	Andrew Hicks*	
1856	Warren, RI	Covington*	Bark	Allen Newman/Abby Newman*	C.T. Child*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Morning Light	Ship	John O. Norton/Charity Norton*	S. Thomas & Co*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Kingfisher II	Bark	Martin Palmer	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Saratoga*	Ship	Frederick Slocum/Sarah Jane Slocum*	Abraham Ashley*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Valparaiso*	Bark	Shadrach R. Tilton	William Hathaway Jr*	
1856	Stonington, CT	Cincinnati	Ship	F. Stanton Williams	Stanton & Pendleton	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Rambler*	Ship	James M. Willis*	F. & G.R. Taber*	
1856	New Bedford, MA	Helen Mar*	Bark	Henry E. Worth	Lemuel Kollack & Sons*	
1857	Westport, MA	Platina*	Bark	David E. Allen/ Harriet Allen*	Andrew Hicks*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Huntress	Bark	William H. Allen	Cook & Snow*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Gazelle*	Ship	Michael Baker III/Eleanor Baker*	T & A. R. Nye*	NBWM
1857	Fairhaven, MA	Belle	Bark	Roswell Brown	Edmund Allen*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	America	Ship	Charles R. Bryant*	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1857	Fairhaven, MA	Harvest*	Bark	John Charry	John Howard	
1857	New Bedford, MA	William Thompson	Ship	Peter E. Childs*	Swift & Perry*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Roman II*	Ship	Abraham Dehart/Charlotte Dehart	Abraham Barker	NBWM
1857	New Bedford, MA	Pocahontus	Ship	John Dennis	Rodney French*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Triton	Bark	John Dormin	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Hibernia II	Ship	Pardon C. Edwards*	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Stephania*	Ship	Matthew Fisher*	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1857	Fairhaven, MA	Speedwell*	Ship	Benjamin Gibbs*	Stephen C. Gibbs*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Hope*	Ship	Leonard Gifford/Lucy Ann Gifford	Wilcox & Richmond	
1857	Fairhaven, MA	Arab*	Ship	Edwin Grinnell*	Ezekiel Sawin*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Congress	Ship	John Hamblin/Maria Hamblin*	Edward C. Jones*	
1857	Fairhaven, MA	Rebecca Sims*	Ship	William T. Hawes	Jenney & Tripp*	
1857	New London, CT	New England	Ship	Dennison Hempstead/Fanny Hempstead	Lawrence & Co	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Metacom*	Ship	John F. Hinds	James B. Wood & Co*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Franklin*	Bark	John S. Howland	William Wilcox	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Alto*	Bark	Thomas Lawrence/Mercy Lawrence*	Richmond & Pierce	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Kathleen*	Bark	John C. Marble/Elizabeth Marble*	J & W. R. Wing & Co*	NBWM
1857	New Bedford, MA	Emerald*	Bark	Abraham W. Pierce/Harriet Pierce*	Henry F. Thomas*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Eliza F. Mason*	Ship	Richard P. Smith*	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Ospray	Bark	James E. Stanton*	Swift & Allen*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Mary & Susan*	Ship	James Stewart*	C. Knowles & Co	
1857	New Bedford, MA	James Arnold*	Ship	Thomas Sullivan*	Henry Taber & Co*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	John Avery Parker	Bark	Benjamin Swain*	Henry F. Thomas*	
1857	Sag Harbor, NY	Augusta	Bark	James M. Taber	W. & G. H. Cooper	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Scotland	Ship	Joshua Weeks	O. & E. W. Seabury	
1857	Fairhaven, MA	Omega	Ship	Jonathan Whaldon	N. Church	
1857	New Bedford, MA	Robert Edwards*	Ship	Jarvis Wood	James H. Howland*	
1857	New Bedford, MA	John Wells*	Bark	Ebenezer Woodbridge*	Thomas Knowles & Co*	
1857	Edgartown, MA	Eureka	Bark	Young	John A. Baylies*	
1858	New Bedford, MA	William Gifford	Bark	Nehemiah Baker/Susan Baker	William Gifford*	
1858	Westport, MA	Sacramento	Bark	Thaddeus Defriez	A.H. Cory	
1858	Edgartown, MA	Navigator*	Ship	Jared Fisher Jr/Desire Fisher	John A. Baylies*	
1858	Mattapoisett, MA	Clara Bell*	Bark	Timothy Fisher	R. L. Barstow	
1858	Westport, MA	Elizabeth*	Bark	Hiram Francis*	Andrew Hicks*	
1858	New Bedford, MA	Emma C. Jones*	Ship	Jonathan C Hawes/Jerusha Hawes*	Edward C. Jones*	NBFPL
1858	New London, CT	Philip	Bark	Elias Hempstead/Ellen Hempstead	George Huntley	
1858	New London, CT	Catharine	Bark	John Hempstead/Harriet Hempstead*	Thomas Fitch	
1858	New Bedford, MA	Sea Gull*	Ship	Charles Nichols*	John R. Thornton*	
1858	Edgartown, MA	Splendid*	Ship	Shubael Norton/Ellen Norton*	A. Osborn	
1858	New Bedford, MA	Cambria	Ship	Henry Pease	James B. Wood & Co*	
1858	New Bedford, MA	Lancaster	Ship	Thomas Russell/Eliza Russell	T. & A. R. Nye	
1858	New Bedford, MA	Minerva Smyth	Ship	Abner Smith	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1858	New Bedford, MA	John Howland*	Ship	Alexander Wheldon/Clara Wheldon*	James H. Howland*	
1858	Fairhaven, MA	Florida II	Ship	Thomas W. Williams/Eliza Williams*	Fish, Robinson & Co	PEM
1858	Fairhaven, MA	Atkins Adams	Bark	William Wilson/Ann Wilson	William G. Blackler*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Roscoe*	Bark	William H. Almy/Almira Almy*	Luom Snow*	NBWM
1859	New Bedford, MA	Elizabeth Swift*	Bark	Josiah E. Chase*	Swift & Allen*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Vigilant	Bark	Frederick P. Cole/Sarah Cole	W & G.D. Watkins*	PEM
1859	New Bedford, MA	Florida*	Ship	Coddington P. Fish*	Edward C. Jones*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Trident	Ship	Elisha Fisher	Frederick Parker	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Ocean*	Ship	Ezra Gifford*	John R. Thornton*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Messenger*	Bark	John W. Gifford	John R. Thornton*	

