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A SURVEY OF THE MSS, LOGS AND SHIPS JOURNALS IN THE STATE LIBRARY OF TASMANIA

PART I.

THOSE IN THE ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT OF THE LIBRARY WITH EMPHASIS ON THE LOGS CONCERNING THE WHALING INDUSTRY

'BILL THE WHALER'

'You must have been a whaler
That's clear as clear can be,
For you walk like one
You talk like one
Said Whaler Bill to me.
'And you think like one
And you drink like one
You must have been to sea.'

WILL LAWSON

By

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SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

This Survey from the State Library of Tasmania has been compiled from the series of Logs deposited in 1960 in the State Archives by the Ship Lovers Society of Tasmania. Other voyages included were the Logs of the schooner *Eliza* (William Walker Collection), the *North American* and *Australasian Packet* from the Van Diemen's Land Museum, and a Log containing two voyages of the *Menkar* (from the Crowther collection).

An alphabetical list of the voyages similar in form to that employed by S. C. Sherman in 1965 (Sherman, S. C.): 'The Voice of the Whaleman' has been employed (see *Infra*). In addition detailed typed abstracts of each voyage in an individual manilla folder have been added as an appendix, thus providing an additional source of reference.

It is the intention of the writer to follow this appendix with a second (Part II) concerned with the Logs in his own Collection and housed at the State Library. With its completion it is expected that tentative conclusions may be put forward as to the methods and manner in which the whaling industry of Tasmania and perhaps other Australasian centres was conducted during the middle and later decades of last century; which witnessed the flowering and termination of the taking of the Sperm whale by ships large and small on the high seas in areas by which they emigrated to warmer seas where their food the giant squid might be found. Again from these first hand accounts one may appraise the aptitude and qualities of the Master and their crews of the local ships, as compared to those of their mentors and rivals on the famous whale ships of the enormous fleets from the New England ports of the United States.

FOREWORD

Here are some factors that directed me to this task.

It was inevitable that from early childhood one became interested in whaling.

Hobart at that time had a large fleet of ships of her own trading to the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand and to the United Kingdom and other overseas countries, and there was always something of interest to see or to read in the shipping news of the press.

A much loved uncle Henry L. Crowther, Stipendiary Magistrate at the Huon came to Hobart each month to take his court at Kingston, arriving from Franklin by coach and staying with my father until his return on Monday morning.

It was his custom on Sunday afternoon to walk part of our large family of six children. He always followed the same course by Murray Street to the long stretch of the New Wharf, from the ferry and Watermans slipway (where they drew up their boats waiting for a hire), to the Princes steps by Castray Esplanade.

This area was sacred to the sailing ships, the steamers went to the other side of the harbour.

At the town end of the Princes Wharf were the London and overseas traders, large barques or full rigged ships taking on whale oil and wool. Further along the smaller barques and brigs took the intercolonial trade, Mauritius for sugar, pineapples and bananas from Queensland etc., etc. Last in the row were the whalers, only two of them at this time (c1895) the *Helen* and the *Waterwitch*. The wharf opposite where they were berthed reeked of whale oil which seeped from the long rows of barrels of whale oil lying on their sides on the wooden timbers.

Arriving home in due course, our father would ask what we had seen, and he would then tell us of his father's ships. My grandfather (1817-1885), a surgeon by profession and speculator by nature had three such interests. Timber mills at Castle Forbes Bay and later at the 'Tiers' behind Kettering, D'Entrecasteaux Channel, whaleships and the Guano trade. His ships included the ship *Offley* barques *Isabella*, *Sapphire*, *Juno*, the brig *Velocity* and the schooners *Elizabeth Jane* and *Flying Squirrel* and *Marie Louise*. My father told us of the best remembered masters, namely Capt J. W. Robinson, A. B. Robinson and Copping, with others Captain Saunders and Abbott, also concerning the crews of these ships and their adventures and exploits.

Later my marriage in 1915 to the Great granddaughter of Charles Seal the outstanding whaleship owner of the Thirties and Forties of last century also extended my interests.

Entering private practice at Hobart gave one as patients Capts A. B. Robinson, Scannen and W. McKillop, the latter an outstanding seaman and of literary mind. His memoirs were used by Will Lawson in his last two whaling books and that delightful series of ballads concerning 'Bill the Whaler' which first appeared in the Bulletin (1943).

Harry Power a boatman at Bellerive also my patient had served with Paddy Gilroy in the *Chance* on the occasion described by Frank Bullen in the 'Cruise of the Cachelot (infra) when in a hard gale and on a lee shore—Paddy with his mixed crew of whalers largely Maori in composition, snatched a whale almost from the breakers on the lee shore of the Solanders, to the admiration and envy of the more orthodox crew of the *Cachelot*.

