Collecting Leviathan: The British Southern Whale Fishery and Global Knowledge Production 1775-1860

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Declaration of authorship

I, Rachael K. Utting, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed:

Date:

Abstract

This thesis considers the history and significance of the British Southern Whale Fishery (BSWF) and its role in transporting artefacts and specimens around the globe. It focusses on the period from the fishery's commencement in 1775 to its eventual demise in 1860. Exploring the role of the whaling vessel as a site of cross-cultural collection, the networks of exchange involving whaleship owners, and the biographies of specific objects collected by whalemen, the thesis seeks to understand the nature of whaler collecting and to evaluate the contribution made to knowledge production by the crews of British whaling ships. Through examination of museum collections and primary sources including ship's logs and personal journals the thesis considers the specific forms and processes of whaler collecting in the wider context of maritime collecting and how this shaped whalers' contributions to the creation and dissemination of new knowledge. For various reasons, the collecting practices of the South Seas whalemen of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century have received relatively little attention to date. This thesis aims to shed light on the role of whalers as collectors, discoverers and creators of new knowledge during a period of expanding global connectivity.

Chapter 1 introduces the main themes of the study and the history of the British Southern Whale Fishery. Chapter 2 provides an overview of cultures of maritime collecting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Chapter 3 addresses the challenge of working between archives and object collections and the research strategy adopted for the thesis. The substantive chapters of the thesis are dedicated to: networks of collecting and knowledge exchange (Chapter 4); whaleship owners as collectors (Chapter 5); the whaleship as a space of collecting amongst captains, surgeons and crew (Chapter 6); and the mobility of artefacts from ship to shore (Chapter 7).

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This work is dedicated with the greatest of love and respect to my late father, Dr. Neil Utting (1947-2006)

What fun we had xxx

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Abbreviations

BIASA	Bristol Institution for the Advancement of Science and Art
BL	British Library
BLPS	Bristol Literary and Philosophical Society
BM	British Museum
BRO	Bristol Records Office/Bristol Archives
BMAG	Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
СРК	Culture Perth and Kinross
GA	Gloucestershire Archives
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LSA	Linnean Society Archives
MOLD	Museum of London, Docklands
NBWM	New Bedford Whaling Museum
NHA	Nantucket Historical Association
NHM	Natural History Museum [London]
NLA	National Library of Australia, Canberra
NLNZ	National Library of New Zealand, Wellington
NLW	National Library of Wales, Abersystwyth, Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru
NMMG	National Maritime Museum Greenwich, Caird Library and Archives
PCRO	Pembrokeshire County Records Office
RBG	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
RCS	Royal College of Surgeons
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
RSA	Royal Society Archives
RSCL	Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College, New Hampshire,
	USA
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales
SLSA	State Library of South Australia, Adelaide
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
SPRI	Scott Polar Research Institute
TNA	The National Archives

Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Representing whaling history

Housed in a former warehouse alongside the West India Dock is the Museum of London Docklands. The Museum, sister to the larger Museum of London, focusses on the history of the river Thames and the surrounding dockside vicinity. Within the museum is a small exhibition dedicated to the British Southern Whale Fishery (see Figure 1.1). It is the only such display focusing solely on 'South Seas' whaling in the UK. The Fishery's close relationship with London, as the predominant port of departure and return, makes the Museum of London Docklands a particularly appropriate location to house this display.



Figure 1.1 London and the Whaling Trade, Museum of London, Docklands, 2019. Image: author.

Within the display are exhibited a number of artefacts related to the whale fishery in both direct and tangential ways. There are the turned wooden stanchions (supporting pillars) used

between decks on a south sea whaling vessel, recycled as barn roof supports at Farringdon House, the Oxfordshire estate of whaleship owner William Bennett. The stanchions represent the vessels that voyaged out into both known and unknown spaces, discovering and naming countless reefs and islands. Examples of trypot (the cauldrons for boiling oil) and harpoons, the everyday tools of whaling, are the material remembrances of a brutal offshore trade and speak to the physical and industrial nature of such work. The changing design of the harpoons reflect the whalemen's increasing expertise over time, knowledge literally encased in metal. An example of a logbook from the whaleship *Mary* is a testament to the voyage, but also, as Amanda Bosworth suggests, functions along with other items onboard, such as oil barrels, as an archive of a particular whaling voyage.¹ Within the logbook the everyday occurrences of a whaling voyage are described: a tally of whale hunts, captures, wind, weather and punishments. At the same time, it also reveals extraordinary events such as the shipwreck of the vessel and the subsequent rescue of the crew.²

Within the display case there are several examples of scrimshaw, including the silvermounted *Foxhound* tooth created by whaleman Alexander Monroe which provides the subject for Chapter 7 of this thesis. The tooth speaks to the ship-board life of the below-deck whalemen and their recreational activities. Its subsequent adaptations, a silver mount, an inscribed dedication and a unique museum accession number reflect its changing status as it moved from ship to shore, from domestic setting to auction house and finally into a museum. In addition to these artefacts, the painting of the *William Nicol*, most likely a commission for an owner or captain, represents a permanent memorial to a particular voyage and draws attention to the social aspirations of such men. On display is also a section of bone known as a panbone, cut with surgical precision from a sperm whale's jaw. Artefacts such as this are indicative, as historian D. Graham Burnett suggests, of the whalemen's intimate anatomical knowledge of their prey.³

¹ Bosworth, A.L. (2020) 'In the Hands of One Nineteenth-Century Whaling Cooper: Finding Ourselves at Sea', International Journal of Maritime History, 32(3), pp. 573–595

² The Mary was wrecked at Jervis Island in the South Pacific on 20 January 1825. After six weeks ashore the crew were rescued by two whalers. The Journal of the whaleship Mary, MOLD accession number, ID No.82.680

³ Burnett, D.G. (2007) *Trying Leviathan: The Nineteenth-Century New York Court Case that put the Whale on Trial and Challenged the Order of Nature.* Princeton: Princeton University Press

These artefacts have been drawn together from disparate sources, including donations and acquisitions from descendants of whalemen, to create the exhibition. In their former lives these artefacts existed in different physical spaces and in different times. For example, the stanchions date from the early years of the Fishery (c.1800), whereas the painting was created toward the end of the Fishery's life around 1850. Each artefact also orbited around different people and spaces onboard their respective whaling vessels. If one imagines a cross section of a vessel, tulip shaped, at the top level is the deck where the panbone would be found lashed to the mast, slowly leaking oil for the duration of the voyage. Below this, in the upper section of the vessel the painting might have been in the care of captain in his cabin and the logbook most likely the responsibility of first mate. Neither artefact would have come anywhere near the trypot, spitting fat and smoking with fire amidship. Down in the fo'castle, the darkest, dampest part of the vessel where bulk of the crew resided, the scrimshawed teeth could be found being laboriously sanded and engraved. That is not to suggest that these artefacts were bounded within these spaces. No artefact existed in isolation. Hence the analogy of artefacts 'orbiting' around different individuals and spaces. For example, ship portraits moved from cabins to domestic settings and descending down the generations and captains collected and carved scrimshaw just as the wider crew did. Artefacts were traded between crewmen, between vessels and with indigenous intermediaries they met along the way.

The questions posed by this small exhibit at the Museum of London Docklands provide the starting point for this thesis, concerned as it is with the subject of collecting aboard whaling vessels in the south seas. What kinds of objects, if any, were collected during the voyages of whaling ships and by whom? If whalemen did collect, did their collecting practices differ from other modes of maritime collecting? Did they act as field collectors for others, or for personal profit? What type of knowledge was being created, of people and places, of oceans, hazards, sea creatures? By what means was this knowledge, and these collections, made mobile on shore?

1.2 Research focus and approach

The genesis for *Collecting Leviathan* began over a decade ago whilst working as a volunteer at the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro. During this time, under the guidance of the curator, I researched and catalogued a collection of carved whales' teeth. These offered a fascinating insight into the whaling world and the men who made their living from it. Subsequently, during a career in museums predominantly working with ethnographic collections, I searched for the presence of whalemen within the collections and archives and found them largely absent. The history told by this thesis is thus one of collecting amongst a largely overlooked group of maritime workers, south seas whalemen. It considers their role both as collectors of objects, including specimens as well as artefacts, and as producers of new knowledge regarding the phenomena encountered on their travels. It aims to unpack whalers' collecting practices, looking at the networks through which their collections moved, and how their newly accrued knowledge was or was not promoted.

The British Southern Whale Fishery (BSWF), little known and little studied in comparison to its Arctic counterpart, offered a suitable choice for a specific focus, making for a manageable project: its chronological limits were well bounded and it was organised predominantly from one metropolitan locale, London. However, while mainly based in London, the Fishery functioned in the vast global networks of international trade and exchange sharing trading links, manpower, religious and familial networks with Nantucket, New Bedford, Nova Scotia, France and Wales.⁴ Although primarily driven by economic profitability, it was also inextricably linked to political agendas of territorial expansion, the formationally-operated, multifaceted organisation that, in addition to whaling, was involved in geographical discovery, surveying, convict transportation, trading, and the couriering of people and goods.

While a significant body of research has been devoted to collections made during major voyages of geographical exploration and territorial expansion, pre-eminently the voyages of

⁴ See the extensive research by Jane Clayton on these networks: Clayton, J.M. & Clayton, C.A. (2016) Shipowners Investing in the South Sea Whale Fishery from Britain: 1775-1815. Chania, Crete; Self Published. Clayton, J.M. (2014) An Alphabetical List of Ships Employed in the South Sea Whale Fishery from Britain, 1775-1815. Chania, Crete; Self Published

Captain Cook,⁵ much less scholarly attention has been paid to other aspects of cultures of collecting in the Pacific - for example amongst traders and missionaries.⁶ In this wider context, the collections of British whalers, in particular, warrant particular attention given the scale of the commercial fleet and the extent of trade across the Pacific. The collecting activities of whalers have until now been largely overlooked, due in part to the challenges of available source material in comparison with Royal Navy officers or missionaries, for example. The archives of trade are far more heterogeneous and less likely to be preserved: in most cases, where trading ventures have left written sources, they are dispersed, hard to access and little known.

Whilst acknowledging significant exceptions, such as the work of H. E. Maude and Dorothy Sheinberg in the 1960s, this thesis suggests that the relative lack of scholarly attention to the activities of early traders within the region of the South Pacific within the discipline of maritime history, in comparison with imperial and military endeavours, needs to be redressed. It will explore the extent to which men involved in the whaling trade had opportunities to be at the very forefront of natural history and scientific exploration. The global scope of their operations meant whalers were perfectly placed to act as agents of territorial expansion, naming and claiming for their respective governments. Indeed, whalemen's journals are littered with charts of bays and coastlines (illustrating the potential use of whaleships as proxy survey vessels). As historian H. E. Maude pointed out with regard to the Central Pacific, an area he states that was largely ignored by the main Voyages of Discovery, "the names which appear on the regional roll of discoverers can seldom be found in the published editions of voyages; in all but a handful of instances they are the captains of merchants or whaling vessels who would be startled indeed to find themselves the objects of historical research."⁷⁷

⁵ See, Coote, J. (ed.) (2015) Cook-Voyage Collections of 'Artificial Curiosities' in Britain and Ireland, 1771-2015. (MEG Occasional Paper, No. 5), Oxford: Museum Ethnographers Group. See also, Thomas, N. et al. (eds) (2016) Artefacts of Encounter: Cook's Voyages, Colonial Collecting and Museum Histories. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press

⁶ For the activities of traders see, Thomas, N. (2010) *Islanders: The Pacific in the Age of Empire*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press. For missionary endeavours see, Sivasundaram, S. (2005) *Nature and the Godly Empire: Science and Evangelical Mission in the Pacific, 1795 - 1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press

⁷ Maude, H. E. (1968) *Of Islands and Men*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p.85

The thesis moves beyond highlighting the simple acquisition of 'curiosities' to consider the role of whalers in knowledge production in its broadest sense. In doing so it considers the role the whale fishery played in aiding comprehension of a rapidly expanding world, through its geographical discoveries, oceanographic knowledge (including the pattern of currents and the distribution of species), the collection and transportation of natural history specimens, and its interaction with Indigenous peoples, collecting aspects of their material culture and employing them as crew. As this suggests, the use of the term 'knowledge production' within the thesis is necessarily broad: it encompasses the collection of information as well as artefacts and specimens. As the first study of the knowledge production by British whalemen in the southern oceans, it deploys a distinctive methodology which utilises a dual focus on archives and objects to consider evidence for practices of collecting. The study develops a flexible typology in order to investigate this evidence, allowing for situations where archives survive but objects do not, and vice-versa (as discussed in Chapter 3). Thus the collections of the whaleship owning Enderby family, which no longer exist, are explored mainly via archival research in Chapter 4, whereas the collection of whaleship owner Benjamin Rotch, which has little directly associated archival documentation, is discussed in Chapter 5.

Artefacts migrated both geographically and intellectually, from island to dockside from the collections of philosophical societies into metropolitan museums, and from domestic settings into museum stores, sometimes completely circumventing display or interpretation. Key cultural objects, such as Royal Hawaiian feather cloaks (discussed in Chapter 6), continue to be sent on loan around the world, spawning emotive repatriation debates. Some artefacts have remained in the possession of their collectors' families, descending through generations via inheritance. In one form or another, therefore, mobility is a defining feature of the lives of these objects as it was of the livelihoods of whalers themselves. The particular forms of mobility which shaped whaling voyages themselves left their mark on the collecting practices of their crew. Unlike merchant vessels, whaleships often took a circuitous route in search of their prey.⁸ As whaler Francis Allyn Olmsted suggested in his book *Incidents of a whaling Voyage*, whalemen made curiosity a virtue of their occupation:

⁸ In the early 1840s whaleship surgeon John Wilson stopped counting the number of times he had crossed the Equator after the tenth occasion, on completion of the voyage he estimating he had crossed fifteen

It is customary aboard whalers, whenever they happen to be in the neighbourhood of islands or rocks, to send off a boat or two upon a hunting and fishing expedition, which is not often the case with merchantmen whose object is to press forward as rapidly as possible.⁹

Furthermore, as whaleships typically followed the established migratory patterns of the sperm whale, fishing on identified 'grounds', repeated visits to the same locales were inevitable. As surgeon Thomas Beale noted, this in itself created opportunities to trade goods with Indigenous peoples:

Whalers, whenever they happen to be near the shore, are much in the habit of visiting it , [...] to trade with the natives, either for food of various kinds, which they may possess, or for curiosities, such as shells, clubs, spears, and other things of the like nature.¹⁰

The thesis seeks to situate the collecting practices of whalers in the wider context of cultures and networks of collecting in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Britain. These diverse networks included those of the broader international whaling fraternity, religious groups such as the Quakers, the Admiralty, missionary organisations, commercial dealers, museum administrators, learned societies and government officials. The intersections between these networks, or "contact zones" to adapt Mary Louise Pratt's concept used to describe "social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power",¹¹ have been investigated to reveal how these spaces function as knowledge facilitators, moving whaler collections from ship to shore and beyond. These include specific sites, such as learned societies like the Royal Geographical Society or the Royal Society (as discussed in Chapter 4) where whaleship owners interacted with pioneering individuals in fields such as hydrography, geography or ethnography, sharing the findings of the whaleship captains; the spaces of whaling vessels where British crewmen traded with, and worked alongside, a culturally heterogeneous labour force; and, as discussed in Chapter 7, the London dockside or particular sites of exhibition. These contact zones also provided settings for more transient events; moments in time when individuals and ideas

times. Forster, H. (ed.) and Wilson, J. (1991) The Cruise of the 'Gipsy': the Journal of John Wilson, Surgeon on a Whaling Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843. United States: Ye Galleon Press, p.372

⁹ Olmsted, F.A., 1841. Incidents of a whaling voyage. New York: D Appleton and Co. p.147

¹⁰ Beale, T. (1839) *A Few Observations on the Natural History of the Sperm Whale: with an account of the rise and progress of the fishery, etc.*]. London: London: John Van Voorst, eBook location: 3347 - 3348

¹¹ Pratt, M.L. (1992) *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: New York: Routledge. p.6

collided, such as within the interactions between missionaries and whalemen, or during demonstrations and autopsies carried out by whaling surgeons watched by the crew. All these are moments embedded with the power relations inherent within the collection, distribution and ownership of both material things and scientific knowledge.

As the men who worked, or were associated with, the whaling trade came from a broad crosssection of society, a brief explanation of who, or what, constitutes a 'whaleman' within this thesis is warranted here.¹² Just as the term 'sailor' is an umbrella term referring generically to one who worked at sea, the term 'whaleman' has a similarly broad usage. In this thesis it refers to anyone who worked aboard a whaleship even if they did not actively take part in the whale hunt. The term therefore encompasses captains, sailors, tradesmen, and surgeons, as well as ordinary seamen (the occupations on board a whaleship are outlined in more detail in section 1.4 below). Amongst the whalemen, surgeons were always socially 'apart' due to their medical education, though not so far removed that they were not financially invested in the success of the voyage. They were paid like the rest of the crew, except for the apprentices (discussed in Section 6.3 and in Chapter 7) on the American lay system in which a whaleman's pay was proportional to the amount of oil returned dependent upon their station onboard. Therefore, the more whales they caught the more money they earnt. Thus, everyone including the captain was unified in this end goal. As surgeon John Wilson explained, whaling was a "joint stock concern, a speculation in the success of which everyone is interested, and all without exception are expected to lend a hand in accomplishing the voyage."¹³ As Amanda Bosworth's work illustrates, skilled crewmen such as the cooper were also vital to the success of the voyage.¹⁴ The cooper's importance as the barrel maker and his expertise in the stowage of oil was reflected in his high share of the lay and his superior accommodation onboard. He was an integral part of a whaleship crew and therefore like other artisans on board can be referred to as a whaleman even though he did not hunt.

¹² This thesis deals mainly with men. However, women did go to sea on whaleships but not in an occupational capacity. This is particularly true of the American whaling fleet where wives accompanied their husbands. See Druett, J. & Druett, R. (2001) *Petticoat Whalers: Whaling Wives at Sea, 1820-1920.* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England

¹³ Forster and Wilson (ed) (1991) The cruise of the 'Gipsy', p.383

¹⁴ Bosworth (2020) 'In the Hands of One Nineteenth-Century Whaling Cooper'

The inclusion of all these occupational groups under the umbrella term 'whalemen' does not of course mean that their collecting practices on whaling voyages were undifferentiated. As we shall see, captains, surgeons and below-deck seamen had distinct roles and relationships within the history of collecting. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 4, whaleship owners are a distinct group within the whaling community due to their social status as merchant gentlemen, men of means even if often from humble origins. The main whaleship owners discussed in this thesis, the Enderbys and the Rotches and to a lesser extent the Bennetts, were all descended from merchant stock: tanners of Bermondsey, oil merchants and candlemakers on the American island of Nantucket, and in the case of the Bennetts, braziers of Rotherhithe. Each family, spearheaded by a patriarch, doggedly accrued wealth and status and passed this on to their sons and grandsons through inheritance in the form of businesses, houses and goods. By the turn of the nineteenth century all these families can be said to be main drivers in the establishing and administration of the British Southern Whale Fishery.¹⁵ As Jane Clayton's work has established, whaleship owners were deeply embedded in the tight-knit social and familial networks of the wider whaling community.¹⁶ Furthermore, it is their collections that are predominantly to be found within museums and it is their links to learned societies that aid our understanding of the movement of knowledge and collections from ship to shore. In this thesis, therefore, the distinction between 'whaleship owners' (who financed the voyages) and 'whalemen' (who worked on board ship) is of fundamental significance. The more generic term 'whaler' is occasionally also used to refer to all those employed in the whaling industry, including owners.

1.3 Historical and geographical context

British commercial whaling was carried out with varying economic success from the early 1600s and its history contains three overlapping eras: the Arctic Whale Fisheries from the 1600s until the outbreak of war in 1914, the Southern Whale Fisheries from 1775 - c.1859, followed by the modern era of commercial whaling ending in the 1960s.¹⁷ This thesis focuses

¹⁵ See Stackpole, E.A. (1972) Whales and Destiny: The Rivalry Between America, France, and Britain for Control of the Southern Whale Fishery, 1785-1825. University of Massachusetts Press

¹⁶ Clayton and Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*

¹⁷ Chatwin, D. (1996) A Trade so Uncontrollably Uncertain: A Study of the English Southern Whale Fishery from 1815 to 1860. Master's Thesis. Australian National University, p.1

exclusively upon the activities the British Southern Whale Fishery. Here the historical context of its foundation warrants brief consideration.¹⁸

The British Southern Whale Fleet (BSWF) was established in 1775 and operated primarily from London (about 95% of the total trade) and to a lesser extent out of the ports of Hull, Milford Haven, Falmouth, Bristol and Redbridge, Southampton, Exeter, and the Channel Islands of Guernsey and Jersey.¹⁹ In her extensive study of ship owners involved in the BSWF between 1775 and 1815, historian Jane Clayton suggests that the most significant political influences on the formation of the Fishery included parliamentary legislation, the American War of independence, the monopolies of the Honourable East India and South Seas Companies, and Government incentives for American whalemen to join the BSWF in London and Milford Haven.²⁰

During the late 1700s the valuable oil and spermaceti produced in the head cavity of the sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) was increasingly being used for the lubrication of fine machinery, such as watches and clocks, and in the making of candles to light the homes and cities of Britain. It had the benefit of being cheaper than beeswax, burning brighter than traditional tallow candles, and smelling much less repugnant. Whereas the British Arctic Fishery, during a short six-month whaling season from May to October, focussed on harvesting the oil of the baleen whales (*Balaenidae*) known as 'black' oil, used in industrial machinery, ²¹ it was the American whale fleet, sailing out of the East coast ports of Nantucket, New Bedford and smaller neighbouring harbours, which monopolised the sperm whale oil market into Britain prior to the outbreak of the American War of Independence (1775-1783). However, in an attempt to control the political and social unrest in the American colonies of Massachusetts and New England the British Government introduced the Restraining Acts of 1775. These prohibited the New England colonies from fishing in the waters off

¹⁸ Also known as the British Southern Whale Fleet, Southern Whale Fishery, or South Sea Whale Fishery. This is not to be confused with the Southern Whale Fishery Company established in Auckland NZ in 1849. See; Fotheringham, B. (1995) *The Southern Whale Fishery Company, Auckland Islands*. MPhil Thesis. University of Cambridge.

¹⁹ Clayton and Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, pp.2-3. Chatwin, D. (2018) 'Findings from an Analysis of Data in the British Southern Whale Fishery (1775-1859) Datasets', *The Great Circle*, 40(2), p.31

²⁰ Clayton and Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, pp.9-19

²¹ In addition to collecting the oil, baleen, and whalebone they also hunted bow whales, seal, and walrus, all found widely in the Arctic and North Atlantic.

Newfoundland and the American Atlantic coast, limited the export or import of any goods with Great Britain, and prohibited trade with other colonies. These embargos on American produce created a shortage of sperm whale oil and associated products in Britain. In an attempt to alleviate this, Parliament introduced a complex system of bounties, premiums and Acts to support the British whaling industry.²² Initially, these were focussed on the Arctic Fishery but were then amended to include the fledgling Southern Whale Fishery, offering incentives to British-built vessels which returned from the South Seas (defined as anywhere south of the equator which was considered by the Government to be the limit of the BSWF) with the largest cargos of oil. These bounties continued until after the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783 when the British Government imposed an import duty on American oil that was on par with its selling price, rendering it commercially unviable.²³

From 1775 the BSWF operated primarily in the mid to south Atlantic, predominantly hunting right whales off the Brazil Banks and Falkland Islands venturing to the east coast of Africa and round the Cape of Good Hope in the 1780s.²⁴ In 1788, the *Emilia* owned by Samuel Enderby & Sons of London and captained by a Nantucketer James Shields, rounded Cape Horn and was the first vessel to take a whale in the Pacific (discussed in Chapter 4). She returned in 1790 with a full cargo of 140 tons of whale oil and 888 seal skins, having discovered the rich whaling grounds off Chile, Peru and the Galapagos Islands, a favoured destination for the next thirty years.²⁵ By the mid-1790s the Fishery had moved into the Pacific and Indian Oceans, steadily eroding the stronghold imposed upon it by the South Seas Company and the Honourable East India Company (EIC).²⁶ Both companies required whale ships to hold a licence to fish in restricted waters and stipulated the number of voyages a vessel could make in a specified period.²⁷ The shifting geographical boundaries within which the BSWF could legally operate

²² See Jenkins, J.T. (1948) 'Bibliography of Whaling', *Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History*, 2(4), pp. 71–166. The appendix offers a list of Acts of Parliament issues between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries of relevance to the British whaling trade.

 ²³ Clayton and Clayton (2016) Shipowners, p.10. For a list of Parliamentary legislation see McDevitt J.L. Jr. (1986) The House of Rotch: Massachusetts Whaling Merchants, 1734-1828, Garland Pub. Co. Appendix II, p.566, British Parliamentary Acts concerning whaling

²⁴ Chatwin (2018) Findings, p.32

²⁵ Chatwin (2018) Findings, p.33

²⁶ See: Jackson, G. (1978) *The British Whaling Trade*. London: A. and C. Black, Chapter 5 for an explanation of EIC restrictions.