1859	New Bedford, MA	Japan*	Ship	Charles Grant/Nancy Grant*	William G. Blackler*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Golconda	Bark	Joseph R. Green	George & M. Howland	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Osceola	Bark	Otis Hamblin*	Cranston Wilcox*	
1859	Fairhaven, MA	Hesper	Ship	Joseph Hamblin*	Dexter Jenney	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Roman*	Ship	John Hamblin/Maria Hamblin*	Edward C. Jones*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Issac Howland	Ship	Thomas Long*	I. Howland Jr & Co*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Hope*	Bark	Seth McFarlin	Zeno Kelley	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Harvest*	Ship	Wilbour Manchester	Lorenzo Pierce*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Rainbow	Ship	James Nichols*	William Gifford*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Seine*	Bark	John S. Smith	Rodney French*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Nautilus*	Ship	Charles C. Swain/Mary Swain*	Gideon Allen & Sons*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	Congaree*	Bark	Weston J. Swift	Thomas Wilcox*	
1859	New Bedford, MA	James Maury*	Ship	Lyman Wing*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1860	Fairhaven, MA	Lydia	Ship	Elisha Babcock/Eliza Babcock	Jenney & Tripp*	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Mars*	Bark	Abner P. Barker	Gifford & Cummings	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Barnstable*	Bark	Leonard B. Brownson*	David B. Kempton*	
1860	Fairhaven, MA	General Scott*	Ship	James T. Eldridge*	L.C. Tripp*	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Endeavour	Bark	Owen Fisher	Abraham Ashley*	
1860	Nantucket, MA	Norman	Ship	Richard Gibbs/Almira Gibbs*	G. M. Starbuck & Co*	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Milton*	Ship	Charles Halsey*	Henry Taber & Co*	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Emma C. Jones*	Ship	Gorham Howes/Anna Howes	Edward C. Jones*	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Awashonks	Bark	John C. Marble/Elizabeth Marble*	J. & W. R. Wing & Co*	NBWM
1860	New Bedford, MA	Addison*	Bark	John Pierce*	Issac B. Richmond	
1860	New Bedford, MA	E. Corning	Bark	Charles Stetson/Elizabeth Stetson*	William C. N. Swift	NBWM
1860	New Bedford, MA	Thomas Dicksason	Ship	James Stewart*	G. & M. Howland*	
1860	New Bedford, MA	Polar Star*	Ship	David Wood	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1861	New Bedford, MA	Hector	Ship	Amos Chase/Louise Chase*	William J. Rotch*	
1861	New Bedford, MA	John Wells*	Bark	Matthew Fisher*	Thomas Knowles & Co*	
1861	Westport, MA	Elizabeth*	Bark	Hiram Francis*	Andrew Hicks*	
1861	New Bedford, MA	Swallow*	Ship	Frederick Slocum/Sarah Jane Slocum*	William G. Blackler*	
1861	New Bedford, MA	Robert Morrison	Bark	Crary Waite	Thomas Knowles & Co*	
1861	New Bedford, MA	Washington	Bark	John D. Willard	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1862	New Bedford, MA	Governor Troup*	Ship	Edward R. Ashley/Adra B. Ashley*	Edward C. Jones*	
1862	New Bedford, MA	Morning Star*	Bark	Hervey Luce/Sarah Luce*	S. Thomas & Co*	
1862	Fairhaven, MA	Alto*	Bark	Joseph P. Nye/Mary Nye*	Damon & Judd*	
1862	New Bedford, MA	Camilla	Bark	Reuben Kelley*	Swift & Allen*	
1862	New Bedford, MA	Jireh Swift	Bark	Thomas W. Williams/Eliza Williams*	Swift & Allen*	
1862	New Bedford, MA	Gazelle*	Ship	Daniel Worth/Jane Worth*	Thomas Nye Jr.	
1863	New Bedford, MA	Brewster	Ship	John A. Beebe/Lydia Beebe*	J & W.R. Wing*	NHA
1863	New Bedford, MA	Nimrod	Bark	James M. Clark/Maria Clark*	William Gifford*	Mystic Seaport
1863	New Bedford, MA	Eliza Adams*	Ship	Coddington P. Fish*	Edward C. Jones*	
1863	New Bedford, MA	Milo	Ship	Jonathan C Hawes/Jerusha Hawes*	Edward C. Jones*	
1863	New Bedford, MA	Oriole	Bark	Jared Jernegan/Helen Jernegan*	Edward C. Jones*	
1863	New Bedford, MA	Charles W. Morgan*	Ship	Thomas C. Landers/Lydia Landers	J. & W. R. Wing & Co*	
1863	New Bedford, MA	John P. West*	Bark	Daniel J. Tinker	Simeon N. West	
1864	New Bedford, MA	James Maury*	Ship	Slumon L. Gray*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1864	Westport, MA	Platina*	Bark	Otis Hamblin*	Andrew Hicks*	
1864	New Bedford, MA	Roman*	Ship	John Hamblin/Maria Hamblin*	Edward C. Jones*	
1864	New Bedford, MA	Cleone*	Bark	Hervey Luce/Sarah Luce*	Edmund Maxfield*	
1864	Fairhaven, MA	Alto*	Bark	Joseph P. Nye/Mary Nye*	Damon & Judd*	
1864	New Bedford, MA	George	Bark	James E. Stanton*	Gideon Allen & Sons*	
1864	New Bedford, MA	John Howland*	Bark	Alexander Wheldon/Clara Wheldon*	James H. Howland*	NBWM
1864	New Bedford, MA	Minerva II	Bark	Edward Penniman/Augusa Penniman	Thomas Knowles & Co*	
1865	New Bedford, MA	Nautilus*	Bark	George W. Bliven/Harriet Bliven*	Gideon Allen & Sons*	PEM
1865	New Bedford, MA	Louisa	Bark	Reuben W. Crapo/Lucy Ann Crapo	Swift & Allen*	NBWM
1865	Boston, MA	Louisa A	Schner	Freeman	Heman Smith	
1865	Dartmouth, MA	Matilda Sears*	Bark	William D. Gifford*	William Potter*	
1865	New Bedford, MA	Milton*	Ship	Charles Grant/Nancy Grant*	Henry Taber & Co*	
1865	New Bedford, MA	Courser*	Bark	Joseph Hamblin*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1865	New Bedford, MA	Gay Head*	Ship	William H. Kelley*	James B. Wood & Co*	
1865	New Bedford, MA	St. George	Ship	George H. Soule	Taber, Read & Co	
1865	New Bedford, MA	Swallow*	Ship	William Weeks	William Watkins*	
1865	New Bedford, MA	Massachusetts*	Bark	Nathan B. Wilcox	Swift & Allen*	
1865	New London, CT	Monticello	Bark	Thomas W. Williams/Eliza Williams*	R. H. Chappell	
1866	New Bedford, MA	Xantho	Bark	John A. Beebe/Lydia Beebe*	J. & W. R. Wing & Co*	NHA
1866	New Bedford, MA	Benjamin Cummings*	Bark	Charles Halsey*	Taber, Gordon & Co*	
1866	New Bedford, MA	Henry Taber*	Bark	Frederick Howland	Taber, Gordon & Co*	
1866	Provincetown, MA	Alcyone	Schner	William Hudson	E. & E. K. Cook & Son	
1866	New Bedford, MA	Corinthian	Ship	Valentine Lewis/Ethelinda Lewis	G. & M. Howland*	
1866	Edgartown, MA	Europa*	Ship	Thomas Mellen/Kate Mellen	C. B. Merchant	
1866	New Bedford, MA	Bartholomew Gosnold*	Ship	Charles Nichols*	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1866	New Bedford, MA	James Arnold*	Ship	Thomas Sullivan*	Taber, Gordon & Co*	
1866	New Bedford, MA	Hercules	Bark	James H. Mckenzie/Susan McKenzie*	Swift & Perry*	NBWM
1867	New Bedford, MA	Northern Light*	Bark	Michael Baker III/Eleanor Baker*	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	