So much for the personal factors.
(See note end of this section).

The Nicholson Collection of whaling material at Providence Library, Rhode Island is concerned almost entirely with MSS, Logs, Ships Journals and whaling account books, comprising a total approaching the 1,000 mark.

Inquiry of all the principal Libraries in Australasia and New Zealand reveal the paucity of their holdings in such material.

The Mitchell with a score of 300 (no details then given) is overwhelmingly superior to all the others. Next in members is the State Library of Tasmania with 34 Logs (including 8 of whalers), my own Collection housed in the State Library is numerically larger and therefore the total holdings of State Library will be a very important source of reference for research in the industry.

Apart from whaling, each variety of log has its very real and personal interest viz. the personalities and difficulties and risks of the crew in the small ships of the timber trade, taking hardwood to New Zealand and the outposts of W.A., S.A., N.S.W. and Queensland and returning, inter alia, with softwoods to Hobart Town, Tasmania.

Again the introduction by Straubels 1854 in Capt Rhodes whaling Journal gives a valuable and interesting description of the Sydney whaling trade not available readily elsewhere.

To help in the summary of voyages that follows, it must be remembered that while the Americans would give their catch as say S.O. (Sperm oil) of 1200 barrels, B.O. (Black oil) 1500 barrels and whalebone 200 lbs a Colonial extract might read 'From the South Seas' 25 tons. A Tun or Ton was apparently equal to eight barrels again equal to 252 gallons.

Note: William McKillop in his eighties sailed as a guest on a 38 ft cruiser the *Conella* of which I was part owner. We persuaded him to write his whaling memoirs. These a patient of mine, Mr McLoughlin transcribed into his own legible script, and the original in Capt McKillop's handwriting went I think to Capt O'May. Will Lawson drew largely on McKillop's writing in his *Blue Gum Clippers*, *Harpoons A'Hoy* and *Bill the Whaler*. I had a deep affection for Capt McKillop, he was a highly cultured Scot born in the Southland, N.Z.

Will Lawson's description of his *Bill the Whaler* dedicated to him, does not indicate the great gentleman that McKillop was.

Another old friend was Capt Cook, who wrote occasional whaling articles to the Auckland *Herald* under the cognomen of *Lone Hand*. One concerned the *Sapphire* my grandfather's barque on which McKillop had served (as mate or 2nd mate). He had been born at Steward Island, his people having gone there from Sydney in the earliest era of Colonial settlement in Australasia.

A visit to Auckland in 1937 enabled me to meet Capt Cook and his family as he was ending his days at Parnell in that city.

Both McKillop and Cook were slightly built spare men medium to tall, reticent and slow in speech and gentle in manner, far removed indeed from the popular conception of a mate of a whaleship but both outstanding mates of southern whalers.

SHIPS AND JOURNALS

STATE LIBRARY OF TASMANIA

ANNIE

Barquentine 201 tons. Accession No. 17.

Joseph Ikin, Master, owners A. Aust. Guano Co. Engaged in Guano trade between Bird and Lady Elliott Islands (Coral Sea Q.) and Launceston May 1882-16th July 1882. Driven on shore became a complete loss at Bird Island on latter date. The lives of all on the ship were saved.

AUGUSTUS

Barque 400 tons. Accession No. 6.

Master and part owner William Young; Burn, White & Co., Agents.

On a whaling voyage, principally in Tasmanian waters. 5th April-22nd Sept. 1850.

AUSTRALIAN PACKET

Barque 205 tons. *Accession No. 4.*

William Chamberlain Master 'On a voyage to Southern Waters' from Hobart Town 6.2.1860-20.2.1861. Log kept by James Chamberlain, Chief Officer, 6th April 1860-20th Feb. 1861.

S.W. coast of New Zealand—Researche Bay—Cape Sorell. Sperm whales seen with no success on lowering—Port Davey—Researche Bay, searching without success—middle grounds towards Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands. Several whales taken.

Arrived Hobart Town, 20th Feb. 1861. Press report 'from whaling with Sperm oil' (but does not indicate the actual amount taken). A monotonous voyage until last stages, uneventful for members. Local and American ships sighted and spoken. See infra for two other whaling voyages of this ship. Certain of the pages at the end of the log contain valuable data as to the addresses etc. of the crews of the ships commanded by Captain Chamberlain in the early sixties of last century.