As laid out in the 1893 Act of Parliament. See Clayton, J.M. (2001) *The Development of a Southern Whale Fishery from Britain between 1775 and 1815*. PhD Thesis. University of Wales, Swansea, p.46

altered over time, allowing increased access to key whaling grounds. However, in the process whaling voyages became much longer, two to four years were not unusual. Prior to 1798 EIC restrictions forbade British whaleships to sail or trade in the Indian Ocean above 10 degrees south. This incorporated the Indian Ocean to the north-west and north of Australia.²⁸ However from 1802, British whaleships (under 350 tons) were allowed to fish the Indian Ocean as far north as the latitude of Timor (but not including Batavia, Java), thus opening up the Indonesian Archipelago to whaleships, in addition to a narrow strip of water to the north of the Australian continent passing through areas well populated by sperm whales.²⁹ That same year the BSWF was given permission to fish, albeit under licence, to the east of 180 degrees, effectively from the centre of the Pacific to the west coast of the Americas, when entering the Pacific via Cape Horn.³⁰ It was not until 1813, when the EIC's monopoly was finally broken by a combination of Government and significant and sustained pressure from whaleship owners, that the BSWF was allowed to hunt freely north of the equator under licence, although any trade with China remained the sole preserve of the EIC (see Figure 1.2).³¹

²⁸ Chatwin, D. (2022) 'British Sperm Whaling Activity to the North-West of Australia and in Indonesian and New Guinea Waters in the 1800s – Revised February 2022', p.4. Available at: https://www.academia.edu

²⁹ Chatwin (2022) British Sperm Whaling Activity, p.4

³⁰ Cumpston, J.S. and Nicholson, I.H. (1964) *Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Sydney*. Canberra Australia: Roebuck Society, p.17

³¹ Chatwin (2018) Findings, pp.32-34

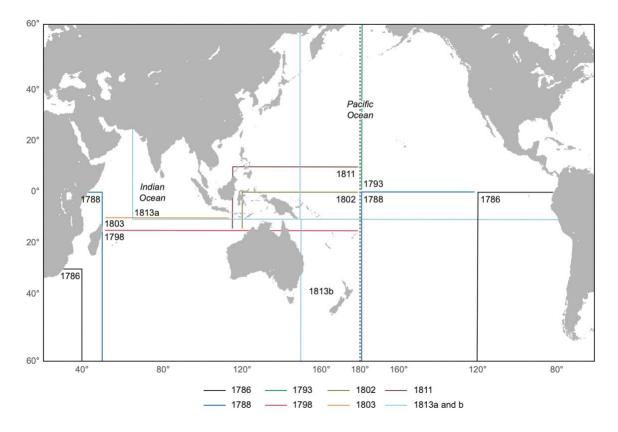


Figure 1.2 Areas open to the BSWF between 1788 and 1813. Adapted from Cumpston, J.S. and Nicholson, I.H. (1964) *Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Sydney.* Canberra Australia: Roebuck Society, p.17. Drawn by Jen Thornton

The War of Independence meant the loss of the American penal colonies favoured by the British Government which found its jail system under increasing strain. Whaleships were ideally suited to the transportation of human cargo as they left port empty of goods. As of 1778, ship owners increased their profits by hiring their vessels to the Government as convict transport ships to Port Jackson, returning with cargos of oil gathered around Australia and New Zealand.³² This placed the whalemen of the BSWF in a prime position to collect new knowledge regarding the furthest reaches of the known world and act as a key tool in territorial expansion: artefacts, geographical discoveries and in several instances Indigenous people were all transported to Britain on returning whaleships from the 1790s onwards (discussed in Chapter 4).

The BSWF also facilitated the migration of American whalemen, mostly Quakers from the East Coast, into Britain. As these individuals were highly regarded within the trade, Prime Minister

³² Clayton and Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, p.13. See also, Byrnes, D. (1988) 'Outlooks for England's South Whale Fishery, 1784-1800, and "the Great Botany Bay Debate"', *The Great Circle*, 10(2), pp. 79–102

Pitt, wishing to take advantage of their expertise, recommended relocating them and their families to British ports to support the fledgling whaling trade. British whaleship owners Samuel Enderby and Sons played a notable role in recruiting American whaling captains and crew, encouraging them to move to London where they could become masters of British whaling vessels. For the Americans, the economic crisis caused by trade restrictions made this an attractive proposal and by 1786 Enderby and Sons had about thirty Nantucket men in their employ.³³ Over subsequent years the Government offered financial inducements for experienced American whalemen to relocate to Britain. These included such measures as paying relocation costs for them and their families and allowing owners to re-register their ships as British vessels and benefit from the same bounties paid to British merchants. Although supportive of this small-scale immigration, London merchants were uneasy about encouraging the mass migration of American whaling communities fearing they be a threat to business. They therefore resisted proposals from the Quaker whaling merchant William Rotch of Nantucket to create a British-based but American-manned whaling fleet. Although his idea was also vetoed by Parliament, Rotch nonetheless established a whaling colony at Dunkirk in France. In 1792, seeing the success of the Dunkirk venture now operating in direct competition the BSWF, Parliament relented and allowed a colony of Nova Scotian whalemen and their families (who had previously relocated from Nantucket) to be established at Milford Haven in Wales. Within a few years, due to revolutionary upheaval in France, Rotch vessels based at Dunkirk also joined the Milford Haven contingency creating a thriving Quaker community in west Wales (as discussed further in Chapter 5).

In the early nineteenth century the BSWF was the dominant force in global commercial whaling, operating 164 ships at its peak around 1815, generating huge profits and leading to a boom period for British whaling in the Pacific.³⁴ Whaleships either took the west route around Cape Horn (favoured from 1790-1820) or the east route via the Cape of Good Hope.³⁵ From there they would voyage toward South Australia or the whaling grounds of the Indian Ocean. Then they entered Pacific whaling grounds, to the east of New Guinea around New Britain, New Ireland, Buka and the Northern Solomons, before sailing north towards the Japan

³³ Clayton and Clayton (2016) Shipowners, p.16

³⁴ Clayton and Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, p.2

³⁵ Chatwin (2018) Findings, p.34

Grounds, often doubling back and revisiting favoured whaling grounds more than once during a voyage.³⁶ The profitable Japan Grounds were discovered in 1819-20, enabling the Hawaiian Islands of Oahu and Lahaina to become key whaling revictualling points, further extending the reach of the BSWF into the wider Pacific Ocean. Once the holds were full, the whaling vessel could either retrace her track, or carry on and do a circumnavigation of the world.

Unlike the Arctic Fishery, which largely practiced a shore-based model of processing whales in which the blubber was stripped form the whale then stored in barrels until returned, either to a processing station in a convenient bay, or to a home port where it was then rendered down for oil,³⁷ pelagic (off-shore) whaling vessels were effectively floating factories. The carcasses were processed alongside and onboard the ship (a process known as flensing or cutting-in), then the slices of blubber (known as bible leaves) were boiled to extract the oil. This required a constant supply of wood to heat the vats (try-pots) in which the oil was rendered from the blubber, meaning that certain locations became key replenishing ports, having the opportune mix of good anchorage, available wood, friendly, or at least not hostile locals who were willing to trade. The ensuing trade in food, wood and women was initially exchanged for iron and, as this became less scarce, tobacco, alcohol, and weaponry.³⁸

³⁶ Chatwin (2022) British Sperm Whaling Activity, p.4

³⁷ Adamson, P. (1979) The Great Whale to Snare: The Whaling Trade of Hull. Kingston upon Hull: City of Kingston upon Hull Museums and Art Galleries, p.8

³⁸ Not all islands tolerated or promoted the trade in women for economic exchange. For example, in areas of the Bismarck Archipelago chaste women were valued for their bride price and therefore closely guarded. See, Gray, A.C. (1999) 'Trading contacts in the Bismarck Archipelago during the whaling era, 1799–1884', *Journal of Pacific History*, 34(1), pp. 23–43

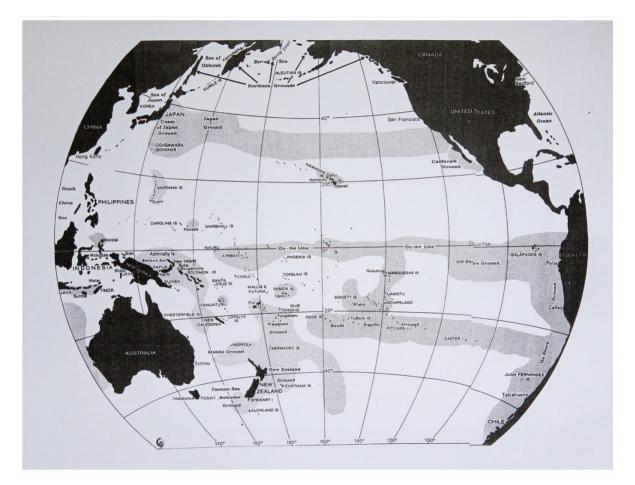


Figure 1.3 Islands of the Pacific and Eastern Indonesia with whaling grounds frequented by the BSWF indicated in grey. Source: Forster and Wilson (1991) *The Cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, p.389

The vast whaling grounds frequented by the BSWF (indicated in Figure 1.3) changed over time as the Fishery responded to factors such as EIC restrictions, migrating whale stocks and the discovery of new profitable whaling grounds (such as the Japan Grounds c.1820). Key locales for revictualing included Coupang (Kupang), Ternate in the North Moluccas, Port Jackson (Sydney), the Bay of Islands, Oahu and Lahaina (Hawaiian Islands), and Valparaiso on the South American Coast.³⁹ However, these are just some of the many places frequented by the whalemen of the BSWF and as whaling historian Dale Chatwin points out, archival sources suggest that interactions with Indigenous populations occurred virtually everywhere the whalers went.⁴⁰ Whether they landed or not, significant amounts of trade took place between whaleships and Indigenous communities via the canoes which paddled offshore to greet the ship. After its peak the BSWF went into long-term decline due to several factors, including the

³⁹ See Chatwin (2018) Findings, p.33. See also Richards, R. (2002) 'Pacific Whaling 1820 to 1840: Port visits, "Shipping Arrivals and Departures" Comparisons, and Sources', *The Great Circle*, 24(1), pp. 25–39

⁴⁰ Chatwin (2022) British Sperm Whaling Activity, p.4

resurgence of the American fisheries, competition from numerous Australian whaling stations and changes in the duty paid on foreign oil.⁴¹ Although the fishery continued to be of economic importance until the 1850s, the discovery of petroleum signalled the end of the British Southern Whale Fishery by the close of the decade.

1.4 Whaling ships and their crews

The physical and social structure of a British whaling vessel during the period examined for this thesis warrants a brief introduction here. While there were similarities with those of Royal Navy ships during the same period, there were also significant differences. In general the working community on a whaling vessel was simpler in its structure, lacking the rigid stratification of the Royal Navy. For most purposes, there was little to distinguish one man from another other than where they lodged within the ship. The whaleship captain was not necessarily from a high-status family and while his rank afforded him some level of social standing onshore, his reputation amongst the whaling fraternity was based on his ability to command and navigate the vessel, as well as his success as a whaleman. Like the mates, he headed up one of the whaleboats and was most likely to have honed his skills as a whaleman by rising through the stations of the ship.⁴² This meant that the tension between those seamen who had learnt their craft and those who had gained their authority through a commission, a common theme in accounts of naval voyages,⁴³ was much less in evidence.

⁴¹ Clayton and Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, pp.2-3. The success of the BSWF inspired the birth of the colonial whaling fleets, largely based in Sydney and Hobart, which hastened its eventual demise. See Dakin, W. (1834) Whalemen Adventures; The story of Whaling in Australian Waters and other South Seas related thereto, from the use of Sail to Modern Times. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. Although beyond the scope of this thesis, the colonial whaling fleet has received attention from contemporary scholars such as Dale Chatwin, Ross Anderson, Mark Staniforth, and John Mills. See, Chatwin, D. (1998) 'If the Government Think Proper to Support It': Issues of Relevance to Australian Whaling in the Demise of the British Southern Whale Fishery', in S. Lawrence and M. Staniforth, The Archaeology of Whaling in Southern Australia and New Zealand. The Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology and The Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology, Special Publication No. 10., pp. 87–92. Mills, J.A. (2016) The Contribution of The Whaling Industry to the Economic Development of the Australian Colonies: 1770-1850. PhD Thesis. University of Queensland. Staniforth, M. (2008) 'European-Indigenous contact at shore based whaling stations', in P.M. Veth, et al. (eds) Strangers on the Shore: Early Coastal Contacts in Australia. Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, pp. 124–132. Anderson, R. (1998) 'Whaling and Sealing Shipwreck Sites in Victoria', in S. Lawrence and M. Staniforth, Archaeology of Whaling in Southern Australia and New Zealand. The Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology and The Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology, Special Publication No. 10., pp. 32–53

⁴² Occasionally whaleship masters were Navy men (such as Lt. Colnett of the *Rattler*) who had moved into the merchant service.

⁴³ Dening, G. (1994) *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.19

Below the station of captain, a title used interchangeably with that of master (unlike in the Navy where these were distinct positions), came the mates, sometimes referred to as the officers. There were usually three or four mates on a Pacific whaling vessel, each of whom headed up a whaleboat and its compliment of men. The mates were paid a lay that reflected their seniority and were afforded a better quality of accommodation and food than those in the fo'castle. Similarly privileged was the surgeon, who occupied a distinct position on board whaling ships as on naval vessels (as discussed further in Chapter 6). Below these were a small number of specialist artisan crew. These were the men who stayed with the vessel when the whaleboats were lowered for the chase (as it was a lot easier to replace a foremast hand than a skilled labourer). Also in the steerage were the harpooners (or boatsteerers). In the fo'castle were the foremast hands; able-bodied seamen, ordinary seamen, apprentices, junior artisan crew (such as carpenter's mates) and occasionally a cabin boy. The role of cabin boy is rarely mentioned in sources: usually he was a family relation such as the captain's son or nephew learning the family trade.

The constantly shifting allocation of duties at sea blurred the lines between these ranks. Ship's surgeons sometimes kept the log, for example surgeon Eldred Fysh of the whaleship *Coronet* was given the task due to the "irregular manner" in which the mate had kept it. Similarly, surgeon Richard Burton kept the log of the *Elizabeth* and for a time surgeon George Eaton Stanger took over the responsibility of keeping the log of the *Sarah and Elizabeth* after the first mate refused duty. Furthermore, when surgeon James Brown went onboard the whaleship *Eleanor* to have a tooth extracted, he found the first mate off-duty and the surgeon promoted to the rank of 4th mate.⁴⁴ Promotion could be rapid aboard a whaleship and did not require sanction by an external body such as the Admiralty. As crew members were liable to be drowned or killed during whale hunts, foremast hands could find themselves appointed harpooners (if appropriately skilled), harpooners as mates and mates as captains (if only in name until officially recognised as such by the owners). This shifting of ranks occurred with surprising regularity. If a whaleboat was lost, having drifted too far from the whaleship, between six and eight men could vanish in one day. This would invariably include one of the mates, a harpooner and several foremast hands, and although the latter individuals could be

⁴⁴ Log of the whaleship Japan kept by Dr James Brown, under Capt. William E. Hill. NBWM: LOG no. ODHS 0809, Monday 2nd May 1836

replaced at the next available landfall, the loss of the upper ranks inevitably required a reshuffle of existing roles. In this context, basic literacy skills were also a decisive factor. Senior members of the crew had to be able to keep an accurate tally of whales taken, barrels filled and stores used, as well as maintaining the ship's log. A foremast hand could not progress further than the rank of harpooner (a highly respected title amongst whalemen due to the skill required) unless he was literate. Writing about whaleships, one surgeon observes that "there is always a very respectable library on board" and another noted in his journal that he had "commenced duty as a schoolmaster. I have already obtained plenty of scholars. I teach them writing, arithmetic and navigation."⁴⁵

Concerning the construction, layout and dimensions of whaleships, information can be gleaned from various sources including ship models, plans, published and unpublished journals and the Lloyds List 'Bills of Entry' series which reported the arrival and departure of vessels into port, giving a rough indication of carrying capacity. Restoration efforts such as that of the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan* at the Mystic Seaport Museum, and archaeological investigations of British whaleship wrecks on the western Australian coast, such as that of the *Lively*, offer further evidence.⁴⁶ It is important to note here that while some vessels were purpose-built, the majority were refitted from existing ships whose design varied considerably.⁴⁷ For example, many of those deployed in the British Southern Whale Fishery had originally been taken as prizes from other nations, particularly France and America. Even those that were purpose-built underwent adaptations during their lifetimes.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Coulter, J. (1845) Adventures in the Pacific with Observations on the Natural Productions Manners and Customs of the Natives of the Various Islands Together with Remarks on Missionaries, British and other Residents etc. Dublin: William Curry, Jun & Company, p. 79. Journal of the Surgeon, George Eaton Stanger, 24th January 1837

⁴⁶ Gibbs, M. (2010) The Shore Whalers of WA: Historical Archaeology of a Maritime Frontier. Sydney: University Press (Studies in Australasian Historical Archaeology 2). Hegarty, R.B. (1964) Birth of a Whaleship. New Bedford: New Bedford Free Public Library. McAllister, M. (2013) Stout, Sturdy and Strong: A Typology for Early Nineteenth-century American Whalers. Master's Thesis. Department of Archaeology, Flinders University South Australia.

⁴⁷ The shipbuilding and ship owning firm Green, Wigram and Green built a number of whaleships from their premises in Blackwall Yard: see Chatwin, D. (1996) A Trade so Uncontrollably Uncertain: A Study of the English Southern Whale Fishery from 1815 to 1860. Master's Thesis. Australian National University. For a discussion on the specifics of comparable American whaleships see: McAllister (2013) Stout, Sturdy and Strong

⁴⁸ McAllister (2013) *Stout, Sturdy and Strong*, p.22

According to whaling surgeon Thomas Beale, writing in 1839, "The ships which are employed in the sperm whale fishery, are generally from 300 to 400 tons burthen, having crews to the number of from twenty-eight to thirty three men and officers, and in which the surgeon is included [...] each vessel carries six whale boats".⁴⁹ This was a generalisation: Beale highlighted considerable differences in size, the *Syren* being 500 tons and the *Swan* only 150.⁵⁰ Another surgeon writing at the same time, John Wilson, characterises south sea whaleships as "generally about 4-500 tons burthen."⁵¹ Beale's assessment is borne out by Madeline McAllister's account of American whaleships active during the period 1800-1860 in which she found them to be approximately 300 to 400 tons, usually with three masts and two decks. These are comparable to British vessels operating in the same era. McAllister also states that an average length for a whaler was approximately "100 to 118 ft (30.5 m to 36 m), average beam was 25 to 29 ft (7.6 m to 8.8 m) and the average depth was 14 to 17 ft (4.27 m to 5.18 m)."⁵² These dimensions are confirmed in Reginald B. Hegarty's in-depth study of American whaleship construction, Birth of a Whaleship (1964), though he acknowledges that the statistics are based upon averages and there are many variations upon a "standard" whaleship," as they varied in "size, arrangement and other minor details, [therefore] no single vessel can be chosen as being fully typical."53

Below deck level there were generally three holds stretching the length of the ship for the storage of oil barrels, water butts, staves, food stocks, live animals and dried goods, in addition to a whole host of equipment needed for a whaling voyage including the tools of the cooper, blacksmith, carpenter, steward and the cook. Also common to all whaleships were the tryworks for boiling blubber and of course the living quarters of the crew. The sleeping quarters for the crew and cabins for the captain, surgeon and the mates were staggered through the ship in order of seniority with the captain having the largest cabin in the rear, or stern of the ship, with a separate living space, lit by several windows. Here he ate his meals with the mates and usually the surgeon, though this depended on their good relations.

⁴⁹ Beale, T. (1839) The Natural History of the Sperm Whale ... To which is added, a sketch of a South-Sea whaling voyage, etc. London: John Van Voorst. p.154

⁵⁰ B Beale (1839) *The Natural History of the Sperm Whale*, p.150-151

⁵¹ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, p.372

⁵² McAllister (2013) *Stout, Sturdy and Strong*, p.73

⁵³ Hegarty (1964) *Birth of a Whaleship*, p.21

Surgeon James Brown of the *Japan* endured his captain's tirades regularly until, in a fit of rage, the captain banned him from the cabin table, demanded he hand over the keys to the medicine chest and sent him aft to mess with crew.⁵⁴ Moving forward through the vessel, the mates berthed in small individual cabins in the stern, near to the captain. Here also was the surgeon's cabin, in addition to the bunks of the artisan crew who berthed together but separately from the main body of men down in the fo'castle, as did the harpooners, a mark of their elevated status aboard. The men in the fo'castle, at the bow end of the vessel were "a short but profound distance from their seniors" with each man having only enough room to sling his hammock over his sea chest.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Log of the whaleship Japan kept by Dr James Brown, under Capt. William E. Hill. NBWM: LOG no. ODHS 0809, 25th September 1836

Chapter 2:

Cultures of maritime collecting

This chapter situates the history of collecting on board whaleships in the context of cultures of maritime collecting during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It reviews pertinent literature concerned with the collection of curiosities, the actors who were engaged in this practice (largely but not exclusively in the Pacific) and the avenues which were available for the circulation of both physical artefacts and new knowledge of oceanic regions and peoples. The chapter aims to contextualise the collecting practices of the whalemen of the British Southern Whale Fishery within this wider history of collection and display and in doing so address the overarching themes of the thesis: global mobility, knowledge production, sites of acquisition and exchange and collecting networks.

The first section of this Chapter ('Collecting the world') introduces the subject of collecting natural and artificial curiosities before and after Captain Cook's voyages into the Southern Ocean. The contents of European collections during the long eighteenth century reflected the increasing global movement of people and goods. An important if neglected role within these collecting endeavours was played by subaltern actors such as sailors and other travellers who were in a position to satisfy the metropolitan demand for the rare and the curious. The creation of the BSWF in 1775 meant South Seas whalemen were perfectly placed to exploit the growing interest in curiosities from the Southern Oceans, as well as to make their own contributions to new knowledge.

The second section ('Collecting the Pacific') focusses on cultures and practices of maritime collecting in the Pacific during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It identifies three key groups active in such endeavours: missionaries, naval surveyors and traders. It considers the ways and means that these individuals, organisations and their collecting agendas (religious, imperial and commercial) intersected with whaler collecting in the same regions. Research on traders as collectors is notably more limited than that on naval and missionary collecting, and in considering one particularly significant global trade this thesis seeks to make a contribution to the wider study of traders as collectors.

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The third section ('Collecting instructions') considers what instructional material was available to travellers, especially whalemen, on the collection, preservation and documentation of specimens and artefacts. It highlights the role of private dealers, individual collectors and scientific institutions in the preparation, publication and distribution of such guidance in increasingly diverse and widely available forms. It considers whalemen and whale ship owners as sources of information for and as readers of such instructional literature. This discussion requires some consideration of the role of learned societies and their links with the whaling fraternity, issues which are examined in more detail in the substantive chapters of the thesis.

2.1 Collecting the world

The global scope of the whaling industries in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and their presence in regions of the world that to many only existed as imaginative constructs, meant that whalemen were uniquely placed to collect and distribute new knowledge. This knowledge was embedded in multiple forms: textual, physical and conceptual. Glossaries, maps, and journals returned to Britain along with shells, corals, botanical specimens, animals and birds, and myriad examples of material culture, together loosely known as 'Natural and Artificial Curiosities'.¹ Whether collected with a guiding rationale in mind or simply a desire to own or sell, they were acquired under the broad banner of curiosity collecting. As John Gascoigne argues "an area as vast as the Pacific had meaning only for those voyagers and visitors who could view the globe with the detachment that came from a return to another part of the world."² The importation and display of specimens and artefacts was one way by which people and places at the furthest reaches of the globe could be made manifest to audiences in Britain.

That the display of curiosities during this era had its origins in the Cabinets of Curiosity of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Europe is a well-covered theme within the museological literature. As maritime trade routes expanded to encompass the Atlantic trade triangle, the

¹ The discourse of 'Natural and Artificial Curiosities', which came into usage during the eighteenth century incorporated both natural history specimens, including drawings, and ethnographic artefacts. See Kaeppler, A. L. and Cook, J. (1978) *Artificial Curiosities*. Honolulu, Hawaii: Bishop Museum Press

² Gascoigne, J. (2014) *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*. Port Melbourne, Vic., Australia. New York: Cambridge University Press, p.xiii

East Indies and the fur and whaling opportunities offered by the North Atlantic, the wealthy classes had increasing opportunities to experience the wider world through luxury commodities. These commodities included consumables such as tobacco, tea, coffee, sugar, and spices but also knowledge in the form of drawings, maps, botanical specimens, natural history and ethnographic artefacts to be displayed in their cabinets. These displays may have offered a loose interpretative framework led by classificatory systems (minerals, metals, vegetables and animals for example, precursors to the defined subject disciplines of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) but were predominantly underpinned by classical thinking. 'Natural Curiosities' in the form of specimens and illustrations were used to instruct physicians, apothecaries and students in *Materia Medica*, to support biblical ideas of creation or to teach comparative anatomy. 'Artificial Curiosities' were distinguished from specimens of the natural order as products of human ingenuity and invention. For natural philosophers, the arrangement of curiosities was an aid to the production of new knowledge: the Repository, the museum of the Royal Society "eschewed wonders and marvels in favour of the factual documentation of nature through common and quotidian specimens."³

MacGregor and Impey's work highlights the movement of artefacts through networks of exchange by sale or gift between the aristocratic, 'virtuoso' collectors and the royal families of Europe. However, subaltern actors such as sailors had long played a pivotal part in this activity; Thomas Sprat, historian of the Royal Society in the late seventeenth century, stated that "there w[ould] be scarce a ship come up the Thames, that d[id] not make some return of experiments [objects], as well as merchandise."⁴ Within this one statement he centres the role of the vessel and sailor in collection and distribution of "experiments" a term that highlights their unknown and unstable nature; the very essence of their curiosity. Sprat's comment illustrates that despite the hallowed place reserved within popular imagination for the voyages of Captain Cook and the artefacts his voyages introduced into Britain, curiosity collecting was neither restricted to Enlightenment science or to the wealthy. It relied heavily on the agency of maritime workers as collectors, intermediates and distributors to provide

³ Delbourgo, J. (2017) *Collecting the World: The Life and Curiosity of Hans Sloane*. London: Allen Lane, (Penguin Random House), eBook location: 830. See also, Hooper-Greenhill, E. (1992) *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge, p.160-161

⁴ Sprat, T. quoted in Longair, S. and McAleer, J. (eds) (2012) *Curating Empire: Museums and the British Imperial Experience*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, p.2

"curious items from home and abroad."⁵ According to Beth Fowkes Tobin writing about the Duchess of Portland (1715-1785), and James Delbourgo in his biography of Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753), this was a procurement technique practiced extensively by both these wealthy collectors and their contemporaries.⁶ Delbourgo asserts that Sloane's habit of collecting should not be seen as a sign of individual genius so much as a combined effort involving a carefully managed network of global actors.⁷ Indeed, this was an approach replicated on an even more global scale by Sir Joseph Banks a century later.⁸ Similarly, the Duchess of Portland is known to have utilised an extensive network of patronage and commercial exchange, entered into correspondence with customs officers and dock officials - men far below her social status in order to build relationships mediated by the movement of specimens and artefacts.⁹ Her suppliers included anonymous seafaring men returning from abroad to British coastal ports intercepted by a network of commercial agents, including the Duchess's friend John Timothy Swainson, the Margate customs agent. A founder of the Linnean Society, Swainson had a significant shell collection of his own and was father to the naturalist and collector William Swainson (1789 – 1855) who wrote an influential collecting guide in 1822 (see section 2.3).¹⁰ Men such as Swainson facilitated the movement of artefacts from provincial coastal towns to the metropolis, acting as middle-men between the anonymous sailor and well-known collectors such as the Duchess.