1867	Westport, MA	Platina*	Bark	Amos Chase/Louise Chase*	Andrew Hicks*	
1867	New Bedford, MA	Orlando	Bark	James M. Clark/Maria Clark*	C. Hitch & Sons*	Mystic Seaport
1867	New Bedford, MA	Eliza Adams*	Ship	Caleb O. Hamblin/Emily Hamblin	Taber, Gordon & Co*	
1867	New Bedford, MA	Mary & Susan*	Bark	Alonzo O. Herendeen/Anna Herendeen*	Thomas Knowles & Co*	
1867	New Bedford, MA	Ionia	Bark	John O. Norton/Charity Norton*	Edmund Maxfield*	
1867	New Bedford, MA	Alaska*	Bark	Shubael Norton/Ellen Norton*	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1867	New Bedford, MA	John Dawson*	Bark	Asaph S. Wicks*^	J. & W. R. Wing & Co*	
1867	Salem, MA	Para	Brig	Daniel Worth/Jane Worth*	John C. Osgood	
1868	New Bedford, MA	Merlin*	Bark	David E. Allen/ Harriet Allen*	William Watkins*	NBWM
1868	New Bedford, MA	Elizabeth Swift*	Bark	George W. Bliven/Harriet Bliven*	Swift & Allen*	
1868	New Bedford, MA	Governor Troup*	Ship	John A. Castino	Edward C. Jones*	
1868	New Bedford, MA	Emily Morgan*	Bark	Benjamin Dexter	J. & W. R. Wing & Co*	
1868	New Bedford, MA	Napoleon*	Bark	William C. Fuller	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1868	New Bedford, MA	Roman*	Bark	Jared Jernegan/Helen Jernegan*	William Watkins*	
1868	New Bedford, MA	Cleone*	Bark	Hervey Luce/Sarah Luce*	Edmund Maxfield*	
1868	New Bedford, MA	James Maury*	Bark	John C. Smith	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1869	New Bedford, MA	Sea Ranger	Bark	Charles Edmund Allen*	I.H. Bartlett & Sons*	
1869	New Bedford, MA	Live Oak	Bark	John A. Beckerman/Rachel Beckerman	Charles S. Randall	NBWM
1869	New Bedford, MA	Desdemona	Bark	Samuel F. Davis/Salome Davis	G. & M. Howland*	
1869	Dartmouth, MA	Matilda Sears*	Bark	William D. Gifford*	William Potter*	
1869	Westport, MA	Mermaid*	Bark	John Horan	Andrew Hicks*	
1869	New Bedford, MA	Annie Ann	Bark	John Pierce*	John W. Pierce	
1869	New Bedford, MA	Nautilus*	Bark	George Smith/Lucy Vincent Smith	Gideon Allen & Sons*	PPL
1869	New Bedford, MA	Ansel Gibbs*	Bark	Charles Stetson/Elizabeth Stetson*	Jonathan Bourn, Jr*	
1869	New Bedford, MA	Fanny	Bark	Lewis Williams^	Swift & Allen*	
1869	New Bedford, MA	Three Brothers*	Bark	James Witherell	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Commodore Morris*	Ship	Gilbert B. Borden	Swift & Perry*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Cicero*	Bark	Henry Clay	Luom Snow & Sons*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Niger*	Ship	Charles Grant/Nancy Grant*	Taber, Gordon & Co*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Mary & Susan*	Bark	Alonzo O. Herendeen/Anna Herendeen*	Thomas Knowles & Co*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Gay Head*	Ship	William H. Kelley*	James B. Wood & Co*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Canton II	Ship	Joshua Lapham/Ellen Lapham	Charles R. Tucker & Co*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	Contest	Ship	Leander Owen/Jane Owen^	Swift & Perry*	
1870	New Bedford, MA	John Dawson*	Bark	Asaph S. Wicks*	J. & W. R. Wing & Co*	

Key:
*Indicates captain or agent participated in two or more wife-carrying voyages
^Indicates first time whaling captain went to sea with his wife

Location of Captains' Wives' Letters and Journals:

Mariner's Museum	Mariner's Museum and Park, Newport News, VA
Mystic Seaport	Mystic Seaport, Inc., Mystic, CT
NBFPL	New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, MA
NBWM	New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, MA
NHA	Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, MA
PMB	Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, Canberra, Australia
PEM	Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA
PPL	Providence Public Library, Providence, RI

Sources**:**

American Offshore Whaling Voyage Database, Mystic Seaport, Inc. and New Bedford Whaling Museum, https://whalinghistory.org.

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APPENDIX B

WIFE-CARRYING WHALESHIPS BY PORT, 1840-1870

Port	Wife-Carrying Voyages
Boston, MA	1
Cold Spring Harbor, NY	7
Dartmouth, MA	4
Edgartown, MA	4
Fairhaven, MA	28
Falmouth, MA	3
Greenport, NY	3
Mattapoisett, MA	2
Mystic, CT	3
Nantucket, MA	22
New Bedford, MA	248
New London, CT	33
Newport, RI	1
Providence, RI	3
Provincetown, MA	2
Sag Harbor, NY	5
Salem, MA	1
Stonington, CT	10
Warren, RI	5
Westport, MA	9
20 ports	394 voyages
7,036 Total Voyages Between 1840 and 1870	
5.86% Wife-Carrying	

Source**:** Preliminary List of Whaling Captains' Wives Who Accompanied Their Husbands at Sea Aboard New England Whaleships, 1840-1870.

APPENDIX C

A LEXICON OF WHALING TERMINOLOGY

Able seaman: An experienced whalemen.

Aft: The portion of the vessel toward the stern.

Agent: The manager of a whaleship, often an owner.

Ambergris: A grey, gritty substance formed in the digestive tract of sperm whales used by the perfume industry as a fixative.

Baleen: Also known as whalebone, plates of keratin used by Mysticeti whales to filter food from the water.

Bark: Also Barque. A vessel with three of more masts with all masts but the sternmost square rigged, the sternmost being fore-and-aft rigged.

Barrel: A measurement of 31 ½ gallons of whale oil.

Blanket strip: A long strip of blubber than has been flensed off a whale and hoisted aboard ship. Subsequently cut into smaller pieces before being boiled in the try-works.

Blow: A spout of a whale.

Blubber: Thick, oily fat found on whales that serves as protection and insulation against pressure and cold.

Boatsteerer: A harpooner, or the member of the crew that darts a harpoon iron into a whale and then steers the whaleboat while the mate lances the animal.

Bomb Lance: A lance shot from a shoulder gun.

Bow: The front of a vessel.

Brig: Or brigantine. A two-masted vessel, square rigged on the foremast but fore-and-aft rigged on the mainmast.

Cabin: An enclosed room or space on a vessel.

Capstan: A large winch with a vertical axis. A full-sized human-powered capstan is a waist-high cylindrical machine, operated by a number of hands who each insert a horizontal capstan bar in holes in the capstan and walk in a circle

Case: The forehead of a sperm whale, composed almost entirely of spermaceti.

Chandlery: A retail business specializing in maritime items.

Clean Ship: A whaleship without oil.

Cruise: A whaler was said to cruise when, on the whaling grounds, she either lay-to or went under shortened sail at night, and set sail again in the morning. Also used to refer to a short stint of whaling during a longer voyage.

Cutting-In: The process of removing blubber from a whale, also known a flensing.

Cutting Spade: A wide, flat, long-handled chisel-shaped implement for cutting blubber.

Cutting Stage: A wooden stage protruding from the side of the ship upon which officers would stand while cutting-in.