CARTELA

Steamship. Owners, Huon, Channel and Peninsula S.S. Coy. Chartered to carry fruit from D'Entrecasteaux Channel to Melbourne during the great shipping strike. P. Johnston, Master, 6th July-12th Aug. 1919. The vessel was not designed for outside work and strained her timbers and leaked badly, proceeding by short dashes from bay to bay and island to island. Ran out of coal and waited at Wilson's Promontory for coal to be sent to her as she sheltered there. The voyage back was less dangerous and she made Barnes Bay safely where she was quarantined owing to the Pan-Influenza outbreak.

CORINNA

Steamship 820 tons. *Accession No. 18.*

R. Soden, Master, on a delivery voyage from the makers at Glasgow for the Tasmanian Steam Navigation Co. at Hobart Town, 19th May-22nd July 1892.

Engine room log only kept by Parlan McFarlane, Chief Engineer.

Passed Cape of Good Hope on 42nd day. Average cruising speed on passage nine knots, and coal consumed per diem 2½ tons. Taken into the Launceston-Sydney run under Capt Drysdale.

EMILY DOWNING

Barque 269 tons. *Accession No. 9.*

J. J. Cannon, Master, 29th Nov. 1883-17th Jan. 1885.

Kept by J. Cooper, Mate.

To Middle Grounds and New Zealand sperm whaling, no noteworthy incidents.

This barque was built at Port Arthur as the *Lady Franklin* in 1845. Sold out of Government service to F. H. Downing, Merchant, renamed after his daughter and fitted as a whaler. Later under the McGregor flag

and in 1885 purchased by the Imperial Government to serve as a powder hulk. Eventually burned out lying at Domain slipyards.

EMU

Barque 381 tons. *Accession No. 3.*

Only a fragment of the Log dealing with last phase from Cape Town to Van Diemen's Land, 1st Dec.-30th Dec., 1841. Called at V.D.L. Coy's establishment at Circular Head en route to Hobart Town. Landed at Circular Head, passengers and supplies. For further record of this ship see Ref. Crowther 1931 M.J. of Australia.

ESK

Steamship Accession No. 13.

Captain Langford—Trading between Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales and occasionally to outports for the Tasmanian Steam Navigation Co. Compiled in succession by A. Drysdale and C. P. Sharpe, 14th Jan. to 7th June 1882.

HARRIETT NATHAN

Barque 186 tons *Accession No. 5.*

Alan Christy, Master, Two Intercolonial voyages trading to Port Phillip and coal mine at Schouten Island, 19th Nov. 1849-6th Jan. 1850 and 27th Nov. 1850-17th Dec. 1850.

Launched from Williamson's slipyards Hobart Town 19th Nov. 1844 for Nathan, Moses & Co. Later used as a whaler. Lost about 1867 in Tasman Sea on a voyage towards New Zealand.

HEREFORDSHIRE

H.E. India Co. *Accession No. 11.*

Capt I. C. Whitman — A manuscript Log of the voyage London-Bengal. Malacia and Whampoa (China) and return via Cape Horn and St Helens.

Trading and transporting of small military detachments 21st Jan. 1827-16th March 1828.

Kept by Alfred Kennerley (Midshipman on the Hon. E.I. Company Service), who later returning to Australia, became the Hon. A. Kennerley in 1873, Premier of Tasmania.

The rear pages of this Journal have records by A. K. of incidents of subsequent voyages made by him between England and Australia (Infra).

JUPITER Ship (Under 'Herefordshire')

Captain Waldy, Master on a voyage Plymouth to Sydney 17th Aug. 1828-21st Mar. 1829. Alfred Kennerley a passenger, long and vague entries describing his personal reactions.

SURREY Ship (Under 'Herefordshire')

Captain Dacres, Master, Sydney-New Zealand and return voyage via Launceston V.D.L. 9th April 1829-19th March 1830. Compiled by Alfred Kennerley, no detail given.

VIBILIA Ship or barque (Under 'Herefordshire')

Captain Stevenson, Master. London-Sydney via Hobart Town 4th April-Oct. 1831. Odd mention of events and dates.

KATHERINE STEWART FORBES (Under 'Herefordshire')

27th May-27th Sept. 1830. Voyage from Sydney to London, via Bahai, Bengal, a mere record of A.K. having made this voyage.

JULIE

Brig. 135 tons. Master Captain Dart. On a whaling voyage from Hobart Town 7th Feb-23rd Aug. 1837—Port Davey and coasts of V.D. Land.

LASS OF GAWLER

Barque *Accession No. 21.*

J. James, Master, in cargo trade Intercolonial. 9th Jan. 1884-22nd March 1885. Various cargoes, mainly timber. Port Adelaide-Gages Rds (W.A.).

Quandeloup (W.A.) Port Victor S.A. Northern Rivers, N.S.W. and Hobart Town. Log terminates with ship sold at auction at Hobart Town to Huddart Parker & Co. Hulked for coal purposes and remained in this capacity until broken up in recent years.