⁵ Gutfleisch, B. and Menzhausen, J. (1989) "How a Kunstkammer should be formed": Gabriel Kaltemarckt's Advice to Christian I of Saxony on the Formation of an Art Collection, 1587', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 1(1), p.11

⁶ Margaret Cavendish Holles Harley Bentinck, the Dowager Duchess of Portland. On her death her collection (which in addition to examples of conchology included natural history specimens and examples of fine and decorative arts) was auctioned off in 4263 lots, half of which consisted of shells. Each of these lots contained anything from 1 to dozens of shells. The auction was held in London in April 1786 and lasted thirty-eight days, thirty of which were devoted to the sale of shells: Fowkes Tobin, B. (2014) *The Duchess's Shells: Natural History Collecting in the Age of Cook's Voyages*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Sloane's collection of specimens and artefacts numbered in the tens of thousands: Delbourgo (2017) *Collecting the World*

⁷ Delbourgo (2017) Collecting the World, eBook location: 309

⁸ See Miller, D.P. (1998) 'Joseph Banks, empire, and "centres of calculation" in late Hanoverian London', in D.P. Miller, and P.H. Reill, (eds) *Visions of Empire: Voyages, Botany, and Representations of Nature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 21-37

⁹ Fowkes Tobin (2014) *The Duchess's Shells,* p.117

¹⁰ According to Fowkes Tobin, despite a significant difference in both age and social station the Duchess and Swainson became friends, using the exchange of shells as a way of negotiating and navigating this potentially difficult alliance. Fowkes Tobin (2014) *The Duchess's Shells*, p.117

Similarly, Sloane's collecting was based on ambitions of universal completeness. Delbourgo suggests his extensive collecting network was a "highly social form of science" in which "universal knowledge demanded universal acquaintance, up and down the social hierarchy and reaching across different cultures."¹¹ This enabled him to create one of the largest collections of natural history amassed by a single individual in the eighteenth century. The development of his collection depended on his connections with individuals serving or travelling in the British trading empire, and his collection reflected the geography of that empire:

His curiosities traced a map not of the globe but of Britain's colonial outposts, from the slave castles of West Africa and the colonies clustered in North America and the Caribbean to the East India Company factories dotted around South and East Asia. Sloane in truth owned little from most parts of the world that lacked British colonies: Australasia, the Pacific, western North America, Central and South America, the Ottoman Empire, Safavid Persia, Russia, Central Asia and the African interior.¹²

However, by purchasing the collections of other travellers Sloane was able to make artefactual forays into territories almost completely unknown to British audiences of the early modern era.

During the eighteenth century many of these private collections of curiosities formed the basis of major metropolitan museums either by gift, bequest or sale.¹³ The British Museum was created by Act of Parliament in 1753 to house Sloane's collection after his death.¹⁴ The Duchess' collection (which in addition to examples of conchology included natural history specimens and examples of fine and decorative arts) was auctioned off in 4263 lots, half of which consisted of shells.¹⁵ Despite, or perhaps because of this transition from private to public many of these collections continued to grow. The ideals of the natural philosophers of

¹¹ Delbourgo (2017) *Collecting the World*, eBook location: 203 and 308

¹² Delbourgo (2017) Collecting the World, eBook location: 4655

¹³ Such as the Ashmolean Museum founded in 1683 based on the Tradescant collection, the British Museum in 1753 and the Hunterian Museum which opened in 1806/7 founded on the collections of Scottish anatomist William Hunter (1718-1783.) His brother John's collection formed the basis of the Hunterian Collection at the Royal College of Surgeons, bought by the British government in 1796. See, Delbourgo (2017) *Collecting the World*. Also, Caygill, M. (2002) *The Story of the British Museum*. London: British Museum Press

¹⁴ In time, the establishing of subject disciplines physically dispersed Sloane's 'universal' collection as separate collections were calved out necessitating their own repositories; the Natural History Museum in 1881 and the British Library in 1973.

¹⁵ Fowkes Tobin (2014) *The Duchess's Shells*; Livingstone, D.N. (2013) *Putting Science in its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, p.30

the late Enlightenment era embedded within these collections held that encountering the unfamiliar gave rise to feelings of wonder which, when harnessed through scientific rationality could give rise to knowledge. As David Livingstone asserts, by such means collecting became established as a valuable and "valid way of knowing."¹⁶ This required a systematic and most importantly, a scientific approach to collecting. If curiosity acted as a guiding principle in early Enlightenment thinking, it was the *precision* of science embodied by the late Enlightenment era, that enabled comparisons to be made, data to be gleaned and knowledge created. Thus, as Livingstone further states, "precision disciplined mere curiosity and channelled its energies in a scientific and, as often as not, imperial direction."¹⁷

Notwithstanding attempts to coordinate and standardise the practice of collection and interpretation of exotic specimens and artefacts, increasingly expressed within the instructional literature (discussed below in section 2.3), the ordinary seaman maintained a significant place within the supply chain. This is illustrated by the comments of Johann Reinhold Forster, the naturalist on Cook's second voyage, in his *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World* (1778). Forster highlights that collecting specimens offered the ordinary sailor a significant economic opportunity and that the sailors aboard the *Resolution* took full advantage of this. He complained that the commercial motivations of "such people" undermined the philosophical purpose of "a Man like me" in his institutionally sanctioned collecting:

Today a Saylor offered me 6 shells to sale, all of which were not quite complete, & asked half a Gallon of brandy for them, which is now worth more than half a Guinea. This shews however what people think to get for their Curiosities when they get home, & how difficult it must be for a Man like me, sent out on purpose by the Government to collect Natural Curiosities, to get these things from the Natives in the Isles, as every Sailor whatsoever buys vast Quantities of Shells, birds Fish etc. so that the things are dearer & scarcer than one would believe, & often they go to such people, who have made vast Collections, especially of Shells viz. the Gunner & Carpenter, who have several 1000...some of these Curiosities are neglected, broke, thrown over board, or lost.¹⁸

¹⁶ Livingstone (2013) *Putting Science in its Place*, p.30

¹⁷ Livingstone (2013) Putting Science in its Place, p.175

¹⁸ Hoare, M.E. (ed.) (1982) *The Resolution Journal of Johann Reinhold Forster*, 1772–1775. London: The Hakluyt Society, pp.555-557

The Gunner in question has since been identified as John Marra who published his own account of the voyage in defiance of the Admiralty's moratorium on non-official publications. Marra's account brings into question common assumptions regarding the agency of ordinary sailors as observers, inquirers and collectors.¹⁹ As Tom Ryan points out, "standard British naval practice automatically assumed that ordinary seamen lacked the ability to produce such documents" and that Marra was "far from the semi-literate misfit he is generally assumed to have been."20 Daniel Simpson asserts that the Admiralty effectively acknowledged the practice of keeping private journals by insisting upon the surrender of such narrative outputs before they would pay the sailor's wages.²¹ The below deck sailor realised that the knowledge held within them had in some way become valuable to their superiors. "The mere fact that things written down were likely to be read, and to be thought important, was enough to excite the intellectual energies of a new generation of sailors."²² Understanding the practice of journal keeping amongst sailors, an increasing proportion of whom had basic skills of reading and writing, is an essential part of any attempt to understand whalers' collecting practices.²³ By the 1820s and 1830s, artisan interests in natural history were becoming expressed through field clubs and societies, meeting in public houses, coffee houses and libraries, as well as through literary and philosophical societies and local museums: it is not unreasonable to assume that these interests were shared by a growing number of sailors.²⁴

The increase in global trade and better provision for the transport and preservation of specimens eventually allowed collectors and museums to engage in a more formalised international trade in natural history and ethnographic objects, exchanging specimens with

¹⁹ See Simpson, D. (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting: The Royal Navy in Australia, c.1772-1855. PhD Thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London. (Specifically, Chapter 1, 'Re-thinking John Marra.')

²⁰ Ryan, T. (2001) 'Blue-Lip'd Cannibal Ladies: The Allure of the Exotic in the Illicit Resolution Journal of Gunner John Marra', in A. Smith (ed.) *Bright Paradise: Exotic History and Sublime Artifice: the 1st Auckland Triennial*. Auckland: Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, pp. 89–95

²¹ Simpson (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting

²² Simpson (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting. See also, Keighren, I. et al (2015) Travels into Print: Exploration, Writing, and Publishing with John Murray, 1773 - 1859. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, p.30

 ²³ Klancher, J. P. (1987) *The Making of English Reading Audiences*, *1790-1832*. Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press. See also Gillard, D. (2018) *Education in England: a history*

²⁴ See, Secord, A. (1994) 'Science in the Pub: Artisan Botanists in Early Nineteenth-Century Lancashire', *History of Science*, 32(3), pp. 269–315. Morus, I.R. et al (1992) 'Scientific London', in C. Fox, Kulturstiftung Ruhr, and Villa Hügel e.V (eds) *London-World City*, *1800-1840*. New Haven: Yale University Press, p.131

counterparts, commercial dealers, and field collectors around the globe.²⁵ While the latenineteenth century trade (as examined in recent work) was dominated by larger institutions, it is important to recognise the increasingly global traffic in specimens and artefacts during the preceding centuries. In this context, the popular cultures of display of exotic specimens, including living animals and people, has attracted much attention from historians. Richard Altick's classic book on *The Shows of London* investigates the evolving practices of display across a range of spaces in eighteenth and nineteenth-century London, highlighting the commercial and the popular as much as the scientific and the elite.²⁶ Commercial spaces such as coffee houses, taverns, theatres, fairs and menageries offered diverse public audiences the opportunity to see exotic artefacts, specimens, animals and people outside of the physical constraints of private or museum collections. Arctic and Pacific whalers were caught up in this traffic in the exotic: for example, an "astonishing large Hairy Wild Man" was transported to London aboard the whaleship *Rambler* after being captured in South Africa in 1800 and exhibited at the Auction Room in Bath the following year.²⁷

Recent works by Sadiah Qureshi and Coll Thrush pay closer attention to the experience and agency of the people brought to London from across the globe and put on show, some of them carried on whaling ships.²⁸ For example, Col Thrush's *Indigenous London* tells the story of Mahanga of Ngāpuhi, the first recorded Maori to visit England on the whaler *Ferret* in April 1806.²⁹ While the story of such displays of Indigenous visitors lies beyond the remit of this thesis, it should be noted that the infrastructure of whaling underpinned a significant part of the global trade in people. This topic also has wider relevance in this context because of the extensive practice of employing indigenous islanders, particularly from Pacific islands and the

²⁵ Coote, A. *et al.* (2017) 'When Commerce, Science, and Leisure Collaborated: The Nineteenth-Century Global Trade Boom in Natural History Collections', *Journal of Global History*, 12(3), pp. 319–339. See also, Ville, S. (2020) 'Researching the natural history trade of the nineteenth century', *Museum History Journal*, 13(1), pp. 8–19

²⁶ Altick, R.D. (1978) *The Shows of London*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press

²⁷ Caledonian Mercury, Monday 1st September 1800. I am grateful to Dale Chatwin for bringing this to my attention, pers comm, June 2020

²⁸ Qureshi, S. (2011) *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain*. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press. Thrush, C.P. (2016) *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press

²⁹ Thrush (2016) *Indigenous London*, pp.139-168. 'Moehanga becomes first Maori to visit England'. https://nzhistory.govt.nz/moehanga-becomes-first-maori-visit-england, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Accessed July 2020)

Cape Verde archipelago, on board whaling vessels. Despite their recognised prowess as whalemen (particularly as harpooneers) and their cross-cultural knowledge and experience, non-white and Indigenous crew members were subject to discrimination on board British whaleships. Surgeon Robert Smith Owen on board the Warrens wrote of social divisions based on colour within the fo'castle, with the Portuguese being ostracised, adding "I feel for them, fancy how I would feel under such circumstances."³⁰ Along with such social divisions, it was common practice to strip Pacific Islanders of their given name and rename them, often with the name of their vessel. This was a dehumanising act that can be seen as an attempt to collect the Indigenous body. Thus, Snowball, David, and Joe Coronet, were all recruited and renamed at St David's Island by the whaleship Coronet in 1838. David Coronet (along with other crewman) was discharged at Oahu, Hawaii at their own request, thus adding to the geographic dispersal of Pacific Islanders around the Pacific Ocean facilitated by Euro-American whaling.³¹ So widespread was this practice that by the 1880s it was noted that "Sandwich Island words, imported by sailors on whaling vessels, [...] have come into general use among the Indians [of the Aleutian Islands]."32 As discussed by David A. Chappel, significant numbers of Pacific Islanders joined whaleships as crew members and made their way to Britain and home again (see Chapter 6, section 3).³³ Nicholas Thomas highlights that such voyages were not just geographic movements but also social and conceptual voyages; these individuals were brought to metropolitan centres but they were also deposited at intermediate locations, spreading and sharing cultural knowledge in subtle and largely unstudied ways.³⁴ Both David Chappell and Nancy Shoemaker's research identifies a far higher number of indigenous men aboard whaling ships than has previously been supposed.³⁵ The true numbers are unclear, partly due to this practice of renaming, thus obscuring their presence within the historical record. If, as I suggest, the whaleship can be viewed as a site of

³⁰ Journal of the whaleship *Warrens* kept by Dr Robert Smith Owen, 5th March 1838

³¹ Journal of the *Coronet*, Eldred Fysh, surgeon, NHA: LOG 55, crew list: p.1

³² Buckland, A.W. (1889) 'Some Recent Publications of the Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, D. C., U.S.A.', *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 18, p.96

³³ Chappell, D.A. (1997) Double ghosts; Oceanic Voyagers on Euroamerican Ships. Armonk, NY: Sharpe. This practice was not limited to Pacific Islanders, there is evidence for Indigenous Americans joining the crew particularly of American vessels, see Shoemaker, N. (2015) Native American whalemen and the world: indigenous encounters and the contingency of race. First edition. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. Additionally, Azoreans and, to a lesser extent, Indonesians also joined whaleship as crew.

³⁴ Thomas, N. (2010) *Islanders: the Pacific in the age of Empire.* New Haven: Yale Univ. Press. p.4

³⁵ Chappell, (1997) Double ghosts; Shoemaker, (2015) Native American whalemen and the world

both exhibition and knowledge creation, the presence of Indigenous whalemen onboard is central to this.

2.2 Collecting the Pacific

The extract from Forster's *Resolution* journal quoted in the previous section points to the wider cultural impact of Pacific exploration during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries through the publication of narratives as well as through a variety of other cultural forms. The official literary output from the Cook voyages was enormous. Popular voyage publications such as those of John Hawkesworth (1773) were produced from the edited diaries of the commanders of prominent Pacific voyages and those of Sir Joseph Banks.³⁶ These were some of the most widely read publications of the late eighteenth century.³⁷ According to Nicholas Thomas, such expedition narratives represented "the supreme expression of a voyage's accomplishments, indeed a monument in book form to them."³⁸ They also had more instrumental purposes. Banks thus lobbied hard to promote the findings of the *Endeavour* voyage and understood that publishing was key, not only to developing and sustaining patronage, but also to building on his many spheres of influence within what David Miller has termed the "Banksian empire."³⁹

The increasing incorporation of the Pacific Ocean into the European consciousness over the following decades reflected a variety of impulses, including the push for religious conversion spearheaded by missionary societies, intensified naval activity (including surveying expeditions, military encounters and the imperial expansion resulting from both) and mercantile ventures. The teaching of religious doctrine, the mapping of coastlines, and the extraction of natural resources - guano, sandalwood and pearl shell, to name a few - were all

³⁶ Hawkesworth, J. (1773) An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of his Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Carteret, Captain Wallis, and Captain Cook, [...]. London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell

³⁷ See, Ogborn, M. (2008) *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550-1800*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, p.319

³⁸ Thomas, N. (2010) *Islanders: the Pacific in the Age of Empire.* New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 131. See also, Thomas, N. (1994) 'Licenced Curiosity: Cook's Pacific Voyages', in J. Elsner (ed.) *The Cultures of Collecting:* London: Reaktion Books, pp. 117–136

³⁹ Miller highlights Banks' dual role as a naturalist and entrepreneur, controlling a vast network of global plant collectors whilst aligning the needs and requirements of government with those of his own botanical agenda as advisor to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew: Miller (1998) Joseph Banks, Empire, and "Centres of Calculation"

endeavours centred around the depositing, extracting, or moving of tangible or intangible commodities. The ways and means by which British whaling fleet intersected with these endeavours remains a largely unexplored narrative within the research literature on Pacific history. Whilst the antipathy between whalemen and missionaries (in particular) is a common theme in Pacific historiography, relatively little attention has been paid to whaler/Admiralty or whaler/trader relations. The two significant exceptions to this are whaling historian Eduardo Stackpole's book, *Whales and Destiny* (1972), in which the interactions between the prominent whaleship owners, the Admiralty and Board of Trade representatives are discussed in terms of the political will to encourage whaling in the Southern Ocean; and Briton C. Busch's 1993 article on 'Whalemen, Missionaries, and the Practice of Christianity in the Nineteenth-Century Pacific' which unlike Stackpole, questions how those relationships intersected on a practical level within the oceanic realm.⁴⁰

2.2.1 Missionaries and evangelical collecting

"Natural enemies abound in history. Seldom, however, has there been so lengthy a quarrel as that between missionaries and whalemen in the nineteenth-century Pacific Ocean" writes Briton C. Busch.⁴¹ Notwithstanding such disputes between traders and missionaries, the extension of whaling often played an important role in establishing Christian missions in the Pacific. As one publication reported in 1849:

There is no ocean or sea into which the vessels employed in the southern whale fishery do not penetrate; neither is there any port or harbour which they do not occasionally visit, for the purpose of affording refreshments for the crew. The residence of missionaries among the natives of the South Sea Islands is entirely owing to whaling ships having first frequented those islands; and, but for their visits the missionaries (if indeed they had ventured to locate themselves in such a remote place) would have had but little means of attaining supplies of various necessary articles, or even of interchanging communication with their friends.⁴²

The evangelical religious revival in Britain saw the founding of the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1795, the Church Missionary Society in 1799, and the Wesleyan Methodist

⁴⁰ Stackpole, E.A. (1972) Whales and Destiny: The Rivalry Between America, France, and Britain for Control of the Southern Whale Fishery, 1785-1825. University of Massachusetts Press. Busch, B.C. (1993) 'Whalemen, Missionaries, and the Practice of Christianity in the Nineteenth-Century Pacific', Hawaiian Journal of History, 27, pp. 91–118

⁴¹ Busch (1993) Whalemen, p.91

⁴² Clement, J. (1849) *The Western Literary Messenger. A Family Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, Morality, and General Intelligence,* Vol.XI. Buffalo: Jewett, Thomas and Co. publishers, p.194

Missionary Society c.1818.⁴³ After its inauguration the LMS was faced with the logistical problem of how to transport missionaries and their families to the Pacific. As it was not financially viable for them to purchase their own vessel at this point in time, they looked to the only merchant vessels heading to the South Seas from Britain.⁴⁴ This burgeoning religious activity coincided with the territorial expansion of the BSWF (outlined in Chapter 1), in which whaleships were visiting Port Jackson regularly and making increasing incursions into the wider Pacific therefore making them an obvious choice. The LMS thus opted for the Duff, a BSWF whaleship under Captain James Wilson to carry its first instalment of thirty missionaries and their families. After departing London in 1796 most of the party were landed at Tahiti in March 1797, while a few sailed on to the Friendly Islands (Tonga) and the Marquesas Islands.⁴⁵ In the following years, the whaling fleet offered the missionaries a lifeline direct to either Port Jackson or Europe, moving them to and from the islands, and bringing supplies.⁴⁶ Despite their perceived mutual antipathy, Busch indicates that whalemen and missionaries shared many overlapping concerns: the same Christian nonconformist heritage, particularly amongst the New England Quakers who dominated in both British and American whaling fleets (and predominantly captained the early BSWF whaling voyages).⁴⁷ Links between Quakerism and whaling are researched in depth in Griffith's History of Quakers in Pembrokeshire, where many of the American Quakers initially settled (as discussed in Chapter 5). In addition to religious leanings, Busch suggests that whalemen and missionaries held similar beliefs in the exchange of goods for labour, and an abhorrence to perceived Indigenous attitudes towards property.⁴⁸ To this can be added that they came from the same middle and lower classes,

⁴³ The LMS was known as The Missionary Society until 1818. For a comprehensive overview of the founding of these societies, see Gunson, N. (1978) *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797-1860.* Melbourne; New York: Oxford University Press

⁴⁴ Missionary vessels would become indispensable tools in spreading 'the Word' around the Pacific. The building of such vessels by missionaries themselves also underlined to the public in Britain the practical abilities missionary work required. The LMS was founded by wealthy individuals, but its workmen were of middle class, 'mechanic' status. See Prout, E. (1865) *Missionary Ships Connected with the London Missionary Society*. London: LMS

⁴⁵ It was not an initial success and after a few years nearly all the missionaries left the Society Islands, either settling in New South Wales or returning to England. It was only after 1810 that the mission became truly established first in Mo'orea (Eimeo) and then in Tahiti, when the chief Pomare II succeeded in overcoming his rivals.

⁴⁶ This was supplemented after 1801 with intermittent visits by government vessels and pork traders from Port Jackson. See Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*, particularly Chapter 5, The Tahitian Pork Trade

⁴⁷ This Quaker heritage promoted temperance and encouraged literacy – both aspirations in keeping with missionary attitudes. However, most whaling captains stopped short of banning alcohol, although some American vessels were 'dry'.

⁴⁸ Busch (1993) Whalemen, p.92

which promoted practicality, mechanical skills, and ingenuity; all character traits that both whalemen and missionaries required in droves. Greg Dening positioned the relationship between missionaries and whalemen as one of knowledge exchange, in which missionaries used the information provided by whaling captains in order to select the most appropriate Island bases.⁴⁹ As Busch points out this was not always successful: the arrival of missionaries at the Marquesas Islands in 1797 proved a disaster. Inter-island warfare and a firm resistance to the missionaries meant that the religious settlement was abandoned within two years.⁵⁰

As the missionary societies supported themselves mainly by public subscription, the production of books and pamphlets such as the *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle or Missionary Sketches* were instrumental in galvanising public support in Britain. Likening this to a mass marketing campaign, Anna Johnston outlines the diversity of the LMS publishing output and its targeted nature. For example, *Missionary Sketches* was printed on cheap paper with striking imagery of 'heathen idols' and "clearly positioned at the disposable end of the LMS distribution chain." Whereas the colour prints of missionary celebrities, such as John Williams by lithographer George Baxter, were targeted toward a more affluent market entering public culture and "circulating as mass market products."⁵¹ Significant examples of popular missionary works include William Wilson's *A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean, performed 1796 - 98 in the ship Duff* (1799), and John Williams' *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* (1837), and with a more ethnographic turn, William Ellis' *Polynesian Researches* (1829).⁵² By 1845 John Williams' *Narrative* had become extremely popular reading.⁵³ This literary success, and the knowledge

 ⁴⁹ Dening, G. (1980) *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent land: Marquesas, 1774-1880.* Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of Hawaii, p.176

⁵⁰ Busch (1993) Whalemen, p.101. See also, Tagupa, W.E. (1978) 'Soliloquies from the Surviving; Missionary notes from the Marquesas Islands, 1853-1868', *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, 60, pp. 113–118

⁵¹ Johnston, A. (2005) 'British Missionary Publishing, Missionary Celebrity, and Empire', Nineteenth-Century Prose, 32(2), pp. 24-25

⁵² Wilson, W. (1799) A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean, performed 1796 - 98 in the ship Duff, Commanded by Capt. James Wilson [...]. London: Gosnell. Williams, J. (1837) A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands: With Remarks Upon the Natural History of the Islands, Origin, Traditions, and Usages of the Inhabitants. London: J. Snow. Ellis, W. (1829) Polynesian Researches, During a Residence of Nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands [...] 2 Vols. London: Fisher, Son, & Jackson.

⁵³ Shaw King suggests it was the most popular account of Pacific exploration second only to the voyages of Captain Cook. Shaw King, D. (2011) Food for the Flames: Idols and Missionaries in Central Polynesia. San Francisco: London: Beak Press; Holberton Publishing, p.6. Also transported on board was a staff god wrapped in tapa cloth of significant size (similar to the one John Williams is pointing towards in Figure 2.1). Captain Hammer of the Sir Andrew Hammond was given permission by Williams to unwrap the staff god and show it

of Pacific cultures contained within it was directly aided by the whaling trade. Williams' journals were transported back to Britain by the whaleship *Sir Andrew Hammond*, from the island of Raiatea in 1830, prior to publication.⁵⁴ All three religious societies mentioned above made collections of 'idolatrous' material which were publicly displayed to reinforce the message of the Christian civilising mission. In addition to taking the journals, personal letters and society correspondence, the BSWF transported these enormously culturally significant ethnographic collections back to Britain. In this mode the BSWF aided the spreading knowledge of Pacific peoples and cultures albeit through the lenses-of Christian conversion.