Davits: Curled wooden arms that suspend a whaleboat over the side of the ship.

Fishery: A name applied to the entire fleet of any town, nation, or locality. Also applied collectively to the ships fishing on an important whaling ground; that is, the New Bedford Fishery, the American Fishery, the Sperm Fishery, the Arctic Fishery

Flensing: The act of slicing blubber off a whale, also known as cutting-in.

Flukes: The horizontal tail fins of a whale.

Fo'c'sle: The forecastle, or fo'c'sle, was a triangular shaped compartment below deck in which a whaleship's crew lived during a voyage.

Fore-and-Aft Rig: A sailing rig consisting mainly of sails that are set along the line of the keel rather than perpendicular to it.

Full up: A whaleship full of oil.

Galley: A vessel's kitchen.

Gamming: The practice of two whaleship captains or crews visiting one another while at sea.

Greenhand: An inexperienced man on his first whaling voyage.

Hands: A term for whalemen, as in "All hands on deck!"

Harpoon: An iron or steel instrument with a barbed head used for fastening to whales.

Head: A vessel's toilet.

Hen Frigate: Any ship with a woman aboard.

Iron: The name commonly applied to a harpoon by whalemen.

Junk: The wedge shaped lower half of the sperm whale's forehead.

Lance: Iron or steel instrument used for killing whales.

Lay: A whaleman’s proportionate share of the earnings of a voyage. Long lays imply smaller shares, while short lays imply larger shares.

Make port: When a vessel sails into a port of call, often for provisioning or to solicit new recruits.

Mast: A vertical pole on a ship which supports sails or rigging.

Mate: An officer aboard a whaleship. Two to three mates served aboard the average nineteenth-century whaleship.

Outward Bound: To leave the safety of port, heading for the open ocean.

Pitch: The motion of a vessel as it rotates on its transverse axis, causing the fore and aft ends to rise and fall repetitively.

Port: The left side of a vessel.

Rigging: The system of masts and lines on ships and other sailing vessels

Roll: The rotating of a vessel from side to side along its longitudinal axis.

Sailor’s Valentines: A type of folk art made of shells made or purchased by mariners as gifts for wives and sweethearts during the nineteenth century.

Schooner: A type of sailing vessel characterized by the use of fore-and-aft sails on two or more masts with the forward mast being no taller than the rear masts.

Scrimshaw: The art of the whalemen. Pictorial, ornamental and useful things made of the bone and teeth of the Sperm Whale.

Shanghaied: Condition of a crewman involuntarily impressed into service on a ship

Ship: Officially, a ship is a three-masted vessel with square rigs on all masts. In general parlance, the term is used to describe any seafaring vessel.

Spermaceti: The head matter of a sperm whale.

Sperm Oil: Oil harvested from the cranium of a sperm whale.

Square-Rig: A generic type of sail and rigging arrangement in which the primary driving sails are carried on yards which are perpendicular, or square, to the keel of the vessel and to the masts.

Starboard: The right side of a vessel.

Stern: The rear of a vessel.

Steward. A member of a vessel's crew involved in commissary duties and personal services to a vessel’s captain and officers.

Tacking: Zig-zagging so as to sail directly towards the wind.

Thar She Blows: The common announcement made by whalemen upon the sighting of a whale.

Toggle Iron: Invented by African-American whaleman Lewis Temple, toggle irons were the most successful ever made due to their durability and practical design.

Trying-Out: The process of boiling pieces of whale blubber so as to render it into pure oil.

Underway: A vessel that is moving under control: that is, neither at anchor, made fast to the shore, aground nor adrift.

Watch: A period of time during which a part of the crew is on duty.

Whaleboat: A small rowboat used to catch and kill whales. Usually whaleboats are relatively narrow and pointed at both ends, enabling to move either forwards or backwards equally well.

Whalebone: A nineteenth-century term for baleen.

Whaleship: A whaling vessel.

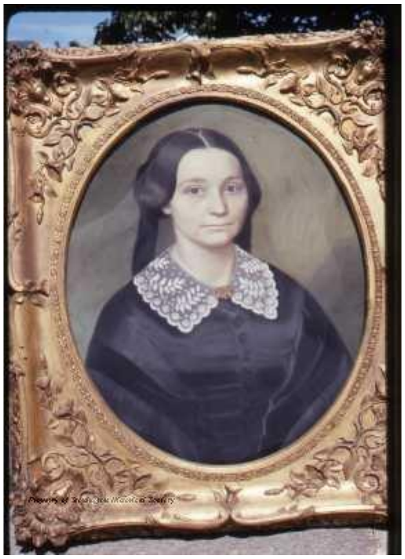
Whale oil: Oil harvested by rendering whale blubber.

Wharf: A structure on the shore of a harbor or on the bank of a river or canal where ships may dock to load and unload cargo or passengers.

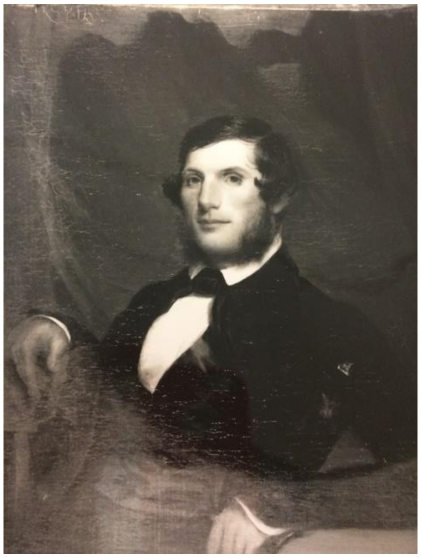
Widow’s Walk: A railed, rooftop platform frequently found on homes in nineteenth century New England port communities. Scholars debate their origins and purpose, though they have largely become synonymous with gendered perceptions of women in maritime communities.