MACCLESFIELD

Ship *Accession No. 1.*

John Moore, Master. Voyage from Cork, U.K. to Hobart Town 1822.

A brief record of facts on board, in a note book, kept by Peter Harrison an emigrant who founded his family in V.D. Land. Contains a list of passengers, dates and names of those on board, and such occasions as when at the commencement and end of the voyage the ship was ashore and refloated without damage. An exceptionally long voyage, exciting alarm at Hobart Town by the non appearance of the ship.

MARY WADLEY

Accession No. 23.

Master J. W. Whitton, owners Forn & Harris—Timber merchants of Hobart.

A voyage from Woolgoolga (Q.) towards Hobart 20th Dec. 1892-3rd Dec. 1893. Incidents of a most hazardous voyage in a series of gales. The ship was finally driven ashore at Garden Island Creek, Huon, April 1901. Total loss but crew saved.

MYSTERY

Schooner P. Owens, Master.

On a trading voyage between Hobart and Launceston, July 1849-6th Jan. 1850. Lost on Swan Island 2nd March 1850.

NEMESIS

Steamship Accession No. 22

Owners Huddart Parker & Co.

Trading voyages principally between Hobart and Sydney 28th March-19th April 1899. Masters Captains Featherstone & Bentley—lost at sea with all hands off coast of New South Wales, carrying Newcastle coal 10th July 1904.

PRINCE OF DENMARK

Brig. 69 tons. *Accession No. 9.*

R. Heay, Master—'On a whaling voyage to the South Seas.' 8/10/1851-26/3/1852. Various areas of East Coast of New Zealand visited. Two whales taken off Hawkes Bay. Damaged in heavy weather.

The earlier voyages of this historic Brig. then in James Kelly's fleet, Bay whaling in V.D.L. and towards Portland and to the navigator Islands (Samoa) for pork, (will be found *Infra Part II*, Crowther Collection). See Ref. W. P. Bowden.

PRINCE REGENT (1)

Barque 287 tons *Accession No. 7.*

Master Captain Gardiner, owner Charles Seal, on a whaling voyage to Bering's Strait 7th Nov. 1849-3rd Nov 1850. Journal kept by F. G. Thompson. *An instructive and valuable record* in regard to the various areas visited in the Sub-Arctic areas of N. Pacific whaling and the number of whales taken and ships sighted. Not an official Log book.

PRINCE REGENT (2)

Accession No. 7.

Capt Gardiner-Charles Seal owner.

A second voyage to Berings Straits 20th Feb. 1851-December 1851. To Berings Straits via Fiji Islands and spoke the H.T. whaler *Wallaby* in that area, the only incident of note, until on 11th May passed through the Aleutian group of Islands and may be said to have arrived at the whaling grounds. 14th May lowered for Right whales all four boats without success. 16th May, 3rd mate made fast at 10 p.m.

Next day cut in the whale and tried out. Spoke the 'Litherland' of Hobart Town. Charles Seal with 300 barrels of B.O. and 130 barrels of Sperm. 21st May in drift ice.

23rd May, 2nd Mate got a whale and cut it in (last entry).

Here the *record ceases* abruptly. The ship arrived back at Hobart Town in Dec. 1851.

The Press merely reports her arrival and no mention of the reason for terminating the voyage. The Captain's wife was on board. ? what factors caused this premature return ? ice conditions ? factors concerning Mrs Gardiner or the crew. No hint is to be found.

RIO

Barquentine, 120 tons *Accession No. 25.*

Voyage (1) Capt. D. C. Johnston, trading from Mercury Bay, New Zealand-Sydney, Clarence River, Grafton, Newcastle and Rockhampton, timber trade 8th Feb. 1910-12th Nov. 1910.

RIO (*Voyage 2*). *Accession No. 27.*

Capt W. & E. Taylor (no indication of date of change of command) kept by *William McKillop* mate, covers three intercolonial voyages.

Hobart—Northern rivers and Queensland. 26th March 1914—13th July 1914. 14th July 1914—17th Sept. 1914.

Mostly in timber trade. *Lost at sea off King Island about the latter date.*

STRATHMORE

Schooner 110 tons. *Accession No. 24.*

G. Bennett, Master.

Trading with timber from Hobart—Alligator Creek, Queensland, Clarence River and various parts of N. and South Islands of New Zealand. Also taking timber from various out ports on the Tasmanian coast, one such place as Mussleroe River, N.E. Tasmania. Record kept by Edwin Knight and G. Griffiths, Master.

Driven ashore and lost, 12th June 1895. At Mussleroe Bay without loss of life.