To date little research has been undertaken on the interlocking networks between whalers and missionaries facilitating the transport of missionaries and their collections to and from the wider Pacific. Harry Morton's *The Whale's Wake* offers a broad-brush analysis of the evolution of Euro-American whaling in New Zealand, addressing both its intersection with the Maori and missionary communities, and the role played by the whaling industry in the eventual annexation of New Zealand. The journal of French whaleship surgeon, Dr Louis Thiercelin, translated by Christiane Mortelier, is a first-hand account of the life of a whaleship surgeon resident on the South Island of New Zealand at Akaroa Bay, revealing the tensions of existing between the Maori community and the local missionary faction.⁵⁵ However, a more in-depth consideration of Maori/missionary/whaler relationships is found within the work of Anne Salmond.⁵⁶ Whist this three-way relationship is not the central thrust of this thesis, it is an avenue of potential further research, and certainly has a bearing on the topic of knowledge construction amongst the whalemen of the BSWF.

Contemporary scholarship addressing the collections created by missionaries and the processes involved in their assemblage, circulation and dispersal includes the work of Chris Wingfield, Sujit Sivasundaram and David Shaw King.⁵⁷ Shaw King's study of material culture

to the vessels' owners, Mellish and Co. should they wish to see it. See Shaw King (2011) *Food for the flames*, p.48

⁵⁴ Shaw King (2011) *Food for the Flames,* p.6, p.48

⁵⁵ Thiercelin, L. (1995) *Travels in Oceania: Memoirs of a Whaling Ship's Doctor, 1866*. Translated by C. Mortelier. Dunedin, N.Z: University of Otago Press

⁵⁶ Morton, H. (1982) *The Whale's Wake*. Dunedin: University of Otago Press. Salmond, A. (1997) *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges Between Maori and Europeans*, 1773-1815. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

⁵⁷ See Shaw King (2011) *Food for the Flames*. Wingfield, C. (2016) "Scarcely more than a Christian trophy case"? The global collections of the London Missionary Society Museum (1814–1910)', *Journal of the*

and missionaries in central Polynesia, *Food for the Flames*, is ambitious in scope offering a comprehensive survey of 'idols' known to have been collected by missionary, their historical pathways, and their current location in museums and other collections.⁵⁸ Unlike Wingfield's work, it stops short of highlighting the complex journeys from "ocular demonstrations" of both implied heathen depravity (as John Williams described them) and missionary success, to artworks that demonstrate the incredible creative prowess of pre and early-contact Polynesian societies.⁵⁹ Shaw King uses the image of the missionary John Williams onboard the deck of a ship gesturing to 'idols' strewn at his feet as an opportunity to discuss the wider history of missionary endeavour in Polynesia and the role played by artefact exchange within this (see Figure 2.1).

History of Collections, 29(1), pp. 109–128. Sivasundaram, S. (2005) Nature and the Godly Empire: Science and Evangelical Mission in the Pacific, 1795 - 1850. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

⁵⁸ Many were brought together for the exhibition *Missionaries and Idols in Polynesia* at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS in 2015, and also featured within the Royal Academy's *Oceania* exhibition in 2018

⁵⁹ 'Ocular demonstrations' was a term coined by John Williams: see Prout, E. (1843) *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. John Williams, Missionary to Polynesia*. London: J. Snow, p.219

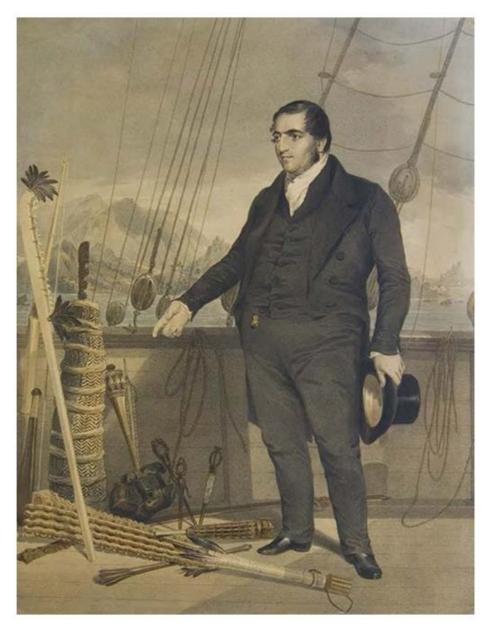


Figure 2.1 Untitled watercolour of the Rev. John Williams c. 1838-40, by Henry Anelay (1817-1883). Council for World Mission archives, SOAS Library. © Council for World Mission

2.2.2 Naval expeditions

The role of naval expeditions in the production of science has attracted considerable attention from maritime historians. However, the extent to which the knowledge-gathering practices of naval surveying expeditions were replicated within the space of the whaleship, and by whom (captains, surgeons, artisan crew or foremast hands), has received surprisingly little scholarly attention. In one sense this underlines the fundamentally different contexts of naval and trading voyages. Oceanic naval expeditions during the period covered by this thesis had clear aspirations: geographical mapping and discovery, hydrographic survey, environmental monitoring to better understand navigational hazards, extending imperial reach and gathering intelligence, all advocated in the name of empire and science.⁶⁰ By contrast the purpose of a whaling voyage, to put it bluntly, was to fill the vessel with as much marketable oil as possible and return safely to Britain where profits could be realised from its sale. This commercial context needs to be borne in mind throughout this thesis: where claims were made during the nineteenth century about the role of whaling vessels in discovery or natural history they rarely presented this work as more than an adjunct to the principal business of hunting, killing and preserving whales.

Nonetheless, research on the involvement of naval personnel as collectors of information, artefacts and specimens does have an important bearing upon the subject of this thesis. Parallels can be drawn between aspects of the culture of collecting amongst the crews of Royal Navy vessels, especially the ordinary sailors whose collecting activities typically were not mandated by the Admiralty, and their counterparts on board whaleships. In both cases, furthermore, surgeons were amongst the most likely crew members to have an interest in new knowledge: as medical men they would have a basic knowledge of dissection and preservation techniques, as well as elements of botany and zoology, while also being entitled to the privilege of an (albeit limited) personal space of a small cabin in which to store their collections, to keep a journal or draw specimens. Further similarities in the architecture of the vessels in the Navy and in trade stemmed from the fact that many whaleships were retired and re-purposed Admiralty vessels, adapted to fulfil their purpose with the addition of structures such as the try works.⁶¹

Richard Sorrenson's argument concerning the role of the Royal Navy ship as a scientific instrument in the eighteenth century provides a starting point for much recent work on naval surveying in the era after Cook.⁶² Sorrenson's much-cited 1996 paper was principally concerned with the relationship between the track of the ship and coastal survey and had relatively little to say about practices of collecting or relations amongst the crew on board

⁶⁰ See Rozwadowski, H.M. and Earle, S.A. (2008) Fathoming the Ocean: The Discovery and Exploration of the Deep Sea. First Harvard University Press paperback edition. Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press

⁶¹ A brick structure built to contain the fire and hold the trypots used for rendering oil from whale blubber

⁶² Sorrenson, R. (1996) 'The Ship as Scientific Instrument in the Eighteenth Century.' Osiris, 11(2), pp. 221-236

ship. By contrast, Antony Adler's 2013 paper on 'the ship as laboratory' examines maritime scientific practice during a later period (the second half of the nineteenth century) as the spaces on board naval survey vessels were appropriated for scientific research.⁶³ Adler pays particular attention to the social relationships amongst crew and scientific personnel, with clearly differentiated roles characterising the work of science at sea. The idea of the ship as a floating laboratory clearly needs qualification in the context of whaling: it would be more apt to think of whaling ships as factories or workshops, marked by distinct work practices and divisions of labour. Indeed, the social stratification of a whaling vessel and the balances of power inherent within are important in understanding the role of lower station crew men, and Indigenous actors as proxy field collectors for the higher-ranking individuals on board, particularly captains and surgeons (as discussed in Chapter 6).⁶⁴ Daniel Simpson's recent PhD thesis on the collecting of Aboriginal material culture on board Royal Navy ships similarly highlights the relationships between captains, officers and crew, emphasising the importance of collecting activity amongst all ranks.⁶⁵ While Simpson's thesis focusses exclusively on the collection of Indigenous artefacts, the study of whalers as collectors in the present study requires a broader frame in which natural history specimens and cultural artefacts are considered together. In this context, it makes little sense to insist on the fundamental distinction between specimen and artefact when so many of the objects collected by whalers - classic examples being whale bone and sea shells - were simultaneously natural and cultural, and liable to be displayed in very different kinds of collection.

As there were similarities, there were also distinct differences between the cultures of collecting amongst whalers and naval personnel. Whalers interested in collecting natural history or ethnography lacked specialised instrumentation, other than those found aboard ocean-going vessels that could be repurposed for collecting activities, such as whaleboats, fishing lines, nets, sounding logs and so on (see Chapter 6). In contrast, nineteenth-century naval vessels engaged in hydrographic survey or other scientific work, as Sarah Millar has

⁶³ Adler, A. (2014) 'The Ship as Laboratory: Making Space for Field Science at Sea', *Journal of the History of Biology*, 47(3), pp. 333–362

 ⁶⁴ A useful comparative study of the more extended hierarchies within the Royal Navy can be found in Evan Wilson's thesis: Wilson, E. *The Sea Officers, Gentility and Professionalism in the Royal Navy 1775–1815*. DPhil thesis. University of Oxford

⁶⁵ Simpson, D. (2018) *Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting: The Royal Navy in Australia, c.1772-1855.* PhD Thesis. Royal Holloway, University of London

shown, were equipped with a wide range of specialist scientific instruments.⁶⁶ These included items such as deep sea dredging devices, a Massey's log to record accurate nautical distance, and compound microscopes with two or more achromatic lenses that offered a higher magnification than the standard simple microscope.⁶⁷ As discussed in Chapter 6, if specialist scientific instruments were aboard whaleships they were in private ownership, and not as part of the ships' standard complement of instruments. Furthermore, the wider institutional networks supporting the collection and transmission of maritime knowledge were quite different in the case of Admiralty voyages. Erika Jones' recent study of the Challenger expedition of 1872-6 suggests that its oceanographic research programme was made possible by multiple intersecting structures, forming a "vast meshwork of mobilities on both land and sea, made possible by nineteenth-century transformations in how people and things moved."⁶⁸ These structures ranged from the stations of the Royal Navy and the expanding networks of British colonial power to privileged relationships with key scientific institutions and publishers in the metropolis. By contrast, whalers operated in a commercial context and very few could hope to mobilise the interest of the scientific community in the way available to officers of the Royal Navy. The best-known exception, William Scoresby of the Arctic Whaling Fishery, was treated with disdain in some quarters, notably including Admiralty officials who scoffed at his humble roots (he was the grandson of a farmer and son of a whaleman) by labelling him merely an "accomplished artisan."⁶⁹ By describing him as such they not only belittled his considerable scientific achievements, but also highlighted prevailing attitudes amongst the social elite concerning the production of natural philosophical knowledge. In this context, the role of 'artisans' such as Scoresby was to supply the elite knowledge makers with data to be synthesised and authored by appropriate individuals, not to do this themselves.⁷⁰

 ⁶⁶ Millar, S.L. (2018) Science at Sea: Voyages of Exploration and the Making of Marine Knowledge, 1837-1843.
 PhD Thesis. University of Edinburgh.

⁶⁷ Massey's log was a brass rotor which trailed in the water and gave a readout of distance travelled in nautical miles. Compound microscopes required the specimen to be prepared and mounted prior to examination, unlike a standard microscope. See Millar (2018) *Science at Sea*, pp. 306-322

 ⁶⁸ See Jones E. (2019) *Making the Ocean Visible: Science and Mobility on the Challenger Expedition, 1872-1895.* PhD Thesis. University College London, p.3

⁶⁹ Bravo, M. (2006) 'Geographies of Exploration and Improvement: William Scoresby and Arctic whaling, 1782–1822', Journal of Historical Geography, 32(3), pp. 512–538

⁷⁰ For discussions of artisan science see, Secord, A. (1994) 'Science in the Pub: Artisan Botanists in Early Nineteenth-Century Lancashire', *History of Science*, 32(3), pp. 269–315

The Royal Navy's commitment to preserving the collections of its officers, as Daniel Simpson has shown, was reflected in the establishment of a museum at the Haslar naval hospital in 1827. ⁷¹ Although this institution was eventually overwhelmed by the scale and scope of its own collections, it at least functioned as a central repository for artefacts and specimens collected on board naval vessels in a key period for naval expeditionary science. For historians it provides a suitable institutional focus for the study of naval collecting in the middle decades of the nineteenth century (just as the museum of the London Missionary Society has provided a focus for studies of missionary collecting and the India Museum for East India Company collectors). In contrast, the collectors of the British Southern Whale Fishery lacked such any such centralised repository as well as having far fewer opportunities for advancement on the basis of their interest in collecting natural history or ethnography. As discussed in Chapter 3, the absence of a single, centralised metropolitan museum collection devoted to whaler objects presents the historian of whaler collecting with a particular challenge in tracing the provenance of objects which have since their acquisition been scattered across many different kinds of settings, institutional and familial.

2.2.3 Traders as collectors

While the history of trade across the Pacific during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is an enormous topic, it warrants some comment here with regard to thinking of the Pacific within a global context, particularly the movement of people and goods. That the Pacific was neither a territorial nor economic void prior to the beginning of the long nineteenth century is a subject explored within the field of Pacific Rim History. This discipline has developed over the last twenty-five years to address the lack of scholarship focussing on the history of what was and remains, a key global economic region. As Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giraldez state in their introduction to an edited volume of papers delivered at the world's first conference on Pacific Rim History in 1994; "failure to acknowledge an over 420-year trade relationship covering one-third of the globe's surface seem[s] like a glaring intellectual omission."⁷² Prior to 1775 South Pacific Ocean trade was dominated by Spanish interests. Late Pacific historian

⁷¹ Simpson, D. (2018) 'Medical Collecting on the Frontiers of Natural History: The Rise and Fall of Haslar Hospital Museum (1827–1855)', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 30, pp. 253–267

⁷² Miller, S. M., Latham, A. J. H. and Flynn, D. O. (eds) (1998) *Studies in the Economic History of the Pacific Rim.* London; New York: Routledge, p.3

and geographer O.H.K. Spate's work on the Spanish Pacific offers a detailed and comprehensive overview of Spanish activities in the Pacific from the voyages of Magellan to the Spanish galleons that sailed from South American to Manila where silver extracted from the colonial mines was exchanged for Chinese goods popular in Europe: silks, textiles, porcelain and tea. These goods travelled via a combination of overland and maritime routes to Europe, creating what John Gascoigne has described as "a fragile ribbon around much of the Earth."⁷³

By the late 1700s, Russian fur traders were active in the Alaskan and Aleutian Islands in the North Pacific. Bockstoce's *Furs and Frontiers in the Far North* investigates the relationship between vying imperial powers to control the lucrative trade and the Indigenous peoples of the northern Pacific rim.⁷⁴ Also active in the North Pacific were the East India Company which traded in opium, tin, cotton, pepper, tea and after 1775, sea otter pelts.⁷⁵ Literature upon trading companies as collectors is largely dominated by work on the formidable East India Company which also (as outlined in Chapter 1) had an important role in regulating the expansion of the BSWF. The EIC traded between India and Northwest Coast America via the Chinese trading hubs of Macao and Canton, using the Hawaiian Islands as a revictualling and trading hub.⁷⁶ The importance of Hawaii as a key site in the North Pacific trade journey is outlined in Kirch and Sahlins' *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawaii*, which offers an account of the development of this key trade entrepôt.⁷⁷

 ⁷³ Gascoigne, J. (2014) *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*. Port Melbourne, Vic., Australia New York: Cambridge University Press, p.63
 See Spate's work for a detailed and comprehensive overview of Spanish activities in the Pacific since Magellan. Spate, O.H.K. (2004) The Spanish Lake. Canberra: ANU Press

 ⁷⁴ See; Bockstoce, J.R. (2010) Furs and Frontiers in the Far North: The Contest among Native and Foreign Nations for the Bering Strait Fur Trade. New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press. See also, Gough, B.M. (1980) Distant Dominion: Britain and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1579-1809. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press

⁷⁵ See Gough, B.M. (1989) 'India-Based Expeditions of Trade and Discovery in the North Pacific in the Late Eighteenth Century', *Geographical Journal*, 155(2), pp. 215–223

⁷⁶ For a history of trading at Macao see, Van Dyke, P.A. (2011) Macao, Hawaii, and Sino American trade: Some Historical Observations, Interactions and Consequences, In Hao, Y. and Wang, J. (eds) *Macao and Sino-U.S. relations*. Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 71-96

 ⁷⁷ Kirch, P.V. and Sahlins, M.D. (1994) Anahulu; The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawaii. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

By the end of the eighteenth century these combined trading activities had drawn the coastal Pacific regions and parts of Asia into a global network of trade, enlarging Western understanding particularly of the North Pacific, even when vast areas remained uncharted. However, with the exception of the Hawaiian Islands these trades left the central and south Pacific Islands largely untouched physically, if not economically.⁷⁸ The trinkets, tobacco, ironware and weaponry bartered by whalers and traders for fresh supplies quickly entered pre-existing Pacific trade networks and local economies, absorbing Islanders into a wider web of economic exchange and undermining traditional exchange mores. The journal of *Bounty* mutineer James Morrison, a valuable first-hand account of Tahitian life, highlights the practice of inter-island barter and exchange during his stay between 1789-91:

They Frequently go from Island to Island in large partys, sometimes 10 or 12 Sail, and by means of them the ironwork left at Taheitie is distributed among all the Islands they are acquainted with; in return for which [they] get Pearls, Pearl shells & c.– Some of the Islands they sailed to are at the Distance of more than 100 Leagues.⁷⁹

Upon the founding of the Australian penal colony at Port Jackson in 1788, maritime contact with the wider Pacific flourished, and the exploitation of natural resources underpinned much of this activity. Commodities were harvested from both sea and land. Whales, whale teeth, furs, turtle shell, pearl and pearl shell and Bêche-de-mer from the oceans and shores and sandalwood, pigs, guano, coconut oil and firewood from the land.⁸⁰ The late Pacific historian, H.E. Maude suggested these interactions had unintended consequences. It was the gift of European pigs from the King of Spain deposited by Spanish explorer, Domingo de Boenechea in 1774 that laid the basis for the pork trade which saved the British penal colony at Port Jackson from starvation.⁸¹ The trade in pigs from Tahiti (active between 1800 and 1830) inadvertently led to the discovery of Pearl shell at the Tuamotus Islands spawning another highly lucrative island trade from 1807 onwards.⁸² Maude's 1968 *Islands and Men* outlined

⁷⁸ It was only in the 1820s that trans-Pacific trade routes had opened up enough to incorporate most of the major Pacific Island groups. Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*, p.235

⁷⁹ Morrison, J. (1935) The Journal of James Morrison, Boatswain's Mate of the 'Bounty', Describing the Mutiny and Subsequent Misfortunes of the Mutineers, together with an account of the Island of Tahiti. London: The Golden Cockerel Press, p.200

⁸⁰ Quanchi, M. and Adams, R. (eds) (1993) *Culture Contact in the Pacific: Essays on Contact, Encounter, and Response*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, p.63

⁸¹ Maude (1968) Of Islands and Men, p.215

⁸² Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*, p.192. See Tryon, D.T. and Charpentier, J.-M. (2004) *Pacific Pidgins and Creoles: Origins, Growth and Development*. Berlin New York: Mouton de Gruyter. Chapter 4 offers a useful synthesis of trade between Sydney and the Pacific Islands, mostly drawing upon Maude's work.

the role of European traders (including whalemen) amongst the Pacific islands trading in commodities such as, pork, sandalwood, coconut oil, copra, sandalwood (and to a lesser extent the trade in pearl shell). Despite its age, his analysis remains the staple reference for scholars researching early private enterprise in the Central Pacific. His work highlights a key point that none of the trades discussed operated in isolation. Traders often diversified their commercial activities in response to financial, local or environmental challenges. For example, early missionaries traded in pigs, and pork traders diversified into pearl shell.⁸³

Originating from the same pioneering Pacific History department at the Australia National University as Maude, Dorothy Shineberg's 1967 They came for Sandalwood, an in-depth study of the sandalwood trade between 1830-65, remains the most influential study to date on this important Island commodity.⁸⁴ The trade in sandalwood (Santalum, an aromatic wood) in Fiji (1804-1816) and the Marquesas (1815-1820) gave huge rewards until depleted stocks necessitated a shift in focus to the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) from 1841-65.⁸⁵ In addition to these mercantile activities, edible sea slug (Holothuroidea, also known as trepang or Bêchede-mer) was harvested between c.1828-50 in the coastal shallows around Fiji and other Pacific islands. It was then dried and smoked requiring huge amounts of local wood, before being sent to the Asian markets as a delicacy.⁸⁶ Coconut oil emerged as a viable commodity on Tahiti around 1818 and from the 1840s it was used in the manufacture of soap and candles. It was a staple trade across the Pacific until copra oil was found to be a cheaper less labourintensive alternative in the 1870s.⁸⁷ The introduction of new technologies and the extraction of indigenous labour therefore redirecting it away from traditional tasks altered longstanding ways of being.⁸⁸ All these commodities, and many more offered substantial rewards and the movement of people, flora and fauna acted in shaping post contact Pacific societies in

⁸³ Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*

⁸⁴ Shineberg, D. (1967) They Came for Sandalwood: A Study of the Sandalwood Trade in the South-West Pacific, 1830-1865. Victoria: Melbourne University Press

 ⁸⁵ McNeil, J. (2002) Magellan to Miti: Economies and Ecologies in Miller, S. M., Latham, A. J. H. and Flynn, D. O. (eds) (1998) *Studies in the Economic History of the Pacific Rim*. London; New York: Routledge, p.78

⁸⁶ Ward highlights the ecological impact of deforestation in Fiji due to the trade in Bêche-de-mer. See, Ward, R.G. 1972. The Pacific Bêche-de-mer trade with special reference to Fiji. In R. G. Ward (ed), *Man in the Pacific Islands*, London: Oxford University Press. pp. 117-118

⁸⁷ Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*, p. 242, 281

⁸⁸ Flynn, D.O., Latham, A.J.H & Miller, S.M (eds) *Studies in the Economic History of the Pacific Rim*. p.3

multiple ways including the depletion of natural resources and the destabilisation of traditional economies.

Within the emerging discipline of Pacific History during the post war years there has been a growing awareness that traders were of significant importance in shaping Islander/Euro-American relations. As were 'beachcombers', island dwelling Westerners who had deserted from whaling or Admiralty vessels, escaped convicts, or been shipwrecked who acted as cultural and linguistic interpreters. Maude's influential paper 'Beachcombers and Castaways' remains a pioneering study of the men who facilitated relations between external visitors and islanders across the Pacific world.⁸⁹ He used beachcomber narratives in conjunction with indepth archival work to assess the geographic spread, the contribution to economic change, the political importance and the social role played by beachcombers amongst the Pacific Islands.⁹⁰ Maude's work highlights the role of these often denigrated individuals in negotiating and influencing island life, advocating what historian Anthony Adler has referred to as a 'history from below' approach to encounter research.⁹¹ Maude's work warrants inclusion in this Chapter not because beachcombers were known to be avid collectors of material culture or natural history - in fact, their peripatetic lifestyles may well have precluded this - but due to this island-orientated approach and the fact that such individuals appear consistently within whaler narratives as intermediaries. The micro-historical focus pursued by Maude attempted to discover "whether the source materials for trading history [and within this genre, beachcombers] in fact exist and can be recovered."⁹² It provided an exemplary example of documentary research, showing that extracting substantial histories from disparate sources such as shipping lists, newspaper archives and first-hand accounts, although challenging, is both possible and worthwhile – one inspiration for the approach to archival sources outlined in Chapter 3.