APPENDIX D

PORTRAITS OF THE SISTER SAILORS

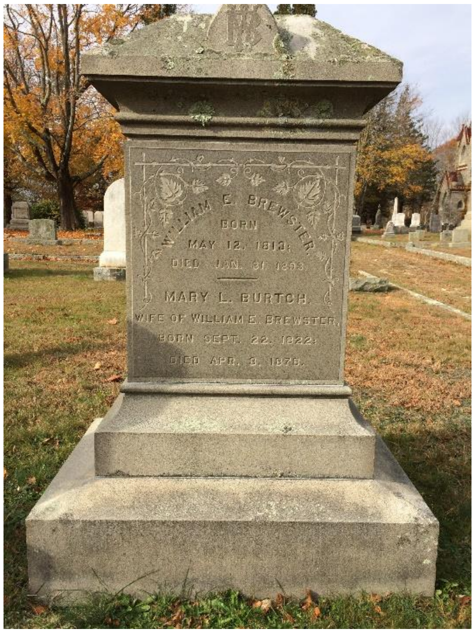


Mary Louisa Burtch Brewster, 1856

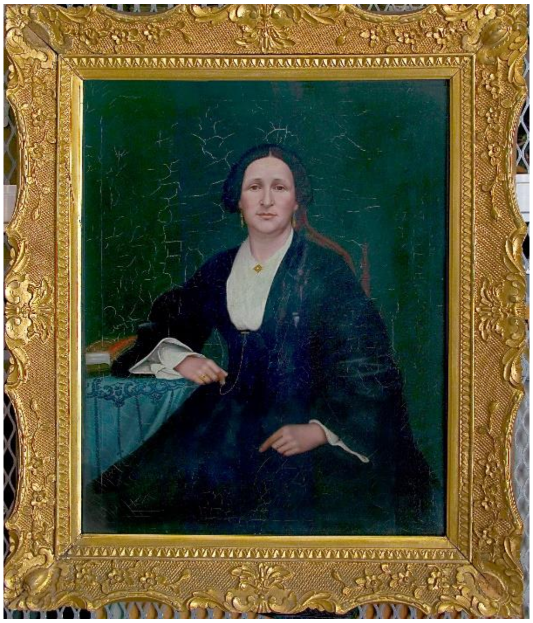


Captain William E. Brewster, 1843

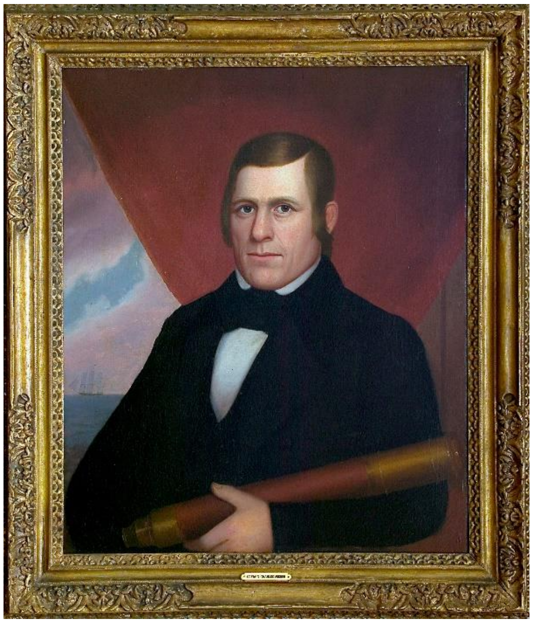
From the collection of the Stonington Historical Society
Used with permission


WILLIAM E. BREWSTER
BORN
MAY 12. 1813;
DIED JAN. 31. 1863.
MARY L. BURTCH.
WIFE OF WILLIAM E. BREWSTER.
BORN SEPT. 22. 1822;
DIED APR. 8. 1878.

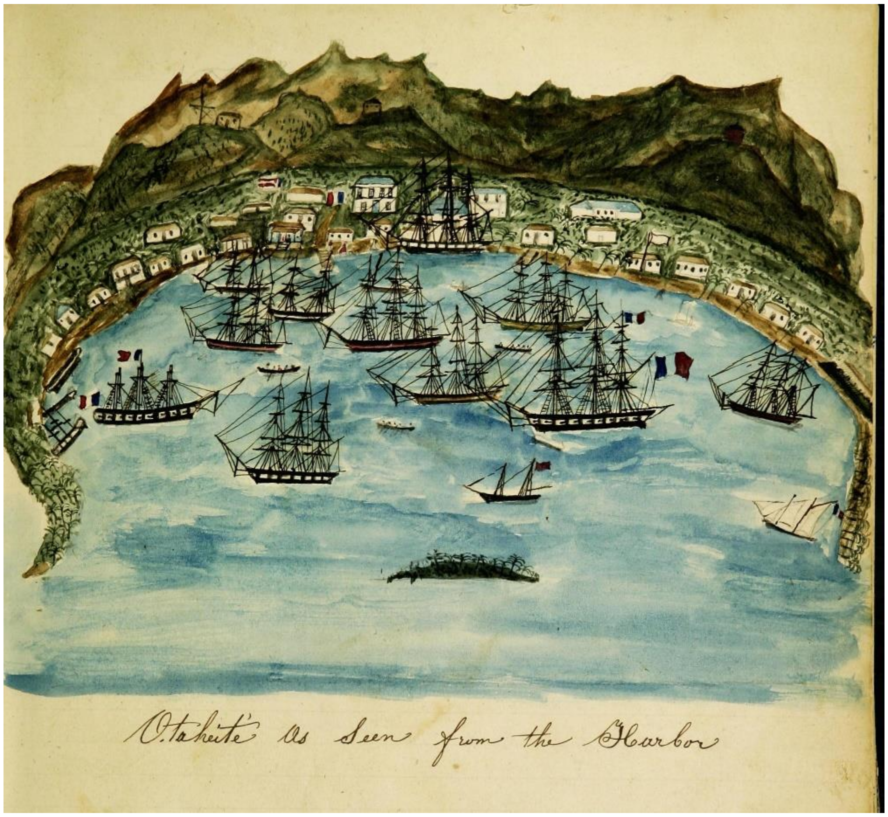
Captain William E. and Mary B. Brewster's Headstone, Stonington Cemetery, Stonington, Connecticut
Photo by Amanda L. Goodheart



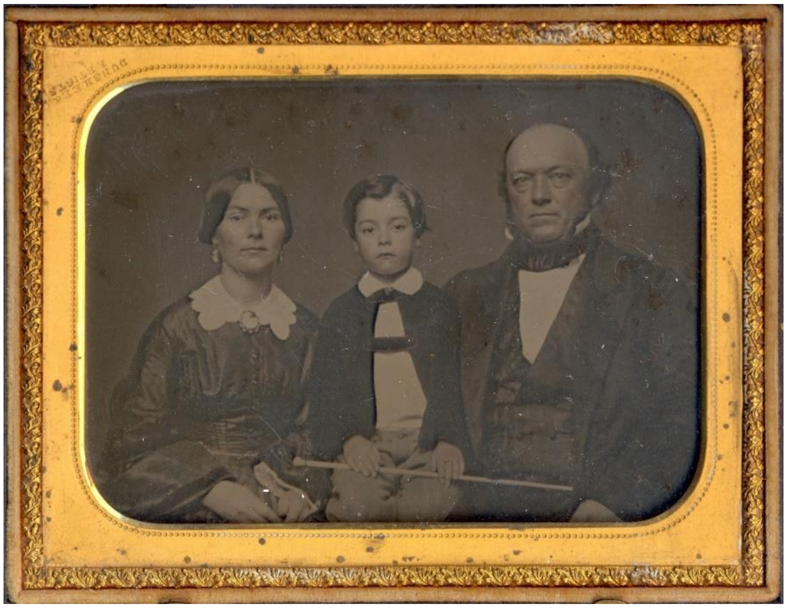
Susan Austin Veeder, c. 1845



Captain Charles A. Veeder, c. 1845

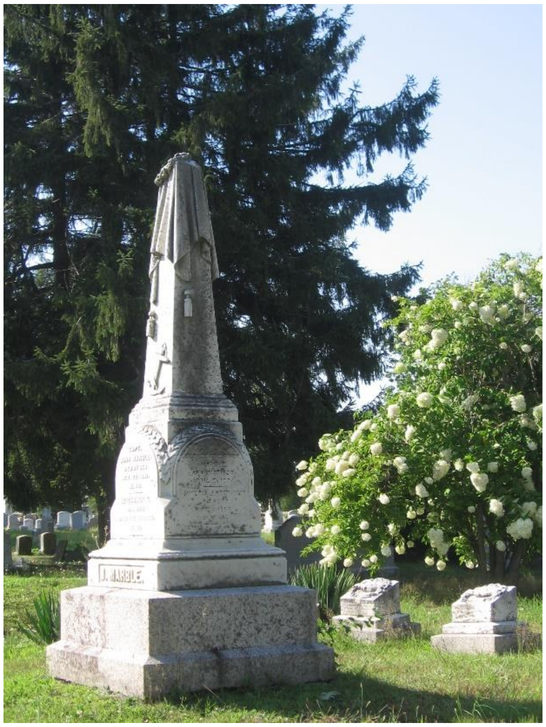

Otahite as Seen from the Harbor

Otahite (Tahiti) as Seen from the Harbor
From Susan Veeder's *Nauticon* Journal
Courtesy of Nantucket Historical Association