SWORDFISH

Brigantine 111 tons. *Accession No. 15.*

J. H. Hurburgh, Master between Hobart, New Zealand and Adelaide-Newcastle, 3rd Aug. 1881—26th April 1882.

Wrecked near Flinders Island, kept by James A. Roper, Mate.

TERROR

Barque, 180 tons. *Accession No. 8.*

Master Captain Griffiths, owner Thomas Brown.

On a whaling voyage to S. Indian Ocean, 7th Feb.—27th Dec. 1851.

Hobart Town—East Coast of Tasmania—Researche Bay—Western grounds—King George's Sound. Bay whaling in Researche Archipelago without success. S. Indian Ocean to Port Davey and vicinity with some small success.

Colonial Times, 31st Dec. 1851 barque *Terror* Captain Griffiths from South Seas 40 tons Sperm Oil, not an inconsiderable amount for the length of time and area searched.

ZEPHYR

Schooner 90 tons.

W. T. Careless Master. In Colonial (timber trade).

Owner R. Sherwin. 30th Nov. 1876—6th Nov. 1877.

Hobart Town—Victoria—New Zealand ports and return to Hobart Town. *Cast ashore without loss of life when taking in Huon Pine logs at Port Davey in October 1877.*

CROWTHER COLLECTION

Menkar Ship 371 tons.

Voyage 18th Aug. 1851—6th April 1854. New London (U.S.A.) Flores—Falkland Island, Mocha Island. Samuel Juan Fernandes Is. Payta (Peru) Marquesus Is. Owynee, Sandwich Is. *Sea of Otkost, Berings Strait, Diomedes Is.* 2nd Sept. 1852 last entry of voyage returned New Bedford 6th April 1854.

MENKAR

Ship 371 tons.

Owned U.S.H. A second voyage in same volume from New Bedford (9.5.1854) 'for North Pacific Ocean with a crew of 29 men' Flores—Martinvas Rocks—Inaccessible Island—Tristan D'Acunah—St Paul's, Cape Leuwin W.A. Poverty Bay, New Zealand, stranded on reef, *log ends ashore there on 29th Jan 1855.* N.B. gap of two years in *Log. Arrived at Hobart Town in March 1858* when ship was condemned as unseaworthy—her oil shipped to London for sale and the vessel and her fittings sold by auction. Purchased by a ship builder at the 'Franklins' (sic) and after repairs and a refit renamed the *Juno* and under this name joined the whaleships of the writer's grandfather and also shipped Guano from his establishment at Bird Island and Lady Elliott Island in the coral Sea west of N. Queensland.

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND FOLK MEMORIAL MUSEUM**AUSTRALASIAN PACKET**

Ship Lovers Society on loan V.D.L. Museum.

William Chamberlain Jun. Master. 4th Feb. 1859—29th Feb. 1860.

From Hobart Town on a whaling voyage. On 3rd Feb 1859 Mr Evans joined the ship as Chief Officer and probably compiled this *Log*, 4 days later the Capt. joined the ship in D'Entrecasteaux Channel and sea *Log* commences. Thompsons Sound, New Zealand, Milford Sound, Mutiny of part of crew, sixteen left on shore. Whaling off S.E. Coast of New Zealand, Bligh's Sound. Heavy seas on passage towards Tasmania. Spring Bay for repairs, Kangaroo Island so towards King George Sound.

Whaling in that area. Return to area of Kangaroo Island and into Bight, Point Hibbs—Port Davey—more trouble with crew, 2nd mate leaves ship. *Greecian arrives and news of loss of one of his boats and its crew.* Whaling S. Tasman Sea with moderate success. Sickness on board, arrive Spring Bay with 2 men logged as having scurvy. 29th Feb. 1860 *log* terminates.

7th March 1860 reported at mouth of Derwent, winds too light, towed. A report in H.H.M. of 7th March 1860 states 24 tons of Sperm oil. *No mention is made of the scurvy or indeed any details of the cruise in the local press at time of her arrival.*

NORTH AMERICA Voyage A.

368 tons. Captain Pendleton, with a crew of 29 men on a whaling cruise to the *North Pacific Ocean 20th June 1849—26th March 1851, 2700 galls oil, 2800 lbs of whale bone*—New London, Fayal-Goughs Island, Banks Peninsula, New Zealand, Guam, Hervoey(sic) Is. Correa(sic) Straits—Sea of Japan Ochotisk—Berings Straits, St Lawrence Bay, Is. of Marce ? - Whao(sic) *Log* entries cease voyage ended, New Bedford 26/3/1851.

NORTH AMERICA Voyage B.

368 tons. Starbuck Vol. II page 466.