 ⁸⁹ Maude, H.E. (1964) 'Beachcombers and Castaways', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 73(3), pp. 254–293.
 See also Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*, pp.134-177

⁹⁰ Maude (1968) *Of Islands and Men*, p. 134

⁹¹ Adler, A. (2008) 'Uncharted Seas: European-Polynesian Encounters in the Age of Discoveries', *Terrae Incognitae*, 40(1), pp. 60–81

⁹² Maude's comment applies to his writings on beachcombers as well as traders. Maude (1968) Of Islands and Men, p. 234

In more recent anthropological literature, there has been a renewed focused on traders as collectors and distributors of trade goods. Nicholas Thomas singles out the Americans for their energetic participation in Pacific Island trade, and Steven Hooper's work on Fijian artefacts provides specific examples of a two-way trade: European iconography and wares supplied by traders 'crossing the beach' and being incorporated into Island material culture.⁹³ Thomas' Islanders: The Pacific in the Age of Empire (2010) highlights how many of these endeavours were accompanied by aggression, violence, the exploitation of Indigenous Islanders and European crew, and the introduction of disease. However, he also exposes counternarratives of Indigenous resistance and agency amongst Island communities, thus firmly rejecting the 'fatal impact' stance espoused by earlier Pacific scholars. Thomas and other historians have also stressed inter-connectness as a defining characteristic of Pacific Island life, despite sometimes enormous geographic separation. Patrick Kirch's On the Road of the Winds (2002) remains the pivotal work of reference for understanding the enormous scope of migration and trade networks within the Pacific up to the time of European contact.⁹⁴ The theme of interconnectedness was further explored by the Tongan scholar, Epeli Hau'ofa whose influential essay, Our Sea of Islands was first published in 1993.⁹⁵ Hau'ofa suggested that far from being a barrier to contact, the ocean was a highway. Within the ancestral view of the oceanic world, Pacific people had (and still maintain) an expansive understanding of themselves within their wider oceanscape: he thus argued that Pacific communities see themselves as inhabiting a 'sea of islands', rather than 'islands in a far sea'. Hau'ofa's work encourages a reassessing of how one can read an oceanscape as vast as the Pacific. A space so great that, as Alison Bashford points out in Oceanic Histories, even the cardinal points are reconstrued by both politics and geography suggesting that the American oriented 'Pacific North West' is, if one orientates oneself via Hawaii at the spiritual heart of the Polynesian triangle, in fact the Pacific North East.⁹⁶

 ⁹³ Thomas (2010) Islanders, p.144; Hooper, S. (ed.) (2006) Pacific Encounters: Art & Divinity in Polynesia 1760
 - 1860. London: British Museum Press; Dening, G. (2004) Beach Crossings: Voyaging across Times, Cultures, and Self. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press

⁹⁴ Kirch, P.V. (2002) On the Road of the Winds; An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands. University of California Press

⁹⁵ Hau'ofa, E. (1993) 'Our Sea of Islands', in E. Hau'ofa (ed.) A New Oceania: Rediscovering our Sea of Islands. Suva, Fiji: School of Social and Economic Development, The University of the South Pacific in association with Beake House, p.6

⁹⁶ Bashford, A. (2018) 'The Pacific Ocean', in D. Armitage, A Bashford, and S. Sivasundaram (eds) Oceanic Histories. Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, p. 69

2.3 Instructions to collect

In 1790 the captain of the whaleship *Lord Hawksbury* returned to Britain from the Pacific with the first specimen of ambergris to be brought home by a British whaler. Highlighting his familiarity with the natural historical debates of the day, the vessel's owner Alexander Champion suggested that the object neatly solved the long-held confusion as to the origin of this valuable substance.⁹⁷ As he wrote to Lord Hawksbury at the Board of Trade,

the circumstance [of its capture] establishes what naturalists have already expressed doubts about respecting the origin of ambergris. I thought it would give your Lordship pleasure to hear of it and when I next have the honour on waiting on you with Mr Enderby, I will bring some of it with me for your Lordship's inspection.⁹⁸

Produced in the intestines of sperm whales, ambergris is a solid odorous mass which was occasionally found floating during a whale hunt or extracted during the processing phase. Ambrein, the substance extracted from ambergris, is an additive used in the production of perfumes, enabling them to retain their scent. The origins of this mysterious and highly valuable substance had been a subject of debate amongst the philosophers of the Royal Society since the 1600s. So Stackpole's assertion that ambergris was first brought to the attention of the Royal Society in 1724 by a Bostonian gentleman, after being brought home by some Nantucket whalemen a few years prior, is not entirely accurate.⁹⁹ Discussing the origins of ambergris in 1664 in *Philosophical Transactions*, the natural philosopher Robert Boyle reported information found within the journal of a Dutch East Indies vessel. This stated that ambergris originated not from the " 'Scum or Excrement of the Whale' but rather to a tree whose roots entered the sea and exuded a certain gum that came to the surface".¹⁰⁰ Boyle felt that the inherent credibility of the journal was held in its being authored by a "Merchant or Factor for his Superiors, to give them an account of matter of fact".¹⁰¹ Thus,

⁹⁷ See, https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/what-is-ambergris.html (accessed February 2022)

⁹⁸ Alexander Champion to Lord Hawkesbury, quoted in Stackpole, E.A. (1972) Whales and Destiny: The Rivalry Between America, France, and Britain for Control of the Southern Whale Fishery, 1785-1825. University of Massachusetts Press, p.114

⁹⁹ See Stackpole (1972) Whales and Destiny, p.115. See also Dr. Boylston (1724) 'Ambergris Found in Whales. Communicated by Dr. Boylston of Boston in New-England', *Philosophical Transactions* (1683-1775), 33, pp. 193–193

¹⁰⁰ A Letter of the Honourable Robert Boyle [...] concerning Amber Greece' (1673) *Philosophical Transactions* (1672-1673), 8, p.6115

¹⁰¹ A Letter of the Honourable Robert Boyle (1673), p. 6113

according to Boyle, the merchant was a man on the ground (or sea) diligently recording what he saw as a passive observer, rather than being a natural philosopher apt to hypothesise.

From the perspective of the Royal Society, if guided correctly such travellers - whether sailors, adventurers, merchants or officials - could be relied on as valuable sources of information on the natural world. Instructional material for travellers was not a new phenomenon, it had existed since at least the sixteenth century.¹⁰² However, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw a shift in emphasis, away from the personal reflections of the traveller toward the accurate gathering of natural philosophical knowledge.¹⁰³ As Daniel Carey points out in his study of observational travel writing, "the most important attributes for the majority of participants" was a "ready curiosity and a capacity to make close observations."¹⁰⁴ If gathered together in a central repository, the logbooks, journals and narratives produced by travellers could form a resource with which to establish certainties about the world. Hence the Royal Society adopted a strategy to not only collect these narrative outpourings, but to guide travellers in collating information that could be used in the study of natural history, culture and geography.¹⁰⁵ With this in mind, the Society began publishing a range of instructional materials in Philosophical Transactions from the 1660s onwards including 'Directions for Seamen, bound for far Voyages', printed in 1666 followed soon after by a version targeted at overland travellers.¹⁰⁶

The earliest record of queries directed specifically at whalemen are to be found in the Royal Society's *Enquiries for Greenland,* published in 1667.¹⁰⁷ Questions were posed regarding weather patterns, currents, tides, vegetation, whales (including a query on ambergris). These are the kinds of queries that would come to be central to the work of the whaler-scientist William Scoresby in the early nineteenth century. The *Enquiries* were written for "English master of ships, or other fit persons that shall sail into Greenland for the whale fishing", and

¹⁰² Driver (2001) *Geography Militant,* p.56

¹⁰³ Driver (2001) *Geography Militant*, p.56

¹⁰⁴ Carey, D. (1997) 'Compiling Nature's History: Travellers and travel narratives in the early Royal Society', Annals of Science, 54(3), p.275

¹⁰⁵ Carey (1997) Compiling Nature's History, p 282

¹⁰⁶ Driver (2001) *Geography Militant*, p.56 and Carey (1997) Compiling Nature's History, p. 272

¹⁰⁷ 'Enquiries for Greenland' (1666) *Philosophical Transactions (1665-1678)*, 2, pp. 554–555

as such identified whalemen as potentially authoritative knowledge gatherers.¹⁰⁸ Their occupation equipped them with the intimate understanding of both cetacean behaviour and anatomy, and additionally it enabled them to supply the hard-to acquire-specimens. As Sir Joseph Banks himself stated when writing to Sir Constantine John Phipps leader of an Arctic expedition in 1773,

Whales are a Kind of animal which Naturalists are almost totally unacquainted with. Accident might bring you in Company with whale fishers. If so, Fœtus's of any species preservd in Spirits would be very acceptable, as would parts [which] might be preservd in spirits, for the doing [of] which Irwin [sic] has particular instructions from Hunter.¹⁰⁹

The "particular instructions from Hunter" to which Banks referred were the precursor to a pamphlet published anonymously in 1788, entitled *Directions for preserving animals, and parts of animals, for examination* written by Scottish surgeon and anatomist, John Hunter (1728–1793).¹¹⁰ Such was Hunter's interest in whale anatomy that a year prior to the publication of his *Directions,* he personally engaged a surgeon to travel to Greenland aboard a whaleship to collect for him, furnishing him with "such necessities as I felt might be required for examining and preserving the more interesting parts [of the whale], and with instructions for making general observations."¹¹¹ Hunter's paper, 'Observations on the Structure and Oeconomy of Whales', was read to the Royal Society by Banks and published in *Philosophical Transactions* in 1787. Within this, Hunter expressed the difficulties in precuring specimens of, or from, whales stating that substances (presumably ambergris) had become

articles of traffic, and in quantities sufficient to render them valuable as objects of profit, are sought after for that purpose, but gain being the primary view, the researches of the Naturalist are only considered as secondary points, if considered at all.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ 'Enquiries for Greenland' (1666) Philosophical Transactions (1665-1678), 2, pp. 554–555

¹⁰⁹ Banks quoted in Strekopytov, S. (2018) 'John Hunter's Directions for Preserving Animals', Archives of Natural History, 45(2), p. 399. "Irwin" here is Dr Charles Irving (d. 1794), naval surgeon. On the Phipps expedition, see Savours, A. (1984) "A Very interesting Point in Geography", the 1773 Phipps Expedition towards the North Pole', Arctic, 37, pp. 402–428

 ¹¹⁰ Hunter, J. (1788) Directions for Preserving Animals, and parts of Animals, for Examination. London:
 Published by the author

¹¹¹ Hunter, J. and Banks, J. (1787) 'Observations on the Structure and Oeconomy of Whales. By John Hunter, Esq. F. R. S.; Communicated by Sir Joseph Banks, Bart. P. R. S.', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, 77, pp. 371–450

¹¹² Hunter and Banks (1787) Observations, p.372. This sentiment would appear to be true, as it was to the Board of Trade that Alexander Champion reported the discovery of ambergris by his whaleship, not to a naturalist or Learned Society. Furthermore, Champion noted in his letter to Lord Hawkesbury that he had sold his specimen at a private sale for a high price. Alexander Champion to Lord Hawkesbury, quoted in Stackpole (1972) Whales and Destiny, p.114

Hunter's pamphlet, *Directions for preserving animals*, was published the same year that the British Southern Whale Fishery was expanding around Cape Horn into the Pacific and just prior to its incursions into the seas around Australia and New Zealand. The guide dealt mainly with the preservation of zoological specimens in alcohol (a preservation technique attributed to Robert Boyle in 1663) and a well-established technique by the eighteenth century, practiced on both land and sea.¹¹³ When Mrs Anna Josepha King travelled with her husband to Australia in 1799 on board Enderby's *Speedy* she wrote in her journal that the crew had "struck a porpoise, hauled her on deck cut her open and found a young porpoise in her about a foot long. The doctor has preserved it in spirits."¹¹⁴ Although no further information is provided about the specimen, this does suggest that the doctor had come prepared for such eventualities. As a man with medical training, he would have been familiar if not directly with Hunter's *Directions*, then certainly with the importance of close observation of anatomical specimens.

Influential collection guides of the latter eighteenth century included J. R. Forster's *Catalogue of the Animals of North America*, which contained "Short directions for collecting, preserving and transporting all kinds of natural history curiosities" (1771); *Instructions for Collecting and Preserving Insects* by William Curtis (1771); and *The Naturalist's and Traveller's Companion* by John Coakley Lettsom (1772).¹¹⁵ Commercial dealers also produced detailed guides for acquiring, preserving and transporting specimens. George Humphrey (1739-1826), for example, was a conchologist and dealer in natural curiosities who produced a manuscript in 1776 specifically addressed to "collectors on board whalers coursing the Atlantic Ocean, from the Str. of Magellan to Boston."¹¹⁶ Humphrey's *Directions for Collecting and preserving all kinds of natural curiosities, particularly insects and shells* was devoted to finding and

¹¹³ Strekopytov (2018) John Hunter's Directions for Preserving Animals

¹¹⁴ Transcribed from the original by Tom Freemantle in 2018. I am grateful to Mr Freemantle for providing me with a copy of the transcript

¹¹⁵ McCracken Peck, R. (2018) 'Collecting Abroad, Preserving at Home: Titian Ramsay Peale II, American Entomologist and Collector', in A. MacGregor (ed.) *Naturalists in the Field: Collecting, Recording and Preserving the Natural World from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-first Century*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, p.707. Also see Prince, S.A. (2003) *Stuffing Birds, Pressing Plants, Shaping Knowledge: Natural History in North America, 1730-1860*. United States: American Philosophical Society

¹¹⁶ Humphrey, G. (1776) 'Directions for Collecting and preserving all kinds of natural curiosities, particularly insects and shells. London Coll. 371'. Archives of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Drexel University, Philadelphia. Available at: https://archivalcollections.drexel.edu/repositories/3/resources/694 (Accessed February 2022)

preserving shells and insects from areas as far away as Africa and South America, destinations familiar to whalemen, both American and European. Indeed, the reference to Boston might indicate that these directions were written for American whaling vessels.¹¹⁷ According to catalogue information, these "collectors were under the direction of Mr. Stanesby, who decided whether to accept goods or cash in return for the specimens."¹¹⁸ Stanesby is currently unidentified but may have been a captain or surgeon acting as sort of middleman between the crew and Humphrey. Humphrey was also a mentor to the young naturalist William Swainson (1789-1855), son of the Margate customs officer (introduced in section 2.1 above) who also ran a successful natural history dealership. Swainson Jnr. published his own influential collecting guide in 1822.¹¹⁹ With directions on packing and transporting through Customs it was aimed squarely facilitating the supply of goods and specimens to the commercial market. The same purpose was shared by The Voyager's Companion, or Shell Collector's Pilot, written by Swainson's fellow natural history dealer, the merchant sailor turned conchologist John Mawe (1766–1829).¹²⁰ First published in 1821, Mawe's guide was based upon an earlier version published in the early 1800s targeted specifically at sea captains venturing to the South Seas – by definition this included whaleship captains and crew.¹²¹ The frontispiece of Mawe's publication depicted the imaginary bounty of shells available to those prepared to look (Figure 2.2). (*The Voyager's Companion* is discussed further in Chapter 6.3).

¹¹⁷ However, as previously discussed American whalemen were an integral part of the BSWF, especially in the formative years

¹¹⁸ Humphrey (1776) Directions for Collecting. Swainson, W. (1840) 'Taxidermy, Bibliography, and Biography', in D. Lardner (ed.) *The Cabinet Cyclopedia*. London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans, pp. 8-2

¹¹⁹ Swainson, W. (1822) The Naturalist's Guide for Collecting and Preserving Subjects of Natural History and Botany: both in Temperate and Tropical Countries, particularly Shells: with Descriptions of some that are Highly Valuable, and Directions for Packing the whole with Security, and Passing them at the Custom House. London: W.Wood

¹²⁰ I am grateful to Mark Howard for bringing this publication to my attention, pers comm, April 2022. Mawe, J. (1825) *The Voyager's Companion, or Shell Collector's Pilot: with Instructions and Directions where to find the Finest Shells: also for Preserving the Skins of Animals: and the best methods of Catching and Preserving Insects*. (Vol 4) London: W. M'Dowell. For biographical details see Torrens, H.S. (1992) 'The Early Life and Geological Work of John Mawe 1766-1829 and a Note on his Travels in Brazil', *Bulletin of the Peak District Mines Historical Society*, 11(6), pp. 267–271. See also, Mawe, J. and Stilwell, J.D. (2003) *The Voyager's Companion; or Shell Collector's Pilot by John Mawe*. Perth: Western Australian Museum

¹²¹ The only copy known to exist is in the SLNSW however, Stilwell provides a facsimile of the 1804 edition: Mawe and Stilwell (2003) *The Voyager's Companion*, pp.33-39

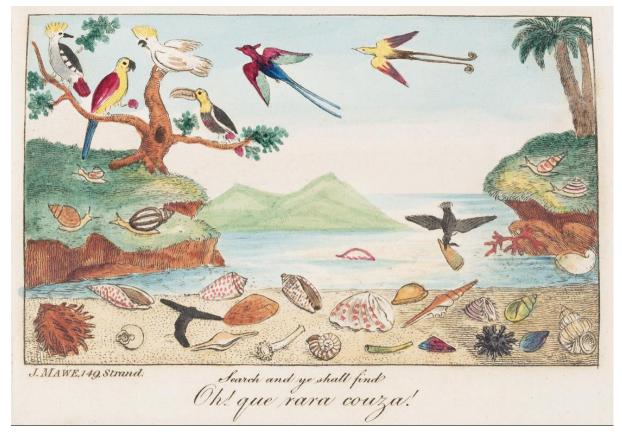


Figure 2.2 Illustration from the 1825 edition of John Mawe's *The Voyager's Companion*. Image: SLNSW Call No. 579/M

The importance of whalers as collectors is evident from the structure and contents of Mawe's guide. For example, he states that he had purchased the entire collection of Major Francis Robson (c1753-1833), the British Lieutenant Governor at St Helena from 1788 to 1801.¹²² Robson himself had purchased specimens from passing whaleships and other merchant vessels on their return to Europe. The collection of shells by foremast hands aboard whaleships (as discussed in Chapter 6.3) is thus likely to have been stimulated by the financial opportunities offered by metropolitan traders like Mawe via their instructional collecting guides. Jeffery Stilwell suggests that copies of Mawe's earliest collection guides were most likely unbound which goes some way to explain the lack of survival of such guides as individual pages would have been easily lost or destroyed over time.¹²³ That reading matter was exchanged widely both on board whaleships and between other vessels at sea is evidenced within archival sources. However, most evidence for such reading practises is limited to whaling surgeons and masters rather than the below deck crew. A notable exception were

¹²² Mawe (1825) *The Voyager's Companion*, p.15

¹²³ Mawe and Stilwell (2003) The Voyager's Companion, p.6

the whaleships belonging to the Quaker Thomas Sturge who instructed his masters that "the Bibles & Testaments are to be lent once a week to the crew, the other books to boys at suitable times, and always to be returned clean at night."¹²⁴ While there is no direct evidence that instructional material on how to collect was part of the available library, it seems that owners such as Sturge promoted the supply of reading material on their ships. If the number of books aboard the whaleship *Elizabeth* can be used as a benchmark, it would appear some vessels were well stocked with reading matter. Whilst visiting Pitcairn in 1819, the captain stated that amongst other items gifted to the Pitcairners "they got nearly two hundred books of various descriptions, from the officers and crew".¹²⁵

The instructional literature on collecting in natural history grew and diversified significantly in the first half of the nineteenth century. By mid-century, there were widely-available guides for stuffing birds, pinning insects, collecting butterflies, preserving botanical specimens, identifying rocks and shells, all arming the non-specialist with the basic tools to collect and analyse specimens of natural history across the British Isles. At the same time, British docksides were awash with exotic samples and specimens, some of which found their way into provincial and metropolitan museum collections. Meanwhile instructional collecting guides and manuals for British travellers and overseas residents, including military and naval personnel, colonial administrators and traders, continued to be published throughout the nineteenth century. They were increasingly designed to encourage the gathering of information and specimens in a standardised form so they could be authoritatively analysed by those 'at home'.¹²⁶ Some were published by new scientific institutions, for example the Zoological Society of London founded in 1828, the Geographical Society of London founded in 1830, the Ethnological Society of London in 1843, and the Anthropological Society of London in 1863. Others were associated with the imperial state, most famously the Admiralty's Manual of Scientific Enquiry edited by Sir John Herschel (1792–1871) and first

¹²⁴ Howard, M. (2015) 'Thomas Sturge and his Fleet of South Sea Whalers', *International Journal of Maritime History*, 27(3), pp. 411–433. See Appendix 4: Instructions from Thomas Sturge to Captain David, February 1828

¹²⁵ King, H. (1820) 'Extract from the Journal of Captain Henry King of the Elizabeth', *The Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, 3(6), pp. 380–388

¹²⁶ Driver (2001) *Geography Militant,* pp.73-74

published in 1849.¹²⁷ The Admiralty manual contained chapters on astronomy, magnetism, tides, geology, ethnology, and geography, in addition to an edited version of Hunter's *Directions for preserving animals* which formed the basis of the zoology chapter, edited by the British Museum naturalist Sir Richard Owen (1804–1892).¹²⁸

The capacity of the South Seas whale fishery to supply museums and societies with specimens was widely recognised by influential men of science. On the eve of the Ross Expedition to Antarctica (1839–1843), Richard Owen thus wrote to mathematician, astronomer and Fellow of the Royal Society, John William Lubbock, enclosing a copy of Hunter's 1835 edition of *Directions to preserve*:

I understand that a son of Sir Wm. Hooker is to be attached as Naturalist to the Antarctic Expedition and I have therefore no doubt but that the interests of Zoology as well as of Botany will be duly attended to. But the Museums of this country would be greatly enriched and Natural History advanced by any plan which would give encouragement to the Surgeon & Chief Officers of the South Sea Traders, especially the Sperm-Whalers to collect the rare objects that they may meet with, and to keep records of the Natural Phenomena, habits and peculiarities of the Living Animals, which they may observe. Perhaps the simplest plan of encouragement would be to propose premiums for certain rare animals, and for journals or observations, and to request the cooperation of the South Sea- & Whaling-Merchants in the distribution of printed lists of such premiums with Instructions for Collecting among their Officers & Crews. I herewith send a copy of some general Instructions which I drew up nine years ago at the desire of the Council of the College, and in which are incorporated some Mss instructions to Collectors left by John Hunter. I would most gladly cooperate with you in any plan that would be likely to enlist the services of our adventurous countrymen in the cause of Natural History.¹²⁹

Hunter's *Directions* were reprinted, with varying amendments, three times during the nineteenth century by the Royal College of Surgeons. Thus the whaling surgeon Frederick Debell Bennett, who served on board the whaleship *Tuscan* in 1833, may well have taken a

¹²⁷ Herschel, J.F.W. *et al.* (1849) A Manual of Scientific Enquiry: Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Navy and Adapted for Travellers in General. London: John Murray

¹²⁸ Strekopytov (2018) John Hunter's Directions, p.337. It is interesting to note that amongst the many books belonging to whaleship owner Charles Enderby, auctioned off after his disastrous attempt to create a whaling colony on the Auckland Isles, was a copy of the Admiralty *Manual*. See Bethune and Hunter (1852) A catalogue of books being the library of His Excellancy [sic] Lieutenant-Governor Eyre, with another collection added, the property of His Excellency Lieutenant-Governor Enderby which will be sold by auction at the Exchange, on Wednesday, November 17, 1852, by Messrs. Bethune & Hunter. Wellington: Printed at the Office of the Wellington Independent. Lot no. 438

¹²⁹ Sir Richard Owen quoted in Strekopytov, (2018) John Hunter's Directions, p.337

copy of Hunter's *Directions* with him.¹³⁰ Bennett's *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe from the Year 1833 to 1836* lists the botanical and zoological specimens he collected and their eventual destinations in the collections of the Royal College of Surgeons, the Hunterian Museum, the Linnaean Society and King's College.¹³¹ A copy of his journal went to the Royal Geographical Society, of which he was a Fellow, with extracts published in the Society's *Journal* in 1837.¹³² In his vote of thanks, George Bellas Greenough referred to him not as a surgeon but as "an indefatigable and accomplished naturalist."¹³³

Despite the evidence that institutional collections such as those of the Royal College of Surgeons and dealers such as Mawe received specimens from whalers, there are very few instances where the actual use of instructional literature by whalers is confirmed by archival evidence. One such case is provided by whaling surgeon Dr James Corson, who sailed onboard the whaleship *Kitty* in 1838 until he died of fever in Timor in 1841.¹³⁴ Along with details of four new plants identified by Corson, a biographical sketch was published in Loudon's *The Gardener's Magazine* by his mentor, the eminent botanist Dr. George Don. From this it is clear that Corson had received guidance on collecting, drawing and preserving specimens:

Previous to Mr Corson's sailing with Captain Benson, through the kindness of the late Professor Don, Dr. Brown, and others, he received instructions for collecting and drawing plants and collecting and preserving shells, seeds, &c., and of each of these here accumulated a considerable number. Among the shells were some very fine specimens and among the plants Mr George Don has discovered four new species [...] deposited in the herbarium of the Linnean Society. The shells were distributed among his friends, and as one of these we have retained duplicates that between forty and fifty specimens for Mrs Loudon's cabinet. The seeds we have divided between the

¹³⁰ Frederik Debell Bennett was the brother of George Bennett, curator of the of the Australian Museum from 1835 who and been a friend of Owen's since their medical training. George Bennett was responsible for sending Owen a steady stream of specimens from Australia and the Pacific. It is quite possible that F.D Bennett knew Owen via his brother, and that from this association the idea was seeded in Owen's mind that whaleship surgeons and whalemen more generally could be drawn into Owen's knowledge gathering endeavour.

¹³¹ Bennett, F.D. (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe from the Year 1833 to 1836, Comprising Sketches of Polynesia, California, the Indian Archipelago, etc., with an Account of Southern Whales, the Sperm Whale Fishery, and the Natural History of the Climates Visited. (2 vol). London: Richard Bentley

¹³² Bennett, F.D. (1837) 'Extracts from the Journal of a Voyage Round the Globe in the Years 1833-36', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 7, pp.211–229

¹³³ Greenough, G.B. (1840) 'Address to the Royal Geographical Society of London', Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London, 10, p.ixv

¹³⁴ Don, G. (1842) 'Article VI. Notice of Four new Plants discovered in the South Sea Islands by the late Mr. James Corson, Surgeon. By George Don Esq. F.L.S. With the Biographical Notice of Mr. Corson, by the Conductor.', in J.C. Loudon (ed.) *The Gardener's Magazine and Register of Rural and Domestic Improvement*. London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, pp. 369–371

Horticultural Society of London and the Caledonian Horticultural Society the specimens we have sent to Mr. McNab jun., to be presented by him to the Edinburgh Botanical Society.¹³⁵

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has considered the motivations for and interests in the culture of collecting the exotic within eighteenth and nineteenth-century Britain, with particular reference to the Pacific. It has considered a wide range of forms of collection by private collectors, museums, scientific societies and the state, as well as the instructional literature to travellers and residents overseas. It has also paid attention to significant changes in the organisation of collecting and its global reach during the period. In providing a context for whaler involvement in collecting, it has also emphasised the commonalities as well as the differences between whalers and other collectors, especially naval officers and missionaries.