Elizabeth Church Wrightington Marble, Captain John C. Marble, and George Frederick Marble, 1857

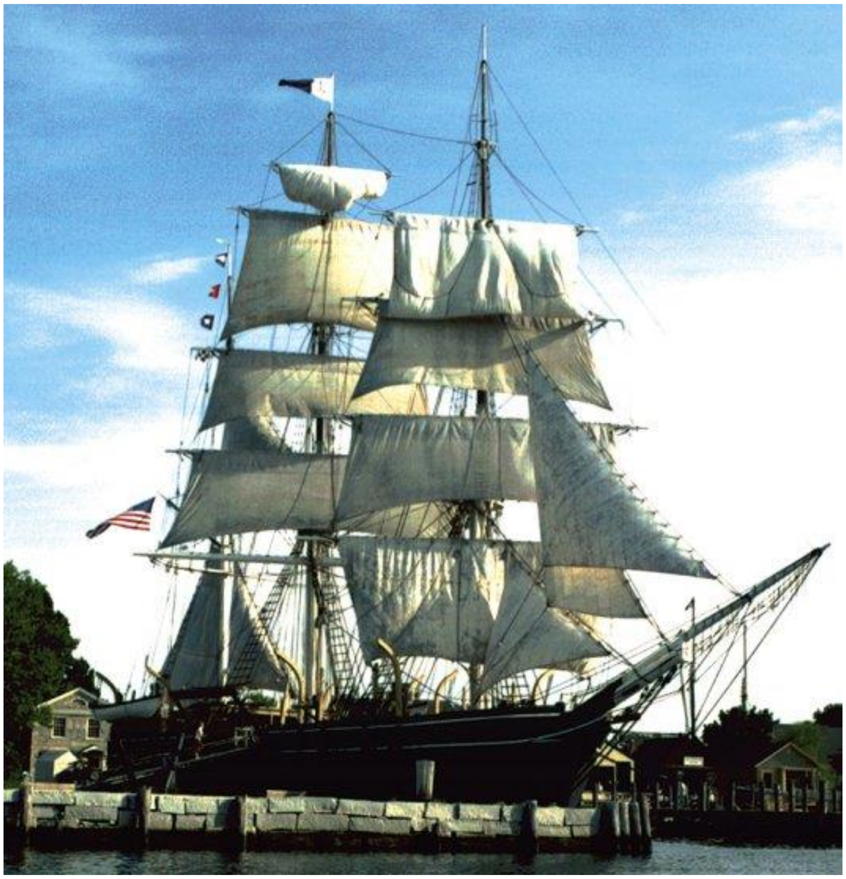
Courtesy of the New Bedford Whaling Museum



Marble Family Plot, Oak Grove Cemetery, Fall River, Massachusetts
Photo by Amanda L. Goodheart

APPENDIX E

IMAGES OF THE WHALE HUNT



The *Charles W. Morgan*

Courtesy of Mystic Seaport, Inc.

Digitized by Google

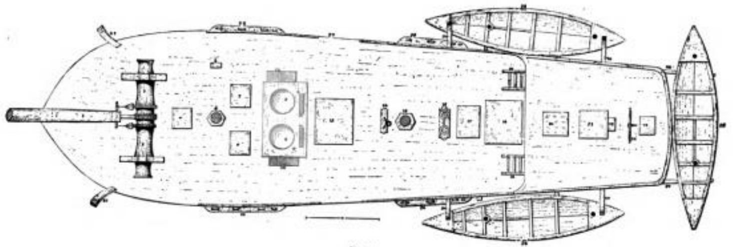


Fig. 1.

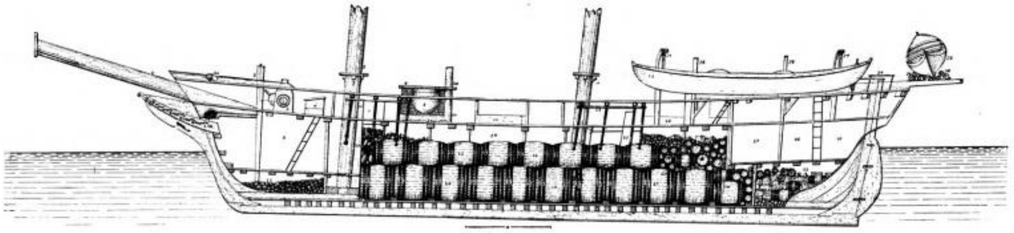


Fig. 2.

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

THE WHALE FISHERY.

Deck plan and side and interior plan of the whaling schooner Amelia, of New Bedford, Mass. (Sect. v, vol. ii, p. 234.)

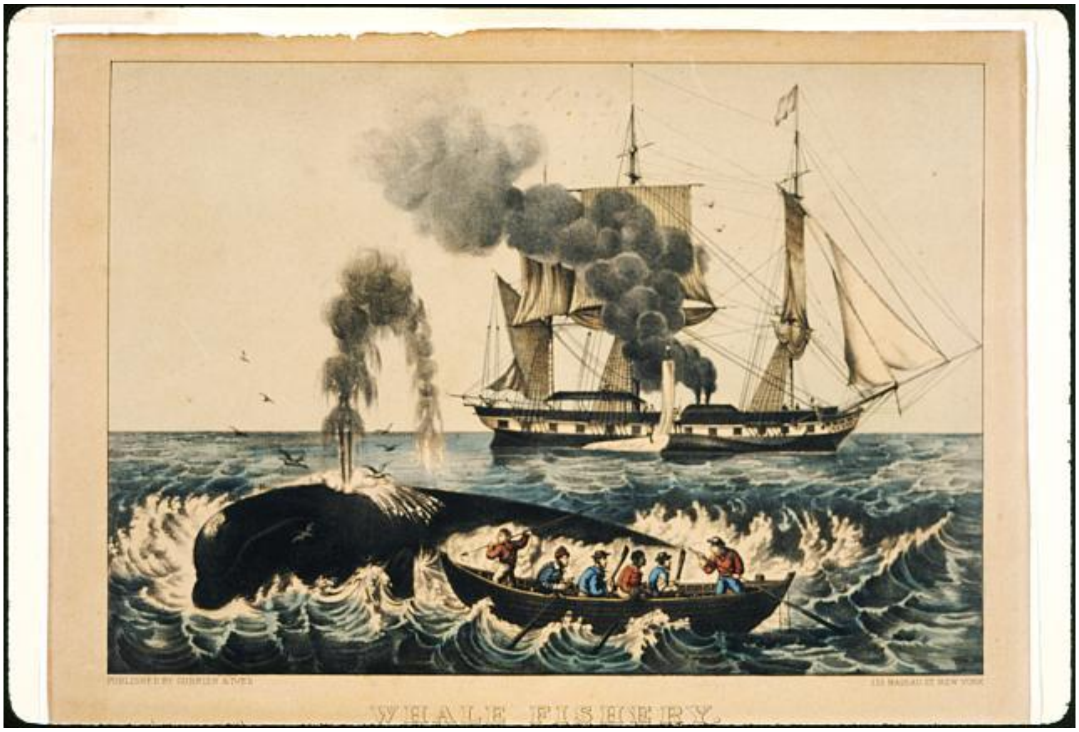
Drawing by C. S. Raleigh.