Mason, Master, Williams & Hines, Agents.

Indian & Pacific Oceans 3rd June 1852—20th April 1853.

In 1859 under Capt. Shepnell this vessel put into Hobart Town for repairs before proceeding to Berings Strait for whaling, she had only poor results there so returned to whale off coast of New Zealand taking a large Sperm whale which returned 80 barrels Sperm oil. The larboard boat lowered and Shepnell struck another, the boat was stove in and one of the crew had a leg broken. In the heavy gale the whale although got alongside was lost. The same gale gravely damaged the deck fittings and bulwarks and two boats were lost as well as other damage. The ship reached Hobart in 1861 was offered for sale, but built in 1810, did not attract a buyer. Later the McGregor Bros purchased her and employed her both as a trader and whaleship as the *Derwent Hunter*. For many years as a hulk she served as a shore ship and repair depot at the Domain slipyards. In 1907 she became alight and was burned to the waters edge. Is remembered as a successful whaler out of Hobart Town.

TERROR

Barque 180 tons (Shiplovers Society at V.D.L. Folk Museum).

Capt McGrath on a whaling voyage from Hobart Town 26th Oct 1848-9th Sept 1849. Compiled by Marney, Chief Mate, Recherche Bay-Port Davey (7 other Hobart Town whalers in company). Cruising off shore 3 other ships in company (Dec. 18) each with a whale alongside. Saw a *Right* whale, lowered without success. Passed to Middle Grounds, Lord Howe Island 1st Feb. 1849—March refitting in Sydney. Ship struck ground hard off the pig styes. Cruising between Recherche Bay and Port Davey 17th Aug. Saw 3 *Black whales* (? does this mean the S. Right whale). Took a Sperm whale on 28th—bearing up for Port Davey. Log terminates the next day 19th Sept. 1849.

This cruise is notable for the mention of the occasional Right whale off our shores, one of the last reminders of their previous arrival on migration to V.D.L. and New Zealand.

N.B.: The mate (to divert comment from the time spent at anchor) made an entry on the rear end paper of the Log as under.

Summary by mate of cruising times and periods at anchor	}	1848 sailed 26th October
		1849 7th Sep. 398 days from date of sailing, arrived Hobart T.
		231 days under weigh
		159 days at anchor.
		Search in newspaper files and elsewhere does not say more than the arrival with Sperm oil (quantity not given).

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE FOREGOING

Before proceeding to Part II of this Survey (the M.S.S. Logs and Journals etc. in the Crowther Collection) one may be pardoned for mentioning the following tentative hypotheses or conclusions suggested by the study of the material of Part I just completed.

Its compilation has proved to be far more tedious and time consuming than had been expected, due first

to the fact that my actual period of study at the State Library is limited to a short portion of each forenoon, the remainder being given to the obligations of Practice at my rooms, domiciliary and hospital visits. Also my transcript in pencil and in fine miniscule writing have given Mrs V. Walker a very difficult task in rendering it into her admirable typescript. Again the sources of reference have on a number of occasions proved to be scattered, difficult to locate and with gaps in continuity. These remarks do not apply to the Archives proper, but to later accessions from such authorities as the Customs Department and the Marine Board.

From time to time too when detailed information in regard to the take of oil etc. in a whaler's cargo, in a customs return, would have been of great interest and assistance, an entry might read no more than a curt 'From the South Seas with oil'.

Starbuck in his authoritative history of the 'American Whale Fisheries' certainly had access to the U.S. Customs records, with detailed information as to the nature of the oil viz. Sperm or Black and the quantities taken in barrels and actual weights of whalebone meticulously given. Such entries also would occasionally provide information of whales seen and the localities, and from such facts often may be determined the qualities of the Master and crew and their work.

We do have at Hobart fortunately remarkable runs of bound volumes of the local press. From this source and especially from the files of the *Hobart Town Courier* and the *Hobart Mercury* much information is available.

When noticing the arrival of a whaler the shipping reporter, on occasion apart from the catch, sought for information or incidents of the voyage as accidents to boats and men in pursuit of the whales and fatalities when they occurred. They obtained too the names of Tasmanian ships (whalers) seen or spoken on the voyage and the localities of the meeting; from this information an estimate might be had of the degree of success of the ship spoken, her plans and when she might be expected to return to Tasmania.

One turned automatically to such sources as *the Memoirs of Captain Harry O'May*¹ and *Mr Will Lawson*², full of practical information and from their background so very largely inspired by the *M.S.S. Memoirs of Captain William McKillop* much of whose work³, so accurate and well told, was incorporated.