The focus in this thesis on whalers as collectors necessarily draws attention to an activity that, while historically significant, has usually been regarded as an adjunct to the main purpose of the trade. The evidently commercial context of whaling has often been seen as inimical to scientific collecting, reflecting older assumptions (as famously expressed in J. R. Forster's Narrative) about the contradictions between the commercial motivations of trade and the pursuit of disinterested knowledge. And yet the evidence for abundant collecting, as revealed in later chapters of this thesis, suggests a rather different picture. Focussing centrally on a trade such as whaling also suggests a different perspective on the wider history of museum collections from those which have emerged from a focus on discipline-bound collections such as natural history and ethnographic museums, not least because of the combination of 'natural' and 'artificial' curiosity collecting that attracted the interest of whalers. Understanding such practices and interests requires the historian to situate practices of collecting in their historical contexts; to pay close attention, in the case of the BSWF, to what the evidence tells us about objects collected in the Pacific and brought back to Britain. If such evidence is often scattered and fragmentary, it is partly because whalers – unlike naval officers or missionaries – had no dedicated museum or professional body to serve their interests. Nor did their collections provide the basis for new disciplines, as did those of

¹³⁵ Don (1842) Article VI. Notice of Four new Plants, p.370

ethnographers and naturalists. While this makes historical inquiry into the pattern of Pacific collecting by whalers more of a challenge, it also helps us to avoid teleological accounts of the relationship between collecting and the formation of new knowledge. We are thus drawn back into the history of collecting as it unfolded, rather than the history which has long served disciplinary historians, separating the specimen from the artefact, the professional from the amateur, and the scientist from the tradesman.

Chapter 3:

Sources and methods: working between archives and objects

The aims of this chapter are twofold: firstly, to outline the methodological challenges posed by a focus on the history of whalers as collectors, especially in relation to the uneven and selective survival of archives and objects; and secondly to provide an account of the principal sources for the research, including the process of identifying and locating archival sources, artefacts and specimens, and the selection of the case studies. The first section of this chapter considers the methodological challenges, exploring how objects and archives can be used as forms of evidence, independently or in combination, and the partial and uneven nature of provenance information often associated with whaler objects (section 3.1). The second section addresses the process of identifying objects and relevant archives in UK collections and highlights those that were found to be most useful (section 3.2). The third section provides a brief overview of relevant sources in overseas archives and collections, in Nantucket, New Bedford, Tasmania, Sydney and New Zealand (section 3.3). The final section provides an account of the rationale for the selection of case studies (section 3.4).

3.1 The methodological challenge: archives and objects as evidence

This thesis is the product of the first substantial research project to examine the topic of collecting amongst South Seas whalemen on British vessels. It explores the collecting practices of this historically under-researched group of men by adopting a dual research methodology. This involves scrutinising both physical artefacts and specimens held in museums (referred to as whaler collections) and archive materials in libraries and archives repositories including both printed narratives and manuscript sources such as logbooks and journals. This dual approach to objects and archives was born through conversations with museum colleagues, collection specialists and archivists which highlighted the paucity of knowledge regarding collections with a South Seas whaling provenance within museums in Britain. Given the relative rarity of object collections identified as having a whaling provenance, it became important to consider a wider range of textual sources for collecting by whalers: logbooks, journals, letters, Probate records, Customs Bill of Entry, and museum documentation. In addition, published narratives, learned society archives and newspapers have been utilised.

The key methodological challenge posed by the questions asked in this thesis is how to bring together these two bodies of evidence to shed light on the history of maritime collecting. In essence how do they speak to each other? How do you study object collections where the evidence only exists in textual form and which have not (yet) been identified within museum collections? On the other hand, how does one elicit useful information from an artefact with little or no supporting documentation? Facing similar questions when studying collections related to naval collecting in Australia during the first half of the nineteenth century, Daniel Simpson developed a useful methodological framework which described such collections as either 'Extant' (i.e. contained within museums today) or 'Non-extant' (i.e. known to have been collected but not identifiable in museum collections).¹ Simpson further differentiated between different types of practice as either 'Intentional' (i.e. acquired in the course of a naval expedition for the purposes of making a scientific collection) or 'Incidental' (i.e. acquired but secondary to the purpose of a voyage). While Simpson's distinction between extant and non-extant collections is important for this study, his differentiation between intentional and incidental collecting is less relevant in a whaling context where the purpose of voyaging was essentially commercial. In this thesis, the whaling context requires a re-framing of the methodological challenge in terms of the different kinds of evidence which survives for the practice of collecting provided in objects and archives.

Table 3.1 presents a typology in which evidence for whaler collections takes two forms: museum objects and archives (the latter term in this context including print as well as manuscript archives). The framework sets out four scenarios depending on the kinds of evidence for the practice of collecting which are available. Box 1 in the diagram refers to an extant museum object with a definite whaling provenance which can be connected directly with written or printed archives (whether at the museum or elsewhere). Although this might be regarded as a perfect scenario, experience shows that it is relatively rare: in the vast majority of cases, objects and archives have become separated in their subsequent histories. A significant number of whaler objects identified to date in UK museum collections fall within Box 2: that is, objects have been identified as of whaler origin, but there is little or no further

¹ Simpson, D. (2018) *Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting: The Royal Navy in Australia, c.1772-1855.* PhD Thesis. Royal Holloway, University of London

evidence other than perhaps a museum catalogue entry or a deduction based on the nature of the object itself. However, both these categories are less significant in numerical terms than a third class of objects (in Box 3) for whose collection archival evidence exists (in a wide range of forms) but which cannot be located within contemporary museums. Finally, there is Box 4, a situation which at first sight appears difficult to grasp – non-extant objects without any archival evidence – but which might be understood as 'known unknowns' - those objects and archives whose existence is suspected but are yet to be discovered. (In this sense the term 'non-extant museum object' for example might more accurately be expressed as 'not yet extant museum object'!).

EXTANT OBJECT

IECT NON-EXTANT OBJECT	

	Box 1	Box 3
ARCHIVA L EVIDENCE		
	Object(s) and	Archival
	archival	documents in
ЧÜ	documents in	existence but no
	existence	object(s)
AL	Box 2	Box 4
Ì ₽ щ		
NO ARCHIVAI EVIDENCE	Object(s) in	No Object(s) and
	existence	no archival
N N	But no archival	evidence
	documents	

Figure 3.1 The evidence of archives and objects: a typological framework

One key point to make about this typology is that it is a dynamic framework: in the course of the research for this thesis, objects have moved from one cell to another, as their provenance has become more clearly identified, or as new archival evidence has been located. The framework is essentially a working tool, a way of presenting dilemmas concerning evidence for the study of collecting in BSWF, in the form of objects and texts. As such, the use of the term 'object' rather than the more specific use of 'specimen', or 'artefact' within the typology allows for discussion of different categories of objects found within this thesis (such as natural history or ethnographic artefact). For the purposes of this chapter, it should be noted that the classifications of natural history specimen or ethnographic artefact are themselves context-specific, and liable to change: what was once defined as natural history in one context might,

with additional evidence or changing approaches to the study of human cultures, become ethnography in another, as was found to be the case in the example of the engraved whale jaw discussed in Chapter 6. In the nineteenth century this object was displayed as a natural history specimen but today is described as an cultural artefact, an example of the sailor's art of scrimshaw. Indeed, in considering the kinds of evidence that museum objects can provide, there are important distinctions (such as between natural history and ethnographic objects) which are significant. In this respect this thesis differs from many recent studies of maritime collecting which are confined to particular kinds of material, defined by discipline or field such as 'ethnography' or 'natural history'. This thesis looks more broadly at collecting in all its guises without making assumptions about the nature of the relationship between the material and the history of particular disciplines. For this reason, any survey of collections with a possible whaling provenance needs to cast its net widely, across a variety of very different types of collection.

3.1.1 Objects as evidence

Artefacts carry their biographies within them in different ways. In some cases, their geographical origins can be deduced by analysis of decorative styles, for example the highly distinctive carving of an Austral Islands paddle, or the curving blade of an Indonesian Kris dagger. However, this does not necessarily reveal whether they were made there, only that this location is part of their biography, if only in inspiration for the maker.² In the case of Figure 3.2, a fid (a European sailing tool) decorated with Marquesan carving, it is not known whether it was carved by a Marquesan or an Anglo-European whaleman, or indeed where it was created onboard or ashore. However, it is a clear example of converging cultural influences expressed in physical form, a phenomenon described by Philip Jones in his study of museum artefacts as historical witnesses to moments of encounter, as a "double patina."³

² See Kaeppler's thoughts on Fijian artifacts made by neighbouring Tongan and Samoan craftsmen in: Kaeppler, A.L. (1978) 'Exchange Patterns in Goods and Spouses: Fiji, Tonga and Samoa', *Mankind*, 11(3), pp. 246–252

³ Jones, P. (2007) *Ochre and Rust: Artefacts and Encounters on Australian Frontiers*. Kent Town, S. Australia: Wakefield Press, p.7



Figure 3.2 A whalebone fid (a European sailing tool) decorated with Marquesan carving. New Bedford Whaling Museum, Acc. No.2001.100.1977

Detailed analysis of an object offers wider insights into its biography than a basic understanding of material or geographic provenance. Close observation can reveal evidence concerning the spaces, places, and networks through which an artefact moved. For example, the use of elephant ivory to create the Marquesan ear plugs discussed in Chapter 5 speaks to patterns of trade in the early nineteenth-century Pacific. Use of this material links such an artefact into wider networks of distribution and exchange (most likely with the Asian subcontinent) within which they, and the whalemen who collected them, intersected. Furthermore, markings may be indicative of former usage, damage in transport or storage, or deliberate adaptations. Labels and numbers denote incorporation into European cataloguing systems, whether in private collections or public institutions. All offer insights into life histories of artefacts. In a wider context, Arjun Appadurai's edited volume, The Social Life of *Things* has been formative in thinking about object biographies and their changing status over time within the different networks that they moved. Appadurai's work draws attention to the changeable nature of artefacts, how their values and identities might be radically transformed.⁴ The influence of this thinking is clearest within Chapter 7, *The Foxhound Tooth*, and its account of the object's movement from whale's tooth to a commodity, a work of art, then a gift, finally a museum exhibit. Over the last twenty years, scholars of material culture have used the notion of biography to highlight different ways of thinking about the relationship between people and things. This school of thought considers aspects of object biography including the cultural contexts of production, the political and social circumstances surrounding moments of exchange, commodification, modification and issues of 'entanglement' to address the evolving relationships between people and objects.⁵ In

⁴ Appadurai, A. (ed.) (1986) *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

⁵ For a general discussion see, Gosden, C. and Marshall, Y. (1999) 'The Cultural Biography of Objects', World Archaeology, 31(2), pp. 169–178. For more focussed works relevant to this thesis see, Thomas, N. (1991) Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press

addition, wider topics inextricably linked with object biographies such as those of provenance, networks and mobility have played an important part in the development of this thesis.⁶

As Nicholas Thomas succinctly states, "artefacts [...] bear powerful if sometimes nebulous relationships with a variety of agents, including artists, makers, previous owners, collectors and communities."⁷ It is through close analysis of artefacts and museum collections that one can begin to see hints of these relationships. Particular object-based research studies that have influenced my approach to this study (in addition to Simpson's work outlined earlier) include work done for the major UK-based research project on Artefacts of Encounter. This was a 3-year project to identify museum artefacts collected within Polynesia between 1765-1840, regarding such artefacts as primary sources of evidence of encounter scenarios discussing both their object biographies and a close analysis of their materiality. These are both methods that have been adopted during this study of whaler collections. The ensuing publication of the same name is strongly weighted towards discussion of artefacts collected during the voyages of Cook and Vancouver but also includes a section on Missionaries and Travellers. Whalemen receive only a brief mention in regard to the transportation of Royal Hawaiian featherwork aboard the L'Aigle (see Chapter 6.1).⁸ As Thomas points out, Artefacts of Encounter aimed to be a starting point for further research rather than a definitive list.⁹ Similarly, my own project aimed to cast as wide a net as practically possible over museum collections in Britain to search for whaler collections, not in order to produce an exhaustive inventory, but to identify specific case studies that illuminate the collecting practices of whalers.

Hill, K. (ed.) (2012) *Museums and Biographies: Stories, Objects, Identities*. Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press (Heritage matters series, v. 9); Kopytoff, I. (1986) 'The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process', in A. Appadurai (ed.) *The Social Life of Things*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 64–92

⁶ See, Hill, J. (2006) 'Travelling Objects: The Wellcome Collection in Los Angeles, London and Beyond', Cultural Geographies, 13(3), pp. 340–366. Richards, R. (2015) Tracking Travelling Taonga: A Narrative review of how Maori items got to London from 1798, to Salem in 1802, 1807 and 1812 and elsewhere up to 1840. Wellington: Paremata Press. In addition, see Cornish, C. and Driver, F. (2020) '"Specimens Distributed'", Journal of the History of Collections, 32(2), pp. 327–340

⁷ Thomas, N. and Kahanu, N.M.K.Y. (2018) 'Presence and absence: an introduction', in L. Carreau et al. (eds) *Pacific Presences: Oceanic art and European museums*. Leiden: Sidestone Press (Pacific presences 4A), p. 19

⁸ Thomas, N. *et al.* (eds) (2016) *Artefacts of Encounter: Cook's Voyages, Colonial Collecting and Museum Histories.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, p. 248

⁹ Thomas (2016) Artefacts of Encounter, p. 27

Also useful for its methodological approach was the subsequent *Pacific Presences* project which aimed to research Pacific collections residing within British, European and Russian, institutions creating links between artefacts in different museums with a shared history and reinterpreting them. Working with indigenous collaborators, they were revealed to be not static artefacts, but dynamic symbols that embody equally dynamic living cultures. In this respect *Pacific Presences* takes a different approach from that in this thesis, in that Indigenous communities were not active participants within the project. However, it offered a model in its use of museum databases as a primary research tool. Indeed, this project encountered many of the same challenges experience by Thomas. As he writes,

To explore ethnographic collections across many museums - was ambitious, probably unrealistic, perhaps simply impossible. In sum, it was all too clear at the onset of this project that collections constituted research resources that might be 'difficult' from a practical perspective.¹⁰

3.1.2 Archives as evidence

A systematic review of evidence for collecting within BSWF whalemen's journals has never been undertaken. However, whaling historian Jane Clayton reviewed eleven logs and journals for her doctoral thesis on the commercial, social and political networks associated with this whaling fleet.¹¹ In the course of her research, Clayton found that information related to South Seas whaling is rarely systematically catalogued or easily accessible. More often than not, such information is catalogued as 'miscellaneous' or identified by chance.¹² This opinion is shared by maritime historian, A.E.G. Jones who found such material to be "scrappy and scattered."¹³ Information can sometimes be found in tangential sources, both official and personal, such as newspapers, customs import documents, probate records, or personal correspondence. As Tiffany Shellam suggests, evoking the image of an archipelago of islands, such information remains "loosely related, in clusters and occasionally linked by a Dewey-

¹⁰ Thomas and Kahanu (2018) 'Presence and absence', p.19

¹¹ Clayton, J.M. (2001) The Development of a Southern Whale Fishery from Britain between 1775 and 1815. PhD Thesis. University of Wales, Swansea

¹² Clayton (2001) The Development of a Southern Whale Fishery, p.39

¹³ Jones, A.G.E. (1981a) 'The British Southern Whale and Seal Fisheries. Part 1.', *Great Circle: Journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History*, 3(1). p.20. This sentiment is reiterated by Chatwin (1996) *A Trade so Uncontrollably Uncertain*, p.1 and Clayton (2001) *The Development of a Southern Whale Fishery*, p.39. Also see Honore Forster's introduction in Forster, H. (1975) 'A Sydney Whaler 1829-32: The Reminiscences of James Heberley', *Journal of Pacific History*, 10(2), pp. 90–104

decimal chain of connection."¹⁴ As she asserts in her study of indigenous intermediaries within the archive of exploration, "patient searching and sifting, reading and reckoning with the archives can occasionally expose rich scenes and stories."¹⁵

The principal archival evidence for collecting on board whaling ships lies within the journals and logbooks of whalers. A brief discussion of these two types of archival sources at this point is warranted, touching upon their similarities and differences, and the types of knowledge synthesised within them. A journal is usually thought of as a personal diary, written in the first person and often narrated in a casual style directed to loved ones or friends for their amusement. As such it is typically authored by one individual who is often (although not always) prominently identified. It can start or finish at any point along a voyage. In contrast, a logbook is an authorised record of observed events from the start to the end of a voyage, often authored by multiple if unnamed individuals, usually the first mate, occasionally the captain. Such is the concise nature of the information recorded, the shift between authors is often only ascertainable by a change in handwriting. A ship's logbook fulfilled a specific purpose. It was an accurate record of daily observation; of location, weather, sea conditions, catches and orders given. Such sources were largely devoid of superfluous description: thus the phrase "men employed variously" was regularly written in whaling logs in place of any detailed explanation. In addition, logbooks recorded the location of fruitful whaling grounds for the vessel's owners, whilst for the captain they acted as a form of evidence in the event of accusations of misconduct or mismanagement of the vessel. Therefore, they often make somewhat dry reading. Far more words were expended on sail changes and barrel stowage than on the crew themselves. With the exception of those in positions of authority (the captain, mates and the surgeon), the names of the crew rarely appear except when recorded as the perpetrators of misdeeds, or as being on the receiving end of punishment.

Logbooks are thus a revealing source of information as to who is or is not left out of the official narrative of a voyage, and who controlled this. This could go some way to explain the received reputation of the below-deck whaleman for drunkenness and general misbehaviour, as it is

¹⁴ Shellam, T. (2019) *Meeting the Waylo: Aboriginal Encounters in the Archipelago*. Crawley, Western Australia: UWA Publishing. p.7

¹⁵ Shellam (2019) *Meeting the Waylo*, p.4

the only time they appear in the official narrative. One has to look elsewhere for the moments of human kindness and care that reveal these men to be more rounded human beings than just the "dregs of Wapping wall" as one whaleship surgeon described his fellow crewmen.¹⁶ One might assume on this basis that logbooks would be of limited use for assessing the collecting practices of whalemen. However, logbook evidence reveals the whaleship to be an active site of knowledge production and as such can been a useful resource for historians and researchers. Their increasingly standardised format for reporting such things as meteorological data, ocean conditions, and location, has proved useful for scientists wishing to collate such data. Indeed, the use of whaling logbooks as reliable source material was pioneered by American hydrographer and head of the U.S. Navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments, during the 1840s and '50s, Lieutenant M. F. Maury. Maury produced over seventy sea charts drawn from evidence found within American merchant, naval, and whaling voyages. These included track charts, trade-wind charts, pilot charts, thermal charts, and storm and rain charts and whale distribution charts.¹⁷ Furthermore, such is the logbook's unimpeachable reputation for truth telling, the American government set to scouring whaling logs in the late 1930s in an attempt to prove American sovereignty over specific islands in the South Pacific. These islands were to become of significant strategic importance during the Second Word War and as such, are indicative of the political value held within these sources.¹⁸ Thus, multiple examples of mapping and surveying found within the pages of whalemen's logs remained largely undiscovered until they became of strategic importance in the twentieth century.

Burnett suggests that the close observation of species and environment expressed within logbooks and journals reflect the whaleman's engagement with the natural world to be above and beyond that of a purely mercantile preoccupation.¹⁹ Indeed, images of deformed whales have been found during this project in several whaling logs (see Figure 3.3), the author noting

¹⁶ Forster, H. (ed.) and Wilson, J. (1991) *The Cruise of the "Gipsy": The Journal of John Wilson, Surgeon on a Whaling Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843*. United States: Ye Galleon Press, p.382

¹⁷ Burnett, D.G. (2010) 'Matthew Fontaine Maury's "Sea of Fire": Hydrography, Biogeography, and Providence in the Tropics', in F. Driver and L. Martins (eds) *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 113–136. Matthew Fontaine Maury. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, http://www.commun.com/doi.uk/2022.

https://www.britannica.com/biography/Matthew-Fontaine-Maury (Accessed January 2021)

¹⁸ Maude, H. E. (1968) *Of Islands and Men*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p.87

¹⁹ Burnett, D.G. (2007) *Trying Leviathan: The Nineteenth-Century New York Court Case that put the Whale on Trial and Challenged the Order of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.110

that such whales tended to have thicker skin, yield less oil and be markedly more aggressive that other examples of their species.



Figure 3.3 Drawing of a sperm whale with deformed jaw within the journal of Richard Francis Burton. Saturday 12th April 1834, Journal of the whaleship *Reliance (1832-35)* kept by Richard Francis Burton, Surgeon, SLSA: PRG113/5/3

This is the kind of comparative knowledge that only comes with the intimate observation of a species, their anatomy, and habits, thus making the zoological observations of whalemen useful for science. One such twisted jaw was on display at the Natural History Museum's Whales: *Beneath the Surface* exhibition in 2017 (see Figure 3.4). Whale kills (in addition to sightings and losses) were also noted in logbooks with a stamp, or a drawing. These were often species-specific, with different tail shapes denoting different species of cetacean. Nineteenth-century logbooks therefore continue to be of use to marine biologists harvesting data regarding historical distribution of the specific whale species, their oil yields and migratory patterns.²⁰ Whales were often denoted in logs by the quantity of barrels of oil they

²⁰ For example, see Smith, T.D. *et al.* (2012) 'Spatial and Seasonal Distribution of American Whaling and Whales in the Age of Sail', *PLOS ONE*, 7(4), p. e34905. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0034905 (Accessed June 2021)

yielded. They were also verbally referred to as such, for example as a *60 barrel*, or if a large bull whale a *90 barrel*, thus confusing the boundary between animal and commodity.²¹



Figure 3.4 A twisted sperm whale lower jaw on display at the Natural History Museum, London in 2017 as part of the *Whales: Beneath the Surface* exhibition.

3.2 Research sources in the UK

3.2.1 Locating museum objects

Previous employment in the museums sector prior alerted me to the locations of some examples of artefacts in UK museums which had originally been collected by whalemen, namely the Lawson collection at the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Starbuck collection at the British Museum. However at an early stage of this research project it was necessary to

²¹ In a similar manner, whalemen would often refer to themselves and to their vessels as 'South Seaman'.

establish a more comprehensive overview of collections using a systematic approach, namely direct targeting of museums via email, social media and collections database searches. Email requests for information on whalers and their collecting activities were also sent to specialist groups such as those associated with the British Southern Whale Fishery website, the Museum Ethnographers Group, and Pacific studies organisations. These inquiries elicited replies from a wide range of museums and archives including the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Royal Armouries, Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, North Yorkshire County Record Office, Plymouth Museums Galleries and Archives, Whitby Museum and Archives and the Scott Polar Research Institute, Merseyside Maritime Museum, and National Museums Scotland.

It is important to note here that many organisations lack the resources to respond in full to unsolicited research enquiries. Some such as Plymouth Museum had shut their enquiry service completely during collections moves and renovations projects. Many smaller local museums work on limited hours and are run by volunteers, or a skeleton staff meaning this approach had varying results, from enthusiastic invitations to visit, to complete radio silence. If the relative paucity of responses from museums was partly a symptom of poor funding within the heritage sector prior to March 2020, after this date problems with communication and access were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated furloughing of museum staff and the closing of institutions. Alongside formal inquiries to museums, social media was also utilised which provided many potential leads for collections and also revealed the location of a 'lost' South Sea whaling surgeon's journal. This journal, kept by Edward Harris of the *George Home*, 1832-1835 was thought to be in private hands but is actually in Littlehampton Museum in Sussex.

Although thematic displays of whaling are not the subject of this thesis, maritime museums and museums in coastal locations were considered to be an obvious place to look for further evidence of artefacts collected by Pacific whalers. It was hoped that thematic displays referencing whaling in the South Seas may also touch upon the subject of ethnographic or natural history collecting amongst whalemen. Furthermore, collections databases are by no means universally available online, particularly in the case of smaller museums which often lack the resources to maintain an up-to-date online database meaning that research results

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tend to favour larger institutions with more secure funding. In order to counter this problem, targeted institutions with no searchable database were contacted directly. Particularly useful in this endeavour was Evans and West's 2015 *Maritime and Naval Museums in Britain and Ireland*, an online resource originally hosted by the University of Cambridge and now by Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, which lists over 290 museums and museum-ships in Britain and Ireland.²² Although the list has not been actively maintained for several years it remains a valuable resource to maritime researchers as it lists many smaller heritage organisations, as well as the major institutions.²³

As expected, Scottish museums including the McManus Art Gallery & Museum in Dundee, the Arbuthnot Museum in Peterborough, Shetland Museum and Archive and Stromness Museum, Orkney, all contain displays upon Arctic whaling. All hold artefacts collected by whalemen on Arctic vessels within their collection. As do Hull Maritime Museum and Whitby Museum, which holds many artefacts relating to the life and works of whaler-scientist William Scoresby. Smaller East Coast museums and heritage locations such as those in Norfolk, King's Lynn Museum and the Greenland Fishery House, make reference to local links with Arctic whaling. In contrast, research showed that the British Southern Whale Fishery was largely missing from the national narrative of maritime history presented within maritime and coastal museums. Discussions with museum professionals revealed many of them knew nothing of the BSWF, their knowledge being confined to the Northern Whale Fishery.

Despite these challenges, early results revealed that some maritime and coastal museums did hold some artefacts of interest relating to the BSWF. In terms of thematic museum displays, the only dedicated exhibition on British whaling in the South Seas is that at the Museum of London Docklands, as mentioned in Chapter 1. In addition, there is a small exhibition at the Milford Haven Maritime Museum focussing on the BSWF's local links (outlined in Chapter 5). Both Hull Maritime Museum and Whitby Museum have a strong focus on the Northern Whale Fishery, although both make reference to Southern whaling within their displays, as does

²² http://www.scarboroughsmaritimeheritage.org.uk/maritimemuseumsuk.html

²³ Many institutions were deemed not to be of relevance to the project such as historic ship charities, lifeboat museums, and National Trust properties, and these were discounted accordingly.