[See explanation opposite.]

PLATE 188.

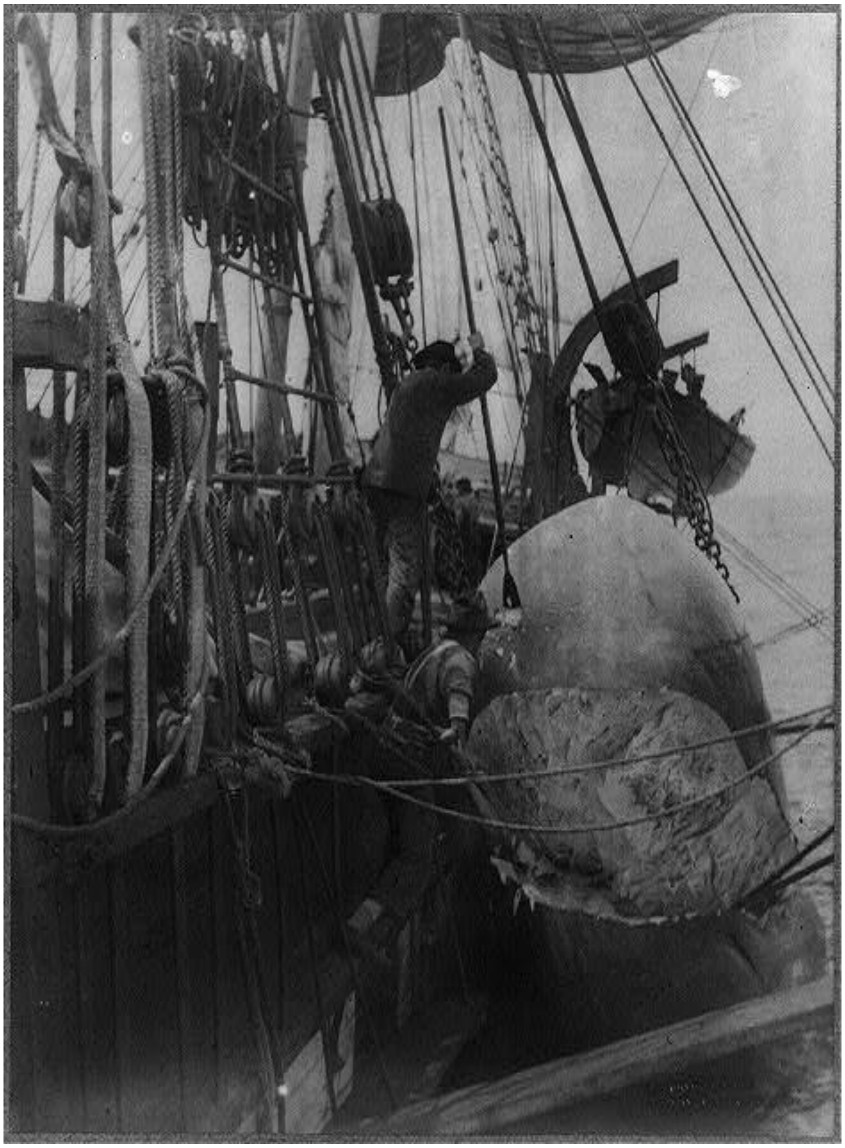
Deck plan and interior plan of the whaleship Amelia

Source:
George Brown Goode. Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States.
Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887.
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044106230535;view=1up;seq=9


PUBLISHED BY CURRIER & IVES
WHALE FISHERY.

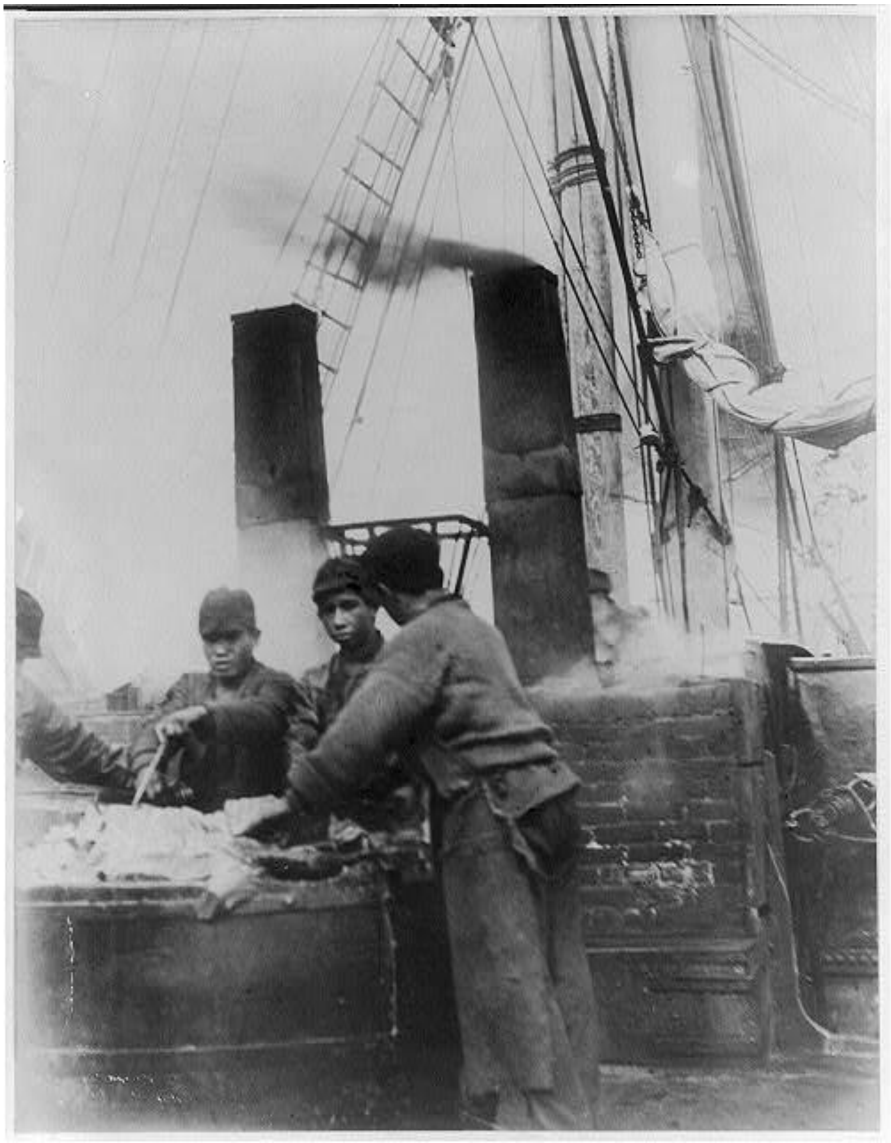
Whalefishery: Attacking a Right Whale
Currier and Ives, c. 1856