The study of the actual Logs has not always been easy owing to the poor quality of the ink employed, more especially when one considers the affect of salt water and damp over a long period. This want of legibility has led to confusion of dates and even of the actual day of the week concerned, while occasional entries of names of localities and islands seen or visited have had to be guessed at.

None the less the effort and time spent has proved of much interest and has been especially rewarding in regard to the whalers, though a close examination of the small vessels employed in the timber trade between Tasmania, New Zealand and out ports of the Mainland Colonies are more than worthy of a study long over-

due. Indeed each of the Logs studied has its own fascinating personal interest.

From the whaling Logs of the local ships a definite pattern emerges which probably applies also to the whalers out of Sydney, and even New Zealand, after leaving their own whaling grounds.

The Hobart Town whalers on leaving Hobart appear to have followed this pattern.

Firstly a preliminary visit to the *Middle Grounds* north and east of Tasmania towards Norfolk Island and the vicinity of Lord Howe Island. Thus they 'worked up' their crews, taking the humble blackfish if no larger whales offered.

Secondly *on the Western Grounds* across the G. Australian Bight to the Recherche Is., King George Sound, the Lewin, or a little more south to Chatham Island (not to be confused with the Chatham Group (E x S of New Zealand)).

Thirdly *Stewart Island and Foveaux Straits, New Zealand* (Frank Bullen's 'Solander Grounds').

Here shelter was found in one of the inlets of Stewart Island and with favourable weather whales were taken in Foveaux Straits and off the Solanders or the nearby S.W. Coast of New Zealand. When practicable the whales taken were 'tried out' in a quiet anchorage at Stewart Island.

After the study of the foregoing Logs my impression is that at this period almost all the Hobart Town whalers eventually found themselves in this Solander area. Here there was always the chance of a Sperm whale although the fabulous numbers recorded by Frank Bullen in his classic 'Cruise of the Cachelot¹', appears to have been represented, only by an occasional whale, or a small 'pod' of the Sperm variety. Nevertheless the lure was still very strong for our ships and if no whales were found in Foveaux Straits there was the adjacent S.W. and south coast of New Zealand to try and failing here, to move east again to the coasts of Tasmania, possibly taking a Sperm whale on passage, and put into Port Davey; where with favourable winds a passage could be made out of the port towards Recherche Bay. Recherche Bay was always a local centre; of whaling in the first (Bay whaling) phase 1803-1840 approx when the southern Right whale came into our bays and inlets to calve, migrating here yearly and feeding off the swarms of 'Brit' (whale food) that is still seasonal and now the main food of the mutton bird. The annual season for Black whales was June to December, but by 1840 the herds were so depleted that the industry died.

In its heyday, Recherche Bay in V.D. Land and Bay of Islands, New Zealand were the most important centres in the Southern Hemisphere.

About 1840 the attention of our whalers was centred on the Sperm whale. Starbuck¹ noted its regular migratory habits in search of its feed the giant squid or octopus (found usually in the warmer oceans). In its migrations the Sperm whale follows this food and two routes pass², S.W. New Zealand and S.W. Tasmania when making north to warmer water. Thus when not pursuing the Sperm on the high seas our local whalers

used to lay in Port Davey which supplied plenty of fresh water and wood, and occasionally news from Hobart Town when small ships came in for Huon pine. Here the whalers rested in heavy weather and with a shift of wind put to sea and with luck got a whale, brought it in and tried it out. One vessel the barque *Terror* (A) spent a great deal of time passing between Port Davey and Recherche Bay and eventually did take a Sulphur bottom at the latter port. 1. The Americans appear to have made little use of Port Davey; the Bay of Islands, New Zealand being their favourite anchorage, although at times they used Port Davey to obtain news and supplies of water and wood. There was the added advantage that no port dues were required in Tasmanian out ports.

Having thus generalised on the short cruises of the Tasmanian whalers in contrast to the long voyages of the Americans to southern latitudes en route to the northern Berings Straits, it must be born in mind that the rule was not invariable.

Charles Seal did lay on his ships the *Prince Regent*, *Eamont*, the *Essex* and the *Litherland* for Berings Straits and in 1851 lost the *Eamont* on the coast of Japan. Eventually the crew, after long detention, sailed from Desima Island to Java in a Dutch ship and from Batavia home again.

W. L. Crowther, F.R.C.S., a Colonial Surgeon and as well a whale ship owner in 1858 laid on his ships the *Offley*, *Elizabeth Jane* and *Flying Squirrel* for Herds Island and the Kergulens for Sea Elephant oil, no luck favoured him and the voyage was a failure.

The New England (American) fishing industry from Nantucket Island had gradually extended west and then south in the Atlantic Ocean, and later round the Horn into the Pacific, wonderful voyages being made to New Zealand and the Bay of Islands for very large catches of oil and the American whalers came to far outnumber those of the other Maritime nations and the problem became where to find enough whales.