Merseyside Maritime Museum, part of the National Museums Liverpool. Hull Maritime Museum collections consists of much scrimshaw, some that references BSWF vessels, and whaling paraphernalia such as harpoons. In addition, they hold artefacts such as an impressive whalebone chair, a South Seas whaleboat carved from sperm whale jaw, and Fijian *tabua*. By virtue of both their subject and their material (such as the *tabua*, a type of artefact discussed in Chapter 7) all these artefacts have a potential link to BSWF whalemen. However, as the majority of provenance information was destroyed during the Second World War, there is little information to verify that they were actually collected or donated by South Seas whalemen.

Whitby Museum has an exhibition space titled *Exploration and Discovery* which focuses on two local characters, Captain James Cook and William Scoresby. As is to be expected, much is made of Scoresby's Arctic connections and the subject of South Sea whaling warrants a brief mention in the narrative. Also of interest are several examples of Pacific Island material culture donated to the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society in the 1820s and 1830s by 'captains', but not specifically identified as belonging to the Royal Navy. Due to Whitby's merchant connections, it is possible that these individuals were local Yorkshire men who were traders active in the Pacific, and as such they may well have had links to the Southern Fishery. However, our knowledge of the relationship between the BSWF and these artefacts is too tenuous (as it stands) to warrant their inclusion in this study. Similarly, Milford Haven Maritime Museum has a small thematic display covering the founding of Milford Haven as a whaling port by American whalers such as the Starbucks and the Rotches in the late eighteenth century (see Chapter 5). However, whaling is presented as a purely American endeavour carried out in Wales, rather than linked to the wider narrative of the British Southern Whale Fishery of which it was a part. The Museum holds no artefacts definitely provenanced as collected by BSWF whalemen.

Within London the collections of the Museum of London, Docklands include sundry items relating to South Seas whaling (aside from those already outlined) such as bills of sale for oil and candles. Meanwhile the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich houses the collection of whaleship captain William Tolley Brookes (1791-1874). This collection was donated by a descendant in 1978 and includes weaponry, scrimshaw, two boxes made of cloves, a

whalebone fid, walking stick and two painted miniatures of Brookes (see Figure 3.5 for an example of one of these). Unusually these artefacts are accompanied by an archive collection in the Caird Library at the Museum: these are Captain Tolley Brookes' journals from the whaleships *Recovery* and *Active*. Within the displays of the National Maritime Museum, Southern whalers and whaling receive an occasional mention but do not form a substantial part of the narrative. This predominantly focusses on Britain's maritime prowess expressed through two overarching frameworks: the history of the Royal Navy and, discovery and exploration. In addition, there is a lesser focus on the themes of maritime social history (in the Maritime London and, Tudor and Stuart Seafarers galleries), and slavery and trade which are addressed within the Atlantic Worlds and Traders galleries. Whaling warrants a brief mention in the Traders gallery in addition to some examples of scrimshaw (one of which features the BSWF vessel *Japan*) and Captain Tolley Brookes' whalebone walking stick.



Figure 3.5 'Captain William Tolley Brookes 1791-1874' c.1830s/ early 1840s. Watercolour with gum arabic on ivory. Artist unknown. From the collections of the Royal Museums, Greenwich

In addition to the collections of UK maritime and coastal museums, the databases of major regional and national museum collections were also searched for references to whalers and whaling collections from the southern hemisphere. The use of online databases as a search tool is not without its drawbacks. For example, there are huge differences between databases in terms of accessibility, quality and quantity of information. In addition, the availability of photographs on database portals, and the quality of those images, varies widely. As Thomas notes, images themselves are not a substitute for close study of an artefact whose materiality can reveal aspects of its biography (as mentioned above) via the presence of such things as old labels, markings, and evidence of adaptations and change of usage.²⁴ This was certainly found to be the case with whaling artefacts such as a sword in the collection of Captain Lawson, at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (see Figure 3.6a &b). Attached to the cover is a label stating its provenance details including the fact it was "repaired by a whaleman". Close observation revealed the entire sheath had been created from a rough hessian cloth and stitched to shape, with a leather wrist strap also added, indicating this weapon had been repaired or repurposed for use by its new owner rather than merely collected as a curiosity. Much of this information is unavailable on the online catalogue and can only be assessed by viewing the object in person.

²⁴ Thomas and Kahanu (2018) 'Presence and absence, p.17



Figure 3.6a Kris dagger and canvas sheath collected by Captain Edward Lawson, University of Oxford, Pitt Rivers Museum

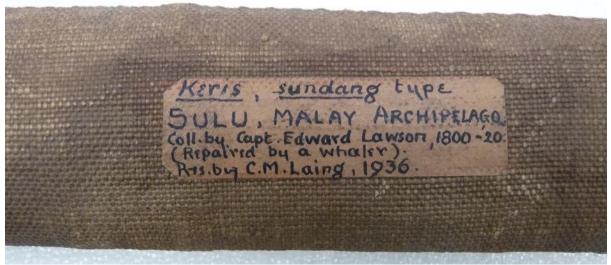


Figure 3.6b Detail of label on the canvas sheath

In addition, the cataloguing of artefacts linked to whaling is problematic due to the idiosyncrasies of collection databases. For a museum artefact to have a traceable provenance with a whaleman this link needs to have been diligently recorded in the first instance, for example in a collector biography field. However, not all databases hold such information, nor is it necessarily publicly available. Conversely, one museum held four separate collector biographies for the same man: in this case, luckily one referenced the fact he had been a

captain on a South Seas whaling vessel, thus enabling definitive links to be made between him and his collection. Furthermore, *whaling* as an occupation or associated activity often does not exist as a searchable term. Instead, within museological terminology, whaling is subsumed within the wider category of 'fishing'. This supplied unhelpfully large returns from database searches which rarely had anything to do with whaling and even less to do with artefacts collected by whalemen. This taxonomic confusion (a whale is a mammal not a fish) is reminiscent of the 1818 New York court case discussed by Graham Burnett in which the scientific community was pitted against the whaling fraternity to publicly thrash out the taxonomic question of whether a whale was a fish, or as the naturalists would have it, a mammal.²⁵

Using the search methodology outlined above, new whaler-collected Pacific objects came to light in both regional and metropolitan settings. This approach was aided by researching other successful collections review projects, such as collections reviews held at Bristol Museum in 2008, a review of Kiribati armour held in museums collection across in Britain, and the review of Pacific material held in Scottish museums undertaken by the National Museums, Scotland in 2013-14.²⁶ Collections were found in Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, the British Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, the National Museums of Scotland, the National Museums Liverpool, the Great North Museum and the Bishop Museum, Hawaii. Several of these are linked collections, sharing an original collector but having been dispersed over time to separate institutions. All extant artefact collections, with a definitive provenance to a BSWF whaler are listed in Appendix 1. Not altogether unsurprisingly, extant collections predominantly favour higher ranking members of the whaling fraternity such as captains, surgeons, or whaleship owners. Fewer examples of extant collections were found relating to subaltern whalemen within museums, therefore it is possible that social class was a factor in the recording of information. Therefore, any provenance information supplied by lower ranking whalemen, as with other maritime actors of similar social standing in the Navy, went

²⁵ See, Burnett (2007) *Trying Leviathan*

²⁶ Giles, S. (2008) 'Maritime Collections at Bristol's City Museum and Art Gallery', Journal of Museum Ethnography, (20), pp. 94–105. Adams, J., Bence, P. and Clark, A. (eds) (2018) Fighting Fibres: Kiribati Armour and Museum Collections. Leiden: Sidestone Press (Pacific presences, 2). See also, Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums: Unlocking their knowledge and potential project, 2013-2014. Available at, www.nms.ac.uk/pacific (Accessed June 2018)

largely unrecorded leading to a common assumption that whalemen were not collecting, selling, and donating. However, based on evidence found within archival sources, it will be argued in this thesis that such whalemen were fully engaged in practises of artefact collection and knowledge generation, not just for themselves but also in supporting roles, such as collecting for others under instruction.

3.2.2 Locating archival sources

Given that the BSWF undertook over 2,500 voyages during the period of its existence, all with a literate captain and the majority with a surgeon, the volume of extant archival material is surprisingly small. Certainly, this is true in comparison with the American Whale Fishery for which there are logs and journals in existence for about a quarter of the 16,000 voyages made by American whaleships.²⁷ In contrast, there has been comparatively little interest in retaining or collecting documents relating to South Seas whaling in Britain. For most of its history, the British industry never seriously rivalled American whaling either in scale or economic importance, despite significant early government support.²⁸ Indeed, Dale Chatwin suggests that whaling was not embedded in the British national heritage in the same way as it was in America, lacking such things as the dedicated maritime publications which reported on the activities of its fishery to a public highly invested in its success. Or as historian Joan Druett put it, it lacked the "concentrated community involvement" that characterised the American fishery of the eastern seaboard.²⁹

Writing in the inaugural volume of the *Journal of Pacific History* in 1966, historian H.E. Maude identified only five known logbooks from British south sea whaleships.³⁰ However, twenty years later in 1986 whaling historian Honore Forster wrote that

116 whaling logs and journals [are] known to be in various institutions in the British Isles, either in their original form or as microfilms, 15 of them relating to the Pacific area. Twenty other British logs/journals, 18 of them from the Southern Whale Fishery,

²⁷ Richards (2015) *Tracking Travelling Taonga*, p.153

²⁸ See Chatwin, D. (1996) A Trade so Uncontrollably Uncertain: A Study of the English Southern Whale Fishery from 1815 to 1860. Master's Thesis. Australian National University, pp.5-6

²⁹ Chatwin (1996) A Trade so Uncontrollably Uncertain, p.7 Druett, J. & Druett, J. (1994) 'Review of The cruise of the "Gipsy". The journal of John Wilson, surgeon, on a whaling voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843, by H. Forster.', Great Circle. 16(1), pp. 53–55

³⁰ It is unclear whether the five to which Maude referred to are official voyage logbooks or personal journal accounts of whaling voyages. See Cleland, L. *et al.* (1966) 'From the Archives', *Journal of Pacific History*, 1, p.193

were deposited outside England, mainly in the United States.³¹

That brought the running total to 33 manuscripts worldwide. Forster also noted the appearance of whaling logs in auction catalogues, such as that of the whaleship Mary which was subsequently bought by the Museum of London, Docklands in 1982 (now on display in the London and the Whaling Trade exhibition). Considering that Forster's comments were made over thirty years ago there was some hope that the total number of known resources would have grown during the interim, particularly with the benefit of increased digitisation of archival and museum collections around the world. In this context, American historians have again led the field. Stuart Sherman of the New Bedford Whaling Museum created an extensive inventory of logs and journals published in 1986. It has become a staple reference for whaling scholars.³² This exercise was highly ambitious in scope, listing over 5000 entries, the vast majority relating to American voyages. It lists all known records in public collections (but not those in private hands). Although access has vastly improved since Forster's comments in the 1980s, particularly considering ambitious endeavours such as the New England Microfilming Project, part of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau's project to scan and make digitally available resources from around the world pertaining to Pacific history, the number of known British logs and journals worldwide has increased only modestly.

Initial investigations into archival resources extant within the UK for the study of the British Southern Whale Fishery were disappointing, if not altogether surprising. There are considerably more archival sources relating to the Northern Whale Fishery held in archives, libraries and museums across Scotland and (to a lesser extent) in England such as those in Hull and Whitby.³³ This is indicative of the fact that whaling was an economic priority in these ports as it was home to many associated trades reliant on the by-products of Arctic whaling to create their wares. Therefore, there has been a concerted effort within local museums and archives to find and retain archival resources pertaining to whaling from these locations. In

³¹ Forster, H. (1986) "The Cruise of the Whaler "Gipsy": Some Recent Developments in the Archives of British Whaling in the Pacific', *Journal of Pacific History*, 21(2), p. 110

³² Sherman, S. (*et al*) (1986) *Whaling Logbooks and Journals, 1613-1927: An Inventory of Manuscript Records in Public Collections*. New York & London: Garland Publishing

³³ Northern Ireland is not covered by the scope of this project as its geographic location meant that it favoured Arctic whaling, hence use of the term Great Britain, rather than the British Isles or United Kingdom. See, Fairley, J.S. (1981) *Irish Whales and Whaling*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press. Brown, S. *et al.* (2008) 'British Arctic Whaling Logbooks and Journals: A Provisional Listing', *Polar Record*, 44(4), pp. 311–320

some instances, this has involved the creation of digital resources to aid public access.³⁴ This disparity in the volume of available archival sources for the Northern and Southern Whale Fisheries can readily be explained. While the Northern Whale Fishery was an economic priority in its home ports, the BSWF represented only a tiny fraction of the number of vessels sailing in and out of the pool of London. Therefore, it was never a defining trade of the metropolis in the way the Arctic trade was for some northern ports. In addition, a South Seas whaling voyage lasted several years whereas Arctic voyages departed annually and lasted only a few months. One can surmise then not only that the Northern Whale Fishery generated more documentation than the Southern Fishery (especially as it was active several centuries prior to the BSWF) but also that Arctic whalemen tended to be more socially and economically embedded in their communities than their southern counterparts. This is because they took other work to sustain themselves and their families during the months when not whaling. Even if this work were off-shore fishing or trading, they would still have returned home to their families on a semi regular basis. Furthermore, in a manner comparable to the much larger and more close-knit communities of American whaling centres such as New Bedford or Nantucket, the towns such as Hull, Whitby, and Dundee were understandably concerned with documenting in the local press the rise and fall of the trade, and regular entrapments in Arctic ice that befell their whaling fleets.³⁵ Notwithstanding some evidence of familial ties between South Seas whalemen, a shipwreck of a BSWF vessel on a far-off island is unlikely to have had the same direct, detrimental impact on the local community in (for example) Wapping, that the entrapment of eleven vessels and nearly 550 men in Arctic ice in the winter of 1836 would have done amongst the families of Hull, Dundee, and Berwick.³⁶

The location of much of the archival material relevant to this project was identified through examination of a voyage and crew database for the BSWF created by an independent research project managed by Dale Chatwin and colleagues, building on the formative work of A.G.E Jones (discussed in Chapter 1).³⁷ In addition to the voyage and crew database, the associated

³⁴ For example, the whaling resource created by The McManus Museum in Dundee: https://www.mcmanus.co.uk/taxonomy/term/2410/all?page=6 (Accessed February 2021)

³⁵ Chatwin (1996) A Trade so Uncontrollably Uncertain, p.7

³⁶ Anon (2013) The Nautical Magazine for 1836. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.56

³⁷ www.britishwhaling.org (Accessed September 2021). The database was initially hosted by the Maritime Historical Studies Centre at the University of Hull, only to be taken down in the early stages of this project

website also lists any logbooks or journals known to exist, and an extensive bibliography of published and unpublished material covering a wide range of south seas whaling interests. This proved an invaluable resource for identifying and locating primary and secondary source material which were spread over Britain, America, Australia, and New Zealand. From this was extracted a list of extant source materials in Britain, predominantly logbooks and journals, (listed in Appendix 2 BSWF logbooks and journals consulted).

Extant archival sources for the project, dispersed around the UK, consist of four categories of material. Firstly, there are archives donated to an institutional repository by a descendant residing in the same locale as their ancestor, examples being the journals of Dr John Lyell in Perth Museum and Art Gallery, or the journal of Dr George Eaton Stanger. The latter found its way into Gloucester County Archives amongst papers donated in 1966 by a local solicitor's office therefore suggesting a local connection. Secondly, there are archives in coastal museums and archives where the provenance is unknown, but from their coastal location we can conjecture that perhaps there was a direct or indirect family link between the author and the final resting place of his narrative. Thirdly, there are specialist institutional repositories such as the Royal Geographical Society where there is some connection between the archive material and scientific projects of geography or natural history promoted by the institution, such as the logs of the Tula and the Lively relating to Captain John Biscoe's voyage to Antarctica (ostensibly on a whaling voyage) in which he made numerous geographical discoveries (discussed in Chapter 4). Fourthly, there are materials which have been acquired by national museums or other major institutions, such as Major C. Tolley's bequest of his great grandfather's whaling logbooks and collection of artefacts to the National Maritime Museum, London. Another example is that of the journal of the surgeon on the *Gypsy*, discussed in Chapter 6, which was donated by his son to the RGS. In these cases, perhaps their descendants felt that such prestigious institutions were fitting repositories for the endeavours of their ancestors. Only in one case has evidence been found for the purchase of archive material by a museum specifically on the basis of its links to the BSWF, this being the log of the Mary which, as mentioned earlier, was acquired at auction by the Museum of London, Docklands.

due to funding issues, a stark reminder of the precarious temporality of digital archives. The database was subsequently hosted by Mystic Seaport Museum.

Apart from journals and log books, a wide range of other archival material was used in the research, notably wills and probate records, and newspapers. Given the function of wills to document the transmission of property after death according to the testator's wishes, they are in principle a useful source for historians of collections. However, one obvious drawback is that they tended to be written before a voyage took place and therefore before a collection had been amassed, though where the individual in question engaged in a series of voyages there may be a prospect of finding evidence of ownership of a significant collection. However the likelihood of finding a Will or Probate record (a document issued following a death which allows the named executors to action the wishes of the deceased) that lists individually collected items is remote. A search of the Discovery database at the National Archives, Kew revealed thirty wills not already noted on the BSWF website. This additional information (see Appendix 3, Wills of BSWF Whalers, 1788-1853) was forwarded to the research project team to be added to the dataset. Only in two cases did wills provide any evidence of collecting amongst whalemen of the BSWF. The first was the will of surgeon Thomas Luccock.³⁸ This document contains a letter written by Luccock at Plymouth Sound on December 2nd 1836, aboard the whaleship Folkestone before its departure, asking his brother that should he (the brother) predecease the surgeon, that he bequeath his war clubs, tomahawk and encyclopaedia to Luccock. This indicates that the surgeon had a prior interest in curiosities, as did his brother. Secondly, there is the will of whaleship owner William Bennett who left instructions that upon his death his "collection of Natural Curiosities [be left] too my dear son Daniel Bennett."³⁹ The fact that this appears early in a long and complex will is suggestive of the collection's importance to Bennett. We know that amongst artefacts collected for Bennett were a large model Maori war canoe, and natural history specimens (now missing) donated in 1827 to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. In addition, a Maori canoe prow (Oc1900,0721.1) purchased from his Farringdon estate is now in the British Museum and featured in the travelling exhibition Treasures of the British Museum. Artefacts that were collected for Bennett by his whaleship captains have also been located in the Chicago Field Museum.⁴⁰ (See Appendix 4 for a fuller discussion of Bennett family collections).

³⁸ The National Archives (TNA), Will of Thomas Luccock, Surgeon on board the South Sea Whaling Ship Folkestone. 23 January 1840. PROB 11/1921/341. This document was located and transcribed by Dr Julie Papworth; I am grateful to her for bringing it to my attention, pers comm, 7th August 2018

³⁹ The National Archives (TNA), Will of whaleship owner, William Bennett. PROB 11/1992/336.

⁴⁰ Richards (2015) *Tracking Travelling Taonga*, p.156

Concerning newspaper evidence, a review of available online archives resulted in a small number of references to South Seas whalemen and their collecting practices. However, the results generated depend on the selection of newspaper digitised and the optical character recognition (OCR) software used when the originals were scanned. Of all the available online resources, the British Newspaper Archive offers a wide spectrum of newspapers and periodicals online. Broad search terms such as *whaler, whaling, South Seas, Pacific, curiosity, museum, British Southern Whale Fishery* generated multiple results, though these were often the same article reproduced in many different newspapers. That said, the digital newspaper archive provided some interesting leads. For example, Captain Hardie's donation of a sperm whale jaw to Edinburgh University Museum (discussed in Chapter 6), is referenced in local newspapers, outlining details regarding its collection and its reception within local scholarly circles. And the only evidence to suggest that shipping agent, oil merchant and whaleship owner, John Boulcott was a collector of curiosities is a single reference in the London *Evening Standard* advertising the sale of his household goods as part of an auction (see Figure 3.7 for the advert).⁴¹

⁴¹ The London Evening Standard, Friday 5 June 1840. I am grateful to Mark Howard for bringing the article of Boulcott's house sale to my attention, pers comm, 5th January 2022

1	AT 12 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
The second se	STRATFORD HOUSE, ESSEXVALUABLE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, small Library of Books, Grand Pianoforte by Broadwood, Cabinet Upright by Clementi, Paintings, Curiosi- ties, fine Orange and Citron Trees, &cBy Mr. HOGGART, on the Premises, on TUESDAY, June 16, and following Days,
	at 11 for 12 o'Clock precisely, the Property of J. E. Houlcott, Esq., who is removing on account of the Eastern Counties Railway.
·	THE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE is
J	modern and of the best manufacture; comprising four
1	post and tent bed steads, feather beds, mattresses, and bedding,
1	mahogany winged and plain wardrobes, double and single chests of drawers, dressing tables, washhand stands, cheval and dress-
ł	ing-glasses, elegant drawing-room suite and rich silk crimson
ł	damask curtains, Turkey, Brussels, and Venetian carpets,
į	nne specimens of the Tournay needlework, sofas, couches,
Į	ottomans, lounging chairs, large chimney and pier glasses, elegant chandeliers, library chairs, rosewood loo, card, oc-
Į	casional, and pembroke tables, a six and a half octave grand
Į	norizontal pianoforte by Breadwood, in mahegany case, a six
l	octave upright cabinet pianoforte, by Clementi, in rosewood case,
i	a noble set of sliding frame dining tables, opening 18 feet long by 5 feet wide, elegant pedestal sideboard, some very valuable paint-
ļ	ings, clocks, lamps, highly polished steel fenders, secretaires,
I	bookcases, curiosities from the South Seas, table, dessert, break-
ł	fast and tea services, old china, rich cut glass, 18 fine Spanish
ľ	wood dining-room chairs covered in merocco, bronze figures, kitchen, dairy, and brewing utensils, melon and cucumber
ĺ	frames, garden rollers, garden-tools, a quantity of green-house
-	plants, American aloes, orange and lemon trees, and a variety of effects.
	The goods may be viewed three days prior to the Sale, and Catalogues had on the Premises; and of Mr. HOGGART, 62, Old Broad-street, Royal Exchange.

Figure 3.7 Advert announcing the auction of the household goods of shipping agent and whaleship owner, John Boulcott in the *London Evening Standard*, Friday 5th June 1840

Finding newspaper reports concerning the transport of a "curiously carved" wooden figure from Hawaii by Captain Valentine Starbuck on the whaleship *L'Aigle* (a vessel owned by Boulcott)⁴² or the sale of a New Zealand Maori head in London by a whaleman from the Whaleship *Dart* provides the researcher with snippets of evidence that may lead in significant new directions. In the case of the latter, for example, the *Morning Advertiser* reported in August 1822 that a sailor had been stopped in the streets of Lambeth on suspicion of carrying contraband goods. On examination, the bundle he was carrying was found to contain the "head a coloured man, wrapped up in a handkerchief":

The sailor, giving an account of this strange possession, said his name was Fair, that he belonged to the *Dart*, South Sea whaler, lately come home; the head which he

⁴² Morning Advertiser, Wednesday, 19th May 1824

carried was that of a New Zealand Chief, [...] and that he was then proceeding to the British Museum, where he expected to get a large price for it as he considered it to be very valuable and rare. The officer under these circumstances, let the sailor go to make the best market he could.⁴³

For the purposes of this discussion, the significance of this report lies in what it tells us about the whaleman's engagement with the curiosity trade: clearly he recognised he had possession of an item of value, and he knew where to sell it. Armed with such knowledge the whaleman formed an integral part of a trade that was at its peak at this period. During the 1820s, hundreds of such heads were bought and sold.⁴⁴ Indeed, by the 1820s 'baked heads' were allotted a separate entry among the imports at the Sydney customs.⁴⁵ Both Sydney and Hobart were major distribution points for *mokomokai*, visited by a regular supply of sailors and whalemen from New Zealand. In his journal the Australian whaleman James Heberley explained the trade thus:

They preserve the Heads of their Enemies they sell them to the Traders, there were plenty of them out of Port Jackson, they trade for Flax, Pork, and Native Heads, they gave one pound Canister of Powder for 6 or 7 Heads, they take Heads to Port Jackson, and sell them for five pounds each, till the Authorities put a stop to it.⁴⁶

Governor Darling prohibited the trade in preserved heads in Sydney in 1831. However, the global traffic continued for years as evidenced in the donation of the head of a New Zealand chief to the Bristol Institution in 1836.⁴⁷

In the absence of extant artefacts or specimens to match the newspaper evidence in the cases of Boulcott and the whaleman from the *Dart*, such snippets offer valuable evidence of diverse forms of collecting associated with the whaling fleet as well as the institutional channels through which they subsequently passed, including auction houses, private trade and museums. Here the class dimension is particularly evident. Whereas the working-class

⁴³ Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette, 8 August 1822. The British Museum has no record of buying this example of mokomokai (preserved tattooed Maori heads) and despite the best efforts of Rhys Richards, its whereabouts remain unknown: Jill Hassell, pers comm, 2019; Richards (2015) *Tracking Travelling Taonga*, p.237

⁴⁴ Blackburn, M. (1999) Tattoos from Paradise: Traditional Polynesian Patterns, PA: Schiffer, p.18, quoted in Palmer, C. and Tano, M.L. (2004) *Mokomokai: Commercialization and Desacralization*. International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management, Denver: Colorado, n.p. Available at: https://bit.ly/3CcPtbh

⁴⁵ Robley, H.G. (1998) *Moko: the art and history of Maori tattooing*. Reprint London 1896. Middlesex: Senate, p.169, 171 quoted in Palmer, C & Tano, M. L., (2004) *Mokomokai*, n.p

⁴⁶ Heberley quoted in Forster, H. (1975) 'A Sydney Whaler 1829-32: The Reminiscences of James Heberley', *Journal of Pacific History*, 10(2), p.100

⁴⁷ Letter from Henry Sheppard to the Bristol Institution. Bristol Archives, letter book: BRO 32079/240

whaleman was suspected engaging in criminality, the whaleship owner's 'South Seas curiosities' are amongst his most valuable possessions, just as much a sign of his status as four poster beds, mahogany winged wardrobes, an elegant drawing room suite, rich silk curtains, Venetian carpets, fine ottomans and a grand piano in its mahogany case.