Source:
Library of Congress
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pga.10137



Cutting into a sperm whale, c. 1903

Source:
Library of Congress
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2013648093/

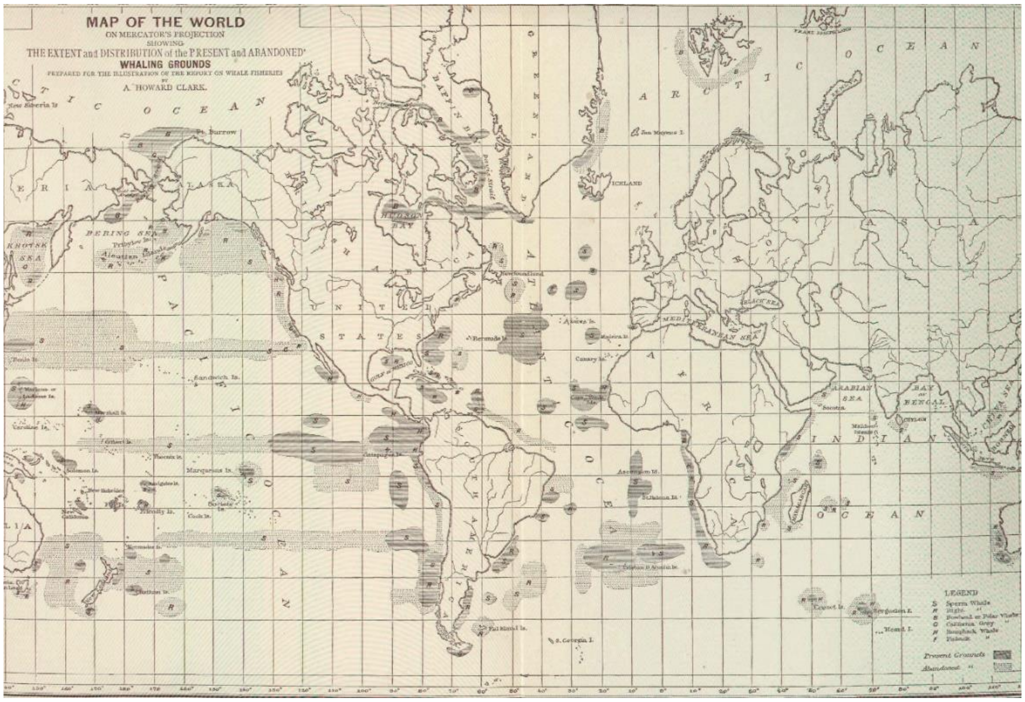


Trying Out, c. 1903

Source:
Library of Congress
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004668342/

APPENDIX F

WORLD MAP OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY WHALING GROUNDS


MAP OF THE WORLD
ON MERCATOR'S PROJECTION
SHOWING
THE EXTENT and DISTRIBUTION of the PRESENT and ABANDONED
WHALING GROUNDS
PREPARED FOR THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE REPORT ON WHALE FISHERIES
BY
A. HOWARD CLARK.
New Siberia Is
ARCTIC OCEAN
Pt. Barrow
ALASKA
BERING SEA
OKHOTSK SEA
Aleutian Is.
HUDSON BAY
BAFFIN'S BAY
GREENLAND
ICELAND
Jan Mayen I.
UNITED STATES
Bermuda Is.
Azores Is.
Madeira Is.
Canary Is.
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
BLACK SEA
ASIA
AFRICA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
INDIAN OCEAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Sandwich Is.
Galapagos Is.
Marquesas Is.
Ascension Id.
St. Helena Id.
Tristan da Cunha
Falkland Is.
S. Georgia I.
Crozet Is.
Kerguelen I.
Heard I.
SOUTH AMERICA
LEGEND
S Sperm Whale
R Right "
B Bowhead or Polar Whale
G California Grey "
H Humpback Whale
F Finback "
Present Grounds ▨
Abandoned " ▤

Source:
George Brown Goode. Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887.
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044106230535;view=1up;seq=9

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Matthew Howland Collection

Harvard University Radcliffe Institute Schlesinger Library:
Hamer Family Papers

Martha's Vineyard Museum:
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Mattapoisett Historical Society:
William Loring Taber Papers

Mystic Seaport, Inc.:
Charles W. Morgan Collection, Coll. 27
Log 38, Mary Brewster Journal
VFM 1007, Silas W. Fisk Letters

Nantucket Atheneum:
Log 10, *Nantucket*

Nantucket Historical Association:
Barney Genealogical Record
Coleman Family Papers, Mss. 107
Folger Family Papers, Mss. 118
Journal of Susan Veeder, 1858-1871, Mss. 482
Log 34, *Catawba*
Log 53, *Islander*
Log 136, Eliza Brock Journal
Log 207, *Phoenix*
Log 294A, *Brewster*
Log 314, *Nauticon*, 1845-1848
Log 347, Susan Veeder Journal

New Bedford Free Public Library Special Collections:
Cook and Snow Ledger Book, 1855-1870

New Bedford Whaling Museum:
Business Records Collection, Mss. 56
Cory Family Papers, Mss. 80
Howland Family Papers, Mss. 135
Jonathan Bourne Jr. Business Records, Mss. 18

Log 401, *Merlin*
Log 452, *Charles W. Gifford*
Log 491, *A. Houghton* and *Gold Hunter*
Log 493, *Kathleen*
Log 494, *Awashonks*
Log 503, *Erastus Corning*
Marble Family Papers, 2008.24.3
ODHS Log 581, *Moctezuma*
ODHS Log 940, *Eliza Adams*
Pierce Family Papers, Mss. 3
Susan A. Gifford Journal, 2017.47
Swift and Allen Records, Mss. 5

Newport Historical Society:
John S. DeBlois Letters 1840-1860, Box 113

Peabody Essex Museum Phillips Library:
Log 1803, *Nautilus*
Log 1952, *Vigilant*

Providence Public Library Nicholson Whaling Collection:
Beetle Family Papers
Log 53, *Awashonks*
Log 57, *Baltic*
Log 110, *Cape Horn Pigeon*
Log 500, *Nauticon*

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The Friend
The Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript

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Connecticut State Library
    Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records
    Charles R. Hale Collection of Connecticut Cemetery Inscriptions
    Probate Files Collection
City Directories of Fall River, Massachusetts
City Directories of Florence, Massachusetts
City Directories New Bedford, Massachusetts

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Hampshire County Massachusetts Probate Records *Vol. 84-87, 1894-1895*
New England Historic Genealogical Society
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- Massachusetts Town and Vital Records, 1620-1888
- Massachusetts Vital Records, 1840–1911
- Vital Records of Nantucket, Massachusetts to the Year 1850

Stonington Connecticut Town Clerk Records
United States Census Bureau Federal Census Records

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- Images:
- 2000.101.1.3-1.6
- Jewelry:
- 2001.100.3520
- Scrimshaw:
- 1923.7.66
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- 1948.30.85
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- 2001.100.2044
- 2001.100.2050
- 2001.100.2251
- 2001.100.9389
- 2001.100.9393-9396
- 2001.100.9428-9429
- 2001.100.9430-9432
- Ship Objects:
- 2001.100.3533
- 2001.100.3534
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- 2009.102.2

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