This question was closely examined in the first half of last century by Lt M. F. Maury, U.S. Navy. He commenced an intensive study of the whaling Logs preserved in the many Libraries, Museums and whaling institutes of the Eastern Sea Board of U.S.A. as well as those available elsewhere. Maury noted the locations and dates on which whales had been sighted pursued or taken by individual ships. From this data in 1857 he published a documentary whaling chart. Twenty-four years later Capt. A. Starbuck a retired whaling Master was approached by the Centennial Board (who were preparing a history of the Fisheries of the United States for the Centenary of 1776), and invited him to complete the whaling section. He produced a masterpiece that was published again in 1878 and yet again by S. C. Sherman in 1965.

It must be axiomatic that the outstanding works of Lt Maury U.S. Navy and Capt Alexander Starbuck's history of New England whaling 1876 were indispensable to the Masters of American whalers. The present

writer has used the latter's history constantly for reference and is aware of the small replica of Maury's chart used as end papers in the noble 3rd edition".

Only two whaling Logs of North American ships are available at Hobart. They are of intense interest and show the American strategy of planning a long voyage to a fixed destination selected in an area where whales were most likely to be found. In both these instances they sought the Bowhead whales at the extreme North Pacific ocean adjacent to Bering Strait. On the voyage out after taking on water etc. and perhaps a few hands at the Western Islands, whales were sought at such areas as Goughs Island, Tristan-D-Achuna in the South Atlantic and New Zealand. On the long voyage home, via the Horn, unless a full ship, whales would be lowered for as an opportunity occurred. The American Masters and crews showed the highest degree of daring, efficiency and persistency in pursuing their quarry.

Hobart Town whaling produced some excellent Masters. J. W. Robinson of the *Offley* and part owner of the *Othello*, the Bayley brothers of the *Runnymede* and *Flying Childers*, were consistently successful; also Kennedy of the *Asia*, Folder and McGregor. All were able to conduct long series of good voyages *Had they possibly access to the works of Maury and Starbuck?* There is no hint or evidence that they had discovered and kept secret any special locality where whales might be found, but on the other hand I do not seem to remember their ships being logged as having been seen or spoken in the areas commonly used by Tasmanian ships whose Logs have been considered in this Survey.

In all, the impression is that the huge American whaling fleets, intensely competitive, produced an elite of hard driving specialists, whereas the Colonial whalers had little personal pride in the calling and joined in by chance and when in need of a job.

So our ships did not produce the *exceptionally skilled* boat steerers and junior mates or the individual crews described by Herman Melville in *Moby Dick*. Again whales were not taken just by chance and the Colonial mates could not drive their crews nor in a hard voyage or hard weather force them into a position to strike and make a kill.

Finally the Logs considered cover in part at least the period of decline and finish of the Sperm whale industry from Hobart and elsewhere. In the late seventies the *Offley* was hard put to find a crew and by 1886 only 4 ships, the *Waterwitch*, *Marie Laure*, *Asia* and *Sapphire* were whaling out of the port.

On 2nd January 1899, the *Helen* commenced an adventurous voyage to the Campbell Island and returned with 73 tons of Black oil. It was the last voyage of the industry from Tasmania and the ship

was badly strained and leaking. * (See note end of this section).

The *Helen* had been converted from a trader to a whaler for this one voyage. The last of the regular whalers was the *Waterwitch*. She had been launched from the Pembroke dockyard in 1820 as H.M.S. *Falcon*. After active service off the E. African coast she was sold and on 12th Aug 1862 came into the port at Hobart Town as a whaler under Capt. Harrison with 118 tons of Sperm oil and whalebone valued at £10,000. Acquired by McGregor Bros she came to be their most successful whaler, taking between 1886 and 1895 669 tons of oil, 5 tons of whalebone and 167 pounds loads of Ambergris. Her total sales of oil amounting to £23,780 with expenditure for refittings etc. £16,750. Her last voyage terminated in 1896 when she was tied up at the Princes Wharf where I remember seeing her, and she was broken up about the end of the century.

Hobart's last whaling association was with the Norwegian Pelagic fleet working the Ross Sea. Captain Larson, commanded the *Neilson Alonzo* and had with him a fleet of some 5-6 chasers (Pol. 1.11.111 etc.) each had a harpoon gun and having taken a whale towed the day's catch back to the mother ship to be flensed. A number of young Tasmanians went south with her and on similar expeditions until the 1st World War broke out, now only the tradition and memories remain. Another factor may have been the very serious depletion of the whales themselves.

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