3.3 International resources

In September of 2018 I participated in New Bedford Whaling Museum's scholar in residence programme, spending one week on Nantucket Island and three weeks at New Bedford Whaling Museum. On Nantucket I was hosted by Nantucket Historical Association and reviewed collections and archival material relating to the British whaling at the NHA Research Library attached to the Island's Quaker church. Five logbooks and one journal were reviewed, and partial transcriptions created (listed in Archival sources). These all originated from vessels belonging to the British Southern Whale Fishery that were registered in Britain. The considerable presence of Nantucket captains within the British fishery partially explains the presence of such documents in an American archive. One hundred and sixty Nantucket masters are known to have captained British whaleships, overseeing more than one in four British voyages. Many worked their way up under the tutelage of fellow islanders within the British fleet.⁴⁸ When they returned home to Nantucket, they took their journals and curiosities, and many were deposited in the Nantucket Atheneum. Founded in 1834, the Atheneum incorporated a private library, a museum and philosophical society. Such was the diversity of the museum collection, a visitor in 1843 stated, "I can not [sic] stop to enumerate even a specimen of the almost infamy of curiosities, natural and artificial here deposited by the whalers."⁴⁹ Most of the Atheneum museum collections were destroyed in a fire in 1846. When the remaining artefacts outgrew their home they were donated to the newly formed Nantucket Historical Association in 1905. The museum has a permanent exhibition showcasing the many artefacts that American whalers brought home during the nineteenth century (see Figures 3.9a &b.)

⁴⁸ I am grateful to Dale Chatwin for information relating to Nantucket captains, pers comm, April 2022

⁴⁹ Anon. 1843 Interpretation panel, Nantucket Whaling Museum, September 2018



Figures 3.8 a &b Examples of whaler curiosities on display at the Nantucket Whaling Museum, September 2018. Dancing mask, New Ireland, c1830. Accession number 2020.0026.021. Stingray skin belt, Kiribati, pre. 1850. Accession number 1972.0002.001a

The archival sources at Nantucket, principally journals and logbooks, revealed evidence of violent encounters between whalers and Indigenous populations, including the gruesome massacre of ten crewmen at the Marquesas Islands, a meeting with *Bounty* mutineer John Adams at Pitcairn, beachcombers on the Galapagos Isles and the story of an apprentice boy on a whaling ship who tried to kill himself twice by throwing himself overboard. Most relevant for this thesis was the journal of Dr Eldred Fysh, surgeon on the *Coronet* 1837-1839. Fysh documented his interactions with the Islanders across South-east Asia, purchasing shells, tools and live birds. In addition, the crew collected weaponry in New Ireland and natural history specimens. He returned to his native Norfolk and died in 1849, aged just 37 (see Figure 3.10). How Fysh's journal found its way to Nantucket is unclear and what happened to his collection remains a mystery. There is further work to be done on the provenance of such journals.



Figure 3.9 The grave of Dr Eldred Fysh (1811-1849), whaleship surgeon on the Coronet. St Mary Magdalen church, Watlington, North Norfolk.

The collection of British whaling archives at New Bedford Whaling Museum is particularly substantial and well-catalogued. As noted above, much of this material is to be found on the American East Coast due to the BSWF links with American captains and owners, such as the Rotch family (discussed in Chapter 5) who although originating from Nantucket, established New Bedford as a prominent whaling port in the early nineteenth century. The New Bedford Whaling Museum also curates an internationally renowned scrimshaw collection which contains significant British pieces (see Chapter 7) and has a display dedicated to whaler collecting. These collections thus offer a view of British whaler collecting set within an international network of captains and owners.

Further archival research was undertaken in the spring/summer of 2019 in Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. During fieldwork I visited collections in both public institutions and private settings and attended meetings with scholars in both Australia and New Zealand. Of particular significance was the journal of ordinary seaman Henry Ransome held in the State Library of New South Wales, Mitchell Library. This undigitised resource is one of only two (unpublished) personal journals known to exist that were authored by below-deck whalemen aboard British Southern Whale Fishery vessels, the other being that of apprentice whaleman Henry Foster of the whaleship *Sussex*. The identity of the latter, whose journal is in the Dartmouth Library Special Collections in the United States, was revealed in the course of research for this thesis. Both of these unique resources are used as case studies within Chapter 6.

3.4 Selection of case studies

Having provided the historical context and outlined the concepts, methods and sources for the research in this and the preceding chapter, the final task here is to outline the rationale for the structure of the thesis and the selection of the case studies. As we have seen, the research methodology involved an extensive engagement with object and archival collections across the UK and in selected repositories overseas. The major outcomes of these surveys are provided in the Appendices as well as in the preceding methodological discussion. The remainder of the thesis is devoted to chapters which connect the major substantive themes outlined in Chapter 2 with the evidence in the object and archive collections described in this chapter. Although each of the substantive chapters to follow focuses on a distinct theme, these themes overlap and weave their way through the thesis as a whole. The chapters move from addressing the global networks and collecting interests of the owners, to the specifics of collecting objects and gathering knowledge on board a whaleship, and finally to the life story of an artefact created in the fo'castle of a whaling vessel. As a whole, the thesis offers an overview of collecting practises from the top to the bottom of both the social hierarchy and of the vessels themselves.

The focus of Chapters 4 and 5 is on networks of collecting and knowledge circulation amongst whaleship owners. This is a key theme for historians who have worked on other kinds of collecting communities and thus there is an opportunity here to consider the specific experience of whalers in the wider context of trade, collecting and science. On the basis of the review of secondary literature and the assessment of available materials, both objects and archives, two prominent whaleship owning families were selected as case studies: the Enderbys and the Rotches. The case studies exemplify some of the intersecting networks which shaped the pattern of collecting as much as of sociality and family life in the period of study: they include political networks, commercial networks, personal and institutional networks (such as those linking Samuel Enderby and Sons, Sir Joseph Banks and Philip Gidley King), the transatlantic Quaker networks of the Rotch family, and the scientific and social

networks of learned societies such as the Royal Geographical Society. The chronological range of both chapters stretches from the 1790s to the 1840s, presenting a longitudinal analysis of collecting amongst at least two generations of whaleship owners. Both these families were key participants in the founding, and the early success of the BSWF, and both were active in galvanising political support for the British whaling industry. As such, they generated more archival documentation then other shipowners who, though equally successful, had a somewhat lower public profile, such as the Bennett family. Although members of the Bennett family have been shown to be active collectors (particularly of New Zealand material culture) preliminary investigation yielded insufficient materials for a full case study (though see Appendix 4). In contrast, the whaling houses of Enderby and Rotch presented themselves as obvious case studies, particularly as they provided examples of both extant and non-extant collections that had moved in very different ways historically: the extant collection of Benjamin Rotch moving through domestic and provincial settings in west Wales prior to its piecemeal donation to the Bristol Institution for the Advancement of Art and Science from 1821 onwards; and the non-extant collections of the Samuel Enderby Snr., and Jnr., explored through the personal communication with Sir Joseph Banks between 1787 and 1809, and within the archives of learned societies, predominantly the Royal Geographical Society which Charles Enderby was a founding member of in 1830.

Chapter 6 examines the whaleship as site of collection and exchange, considering various aspects of whaler collecting associated with different ranks on board – notably captains, surgeons and ordinary crew members – and reflected in the different spaces of the vessel. The chapter seeks to explore how the space allocated to each individual restricted or facilitated their collecting practices, and how those collecting practices varied, including the highly visible collecting of the captain, the scientific collecting of the surgeon and the much less visible collecting of the foremast hands. It addresses how permeable these distinct collecting practices were between the different spheres of the crew and what occupational activities facilitated collecting or knowledge generation amongst the whaling community. The selection of case study material for this chapter depended on information extracted from both archival sources and extant museum collections. However, due to restrictions imposed by COVID-19, return visits to view extant collections studied before March 2020 were not possible. Thus, the chapter leans more heavily upon archival evidence than initially planned.

However, this restriction had the virtue of encouraging a broader consideration of the collecting activities of a wide range of individuals on board, rather than the potentially narrower view offered by following just one individual, or one collection. In its focus and its framework, this Chapter foregrounds the space of the ship and the diverse collecting habits of its crew: by its nature, questions of historical or generational change examined in the preceding chapter are less to the fore.

Chapter 7 provides a counterpoint to the preceding discussion by following the journey of a single artefact, a scrimshawed tooth, from ship to shore. The tooth in question presented itself as a viable case study given its indisputable link to the British Southern Whale Fishery and, unusually, its association with a named individual. The tooth also underwent a series of dramatic changes during its lifetime, as it moved through different spaces - domestic, commercial and public - that offered the opportunity for a wider consideration of the relationship between object biography and the spaces of collection. The selection of this object also reflected one of the recurrent themes in the research, concerning the relationship between 'natural and 'artificial' curiosities, and between specimens and artefacts. In this context, the acts of harvesting, preparing and decorating the tooth are considered as part of a wider process of knowledge creation on board whaleships.

Chapter 4:

Networks of collecting and knowledge circulation: the Enderbys

This chapter discusses the ways in which whaleship owners contributed to the expansion of knowledge through their whaling businesses. Focussing specifically on the Enderby family, headed by Samuel Enderby Snr (1720–1797) it discusses the ways and means by which this knowledge was made mobile through their personal networks with high status individuals, and their associations and affiliations with learned societies. It also highlights how Enderby vessels acted as conduits for natural knowledge travelling into Britain. The time period under discussion, 1790-1840, incorporates the early years of the Fishery when the establishment of Port Jackson as a penal colony extended the reach of the British Empire into the Antipodes. In doing so, it shows how whaling intersected with establishment of colonial rule in New South Wales and reveals how this engagement mirrored changes in cultures of collecting over time. Initially this was filtered through the control of elite individuals such as Sir Joseph Banks and away from the public gaze. Then at the turn of the nineteenth century with the emerging provincial and metropolitan societies with their associated museums, artefacts were exhibited to a wider scientific and public audience. The example of Charles Enderby (1797-1876), grandson of Samuel Snr., illustrates how his association with the Royal Geographical Society, an institution that he co-founded, enabled him to filter knowledge of geographical discoveries gathered aboard his whaleships, particularly in the Antarctic regions, into the public domain. This Chapter considers how the observational notes collated by whaling captains, the raw data of what would become the 'physical sciences', became accessible to a wider public through such networks and their publications. The discussion concludes in 1840 when Charles Enderby was elected Fellow of the Royal Society, thus cementing his place within the scientific elite.

S. Enderby & Sons started life as oil merchants headed by Samuel Enderby Snr (c.1720–1797) son of a Bermondsey tanner, who founded the company in London in the mid eighteenth century.¹ By the 1770s the company had become involved in the Northern Whale Fishery and

¹ King, H. (2004) Enderby Family (per. *c.1750–1876), Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Also see Payton, C. (2018) 'The Enderby Family and their World', in C. Ellmers and C. Payton (eds) *London and the Whaling Trade*. London: Docklands History Group, pp. 185–210

was also commercially involved with Rotch and Co., American whalers from Nantucket and New Bedford, who supplied the Enderbys with sperm whale oil and spermaceti wax (see Chapter 5).² Samuel Enderby & Sons was instrumental in lobbying the government to encourage American whalemen to join the newly formed BSWF, co-founded by the Enderbys along with whaleship owners, the Champions and St Barbe.³ Enderby Snr & Jnr. were both vocal petitioners of the Board of Trade on behalf of the BSWF, lobbying for extensions to the fishery limits imposed by the East India Company, for more favourable premiums for British whalers, for permission to revictual in certain foreign ports, and for the freedom for the whaling crews from impressment by the navy.⁴ Samuel Snr. retired c.1790 but remained an influential figure.⁵ On his death in 1797 the business passed to his sons, two of whom died in quick succession leaving their assets to their brother, Samuel Jnr (1756-1829).⁶ After his death in 1829, the business went to his three sons Charles, Henry, and George and the company was renamed Enderby Brothers with Charles (1797-1876) as senior partner.

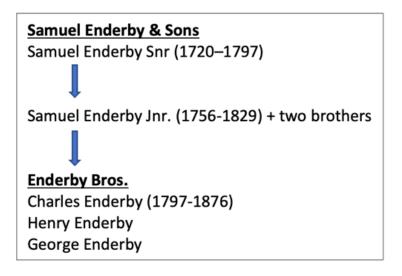


Figure 4.1 Descendants of Samuel Enderby Snr, showing change of company name.

² See, Ash, S., (2015) *The Eponymous Enderby's of Greenwich*, https://atlanticcable.com/CableCos/EnderbysWharf/Eponymous Enderbys.pdf (Accessed June 2019)

³ Jackson, G. (1978) *The British Whaling Trade*. London: A. and C. Black, pp.81-82. Payton suggests that Enderby was primarily responsible for the BSWF and, although they made joint representations to Parliament, Enderby, Champion and St Barbe were not in partnership but merely had a shared business interest. Payton (2018) The Enderby Family, p.188, & Note 6: p.207

⁴ King (2004) Enderby Family

⁵ Ash (2015) *The Eponymous Enderby's*, p.27

⁶ Ludlow, B. (2014) 'The Rise and Fall of the "Enterprising Enderbys" c.1750-1855, (Parts 1)', Journal of the Greenwich Historical Society, 3(4), p.184

Although there is significant interest in the Enderby company activities amongst whaling historians,⁷ no in-depth biographical study exists for any member of the Enderby family, despite their role as significant promoters of geographical discovery in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, no extant Enderby curiosity collection has been found either in a museum or dispersed amongst existing family members.⁸ However, fragmentary correspondence between Samuel Enderby and Sons with figures of historical importance such as Sir Joseph Banks, reveal the company to be instrumental in the production and circulation of geographical and natural knowledge. As much of the correspondence is addressed to the company name, Samuel Enderby and Sons, it is often unclear as to which Samuel is being addressed, father or son. This may be a problem for the biographer but it also highlights the familial context of this whaling business, highlighting the Enderbys' enduring interests in natural philosophy and curiosity collecting over successive generations.

4.1 Samuel Enderby & Sons, Sir Joseph Banks, and colonial collecting

The BSWF had been whaling extensively off the Brazil Banks since 1775, when in 1788 Samuel Enderby & Sons dispatched their whaleship *Emilia* with instructions to go whaling in the Pacific Ocean, thus making her the first British whaleship to round Cape Horn. According to Samuel Enderby Snr.,⁹ this was the vessel upon whose success "depends the establishment of the Fishery in the South Pacific Ocean."¹⁰ Ahead of her departure, Enderby wrote to Sir Joseph Banks asking for advice on an upcoming voyage.¹¹ Was the island of Juan Fernandez settled and were there are good charts to be had? Where were the best whaling grounds and

⁷ Ash (2015) *The Eponymous Enderby's* offers a broad overview of the company's activities with brief mention of Voyages of Discovery in the early years of the nineteenth century. More in-depth is Payton (2018) The Enderby Family and their World. The Enderby's have also elicited interest from historical societies local to Greenwich such as the Greenwich Industrial History Society, particularly within the work of the late Greenwich historian, Barbara Ludlow (1929-2016). See, https://greenwichindustrialhistory.blogspot.com/p/e-index.html (Accessed January 2022) See also, Ludlow, B. (2014) 'The Rise and Fall of the "Enterprising Enderbys" c.1750-1855, (Parts 1&2)', *Journal of the Greenwich Historical Society*, 3(4 & 5), pp.180-195, pp.246-261

⁸ Major Charles Enderby, pers comm, July 2019

⁹ It is unclear whether Samuel Enderby Snr. or Jnr. was the author, however as Enderby Snr. was still head of the company at this time, he is assumed to be the author

¹⁰ Samuel Enderby and Sons to Sir Joseph Banks, 26th August 1788. Archives of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: BC 1.319

¹¹ Because of the tendency to repeat Christian names down the generations, Enderby genealogy quickly becomes complicated. Technically, Samuel Sr. was Samuel Enderby III, his son, Samuel Enderby IV. For clarity I am using the titles of senior and junior. Samuel Jnr also had a son called Samuel, but he was not involved in the family business. See Payton (2018) The Enderby Family, p.190 for a family tree. Also see Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, pp.69-74

were the Spanish to be trusted carrying correspondence?¹² The letter would appear to be the first time the two men had communicated and, in what appears to be an attempt to ingratiate himself with Banks, Enderby stated that he had vessels leaving shortly for the Coast of Africa and the Cape, advising Banks that "if we can be of any service in procuring anything for you from thence, we should be happy in [sic] the opportunity to comply with your wishes." He was in essence offering to facilitate Banks' collecting through the transportation of artefacts and specimens aboard his whaling vessels. As such, this letter provides the earliest documented suggestion that BSWF whaleships acted as a conduit for natural knowledge. To further ingratiate himself Enderby mentioned that "he had the acquaintance of Dr Solander" (naturalist on Captain Cook's first voyage, former Keeper of Natural History at the British Museum, and great friend of Banks). However, the fact Solander had died six years before Enderby's correspondence suggests that Enderby was using the high status of their mutual former acquaintance as a way to embed himself within the systems of patronage at the heart of the Banksian empire - a clear attempt at what Simon Ville has described as "reputation signalling."¹³

After the *Emilia* returned in 1790 with a full hold of oil having discovered the fruitful whaling grounds of the west coast of South America, the need for accurate charts of the Pacific regions became more pressing to Samuel Enderby Snr. Despite the significant discoveries of the preceding decades, knowledge of Pacific coastlines was still scant in the late eighteenth century. Consequently, it was under the guidance of Samuel Snr. that Captain James Colnett was dispatched in 1792 in the sloop *Rattler* (formerly HMS *Rattler*) under instruction to search for safe anchorages and ports for the British whaling fleet in the southern Pacific.¹⁴ Unusually, this was a joint venture between the whaling business and the Admiralty indicating that the

¹² Samuel Enderby and Sons to Sir Joseph Banks, 26th August 1788. Archives of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: BC 1.319

¹³ Ville, S. (2020) 'Researching the natural history trade of the nineteenth century', *Museum History Journal*, 13(1), p.7

¹⁴ James Colnett had sailed as a midshipman on Cook's Second Voyage to the Pacific, before taking part in trading ventures in fur and otter pelts between the Northwest Coast of America and China and Japan. In 1789 Colnett had been embroiled in the Nootka Sound crisis in which the Spanish had taken control of Nootka Island and Colnett had been arrested, jailed and his ship impounded. Colnett therefore was acutely aware of the sensibilities of the Spanish Government, the East India Company and the trading fraternities all active in the Pacific, making him a prime candidate for the *Rattler* voyage. It was against Admiralty rules for a HMS vessel to go whaling them be converted back to an Admiralty vessel, therefore the HMS Rattler was converted permanently into a whaleship prior to the exploratory voyage

Enderbys had either significant powers of persuasion, or political sway. Colnett's success is evidenced in the form of a detailed survey of the Northwest Coast of South America and the Galapagos Islands, including the naming of Chatham and Hood Islands. However, his failings as a whaleman were highlighted by the capture of only four whales resulting in an enormous financial loss for the house of Enderby. He was as Stackpole asserts, no hardened whaler, and probably believed this was not his responsibility.¹⁵ Colnett's narrative and charts, published in 1798, were instrumental in opening up the Pacific to the whale fishery and also to wider commercial opportunities.¹⁶ Indeed, it is interesting to note that the logbook of the whaleship *William* voyaging between 1796-1798, contains a sketch entitled 'A view of Chatham Island.' made in November 1796.¹⁷ The fact that the unnamed illustrator/log keeper refers directly to Chatham Island only eighteen months after Colnett returned to London indicates the immediate impact of new cartographic knowledge, in this case probably via the Enderbys directly, given they were also owners of the *William*.

At the same time, Samuel Enderby Snr. was lobbying the British government to allow British whaleships to transport convicts to the newly established penal colony in Port Jackson. The creation of a new penal colony necessitated a cost-effective way of transporting both the convicts and their government overseers. Enderby felt that the nascent Southern Whale Fishery offered the perfect solution. They could deliver the convicts, and on their return, they could explore the whaling potential of the Australian and South American coasts, without encroaching upon East India Company restrictions. To this end of the eleven Third Fleet transport ships, which departed Britain in 1791, five were whalers licenced to fish off Peru. *Mary Ann, Matilda, William and Ann, Salamader* and *Britannia*.¹⁸ Three of these belonged to the firm of Samuel Enderby and Sons.¹⁹ This offered a ready-made infrastructure for the

¹⁵ Stackpole, E. A. (1972) Whales and Destiny: The Rivalry Between America, France, and Britain for Control of the Southern Whale Fishery, 1785-1825. University of Massachusetts Press, pp.156-7

¹⁶ Gough, B.M. (1983) Colnett, James, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Vol 5*. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/colnett_james_5E.html (Accessed September 2021)

¹⁷ Log of the whaleship William kept by Thomas Wetling/William Mott under Capt. George Fitch, 1796 – 1797. NBWM: LOG no. 0898

¹⁸ See https://history.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/ncb/third-fleet-ships-and-passengers (Accessed December 2021)

¹⁹ The Matilda, Britannia, and William and Ann. The Matilda was wrecked on the Mururoa atoll, 640 miles southeast of Tahiti in February 1792. The crew were saved and remained on Tahiti until Lieut. Hanson of the HMS Daedalus was instructed to collect them on his way to Port Jackson. This would have been a prime opportunity for the whalemen to barter with the Tahitians for curios, presuming they had anything

collection and circulation of goods to and from New South Wales. It was via this infrastructure, that knowledge of Australia, New Zealand and the wider Pacific travelled from the colonial peripheries into Britain. Central to this endeavour were three intersecting structures: the British whaling fleet, predominantly those vessels owned by Samuel Enderby and Sons, the British elite headed by Sir Joseph Banks, and the Admiralty in the form of naval lieutenant and third Governor of New South Wales, Philip Gidley King (1758-1808).

By the late 1780s, Samuel Enderby and Sons and Sir Joseph Banks were thus known to each other with Enderby having introduced himself and his sons as "considerable Adventurers in the Whale Fisheries."²⁰ Banks clearly took up Enderby's offer to transport collected goods home for him aboard his whaling vessel as by the 1790s Enderby was transporting plants and insects from Brazil on Banks' behalf. Concurrently during this period, Banks and Philip Gidley King were "constant and confidential correspondents," their letters "couched in the familial language of friendship" according to F. M. Bladon, editor of the Historical Records of New South Wales.²¹ It is not clear how or when the Enderby family and Philip Gidley King became known to one another, thereby completing the triangle, but by 1790s the two families shared a close bond. Philip Gidley King sailed as second lieutenant aboard the Sirius, setting out to establish the penal settlement at Botany Bay in 1786. Two years later he was sent to Norfolk Island to establish a penal settlement and was made lieutenant-governor of Norfolk Island the following year. King had sailed for England in 1790 to report on the difficulties faced by the settlement and to meet with Banks. He married in 1791 and returned to Norfolk Island that year to take up his post as lieutenant-governor.²² At some time around this point, it would seem that the friendship between the Enderby and King families developed, as from 1796 Charles Enderby (Samuel Jnr's brother) acted as guardian for two of Philip Gidley King's children, Phillip and Anna Maria. Both Phillip Parker King (b.1791) and Anna Maria King

to barter with. The shipwreck had the unfortunate effect of allowing the local chief Poeeno to obtain arms from the wreck which he used to wage war on his rival Tyna. See. https://whalinghistory.org/bv/voyages [search term 'Matilda 1791'] (Accessed January 2022), also see, Banks, J. and Chambers, N. (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence of Sir Joseph Banks, 1768-1820.* Vol 4. London: Pickering Masters, eBook location: 10.1229

²⁰ Samuel Enderby and Sons to Banks, 26th August 1788, Archives of the Royal Botanic Gardens: BC 1.237

²¹ Bladon, F.M. (ed.) (1886) Historical Records of New South Wales. Vol. IV, Sydney: Government Printer, p.xxiv

²² Shaw, A.G.L. (2006) King, Philip Gidley (1758–1808), Australian Dictionary of Biography. https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/king-philip-gidley-2309/text2991 (Accessed January 2022)

(b.1793) were born on Norfolk Island and sailed for England with their parents in October 1796 onboard the *Britannia*. When King returned to New South Wales with his wife Anna Josepha to take up the governorship in 1799 (aboard the Enderby-owned whaleship, the *Speedy*) Anna Maria was left in the care of Charles and Elizabeth Enderby, and Phillip was placed under the tuition of Rev. S. Burford in Essex.²³ Anna Josepha King outlined the depth of her friendship with Mrs Enderby in her journal in 1799, writing onboard the *Speedy* "as to dear Maria [Anna Maria] I feel very easy on her account knowing she is under the protection of all worthy and sincere friend, who is more like a mother to her than anything else."²⁴ The friendship was longstanding; Anna Maria lived with the Enderbys until her marriage in 1813, when she was given away by Charles Enderby.

That the Enderbys, like Sir Joseph, were also collectors of curiosities is evidenced within a letter written from Port Jackson in 1791 by Captain Thomas Melville of the convict transporter-turned-whaler *Britannia* to his employer Samuel Enderby.²⁵ Melville's reference to his cargo of convicts as "live lumber" is indicative of attitudes of the era toward convict transportation. However, it is the comments at the end of that letter that have until now been overlooked. Captain Melville wrote to Enderby, "I am collecting some beautiful birds, and land animals and other curiosities for you."²⁶ This brief line suggests that he was acting as field collector although in all likelihood the crew would also have been incentivised to collect on his behalf. It is unclear whether this collection was a live shipment, or took the form of prepared specimens, in which case Captain Melville would have to have travelled with the necessary preservation equipment onboard. I suggest that Melville's letter to Enderby links the British Southern Whale Fishery with some of the earliest examples of collecting in colonial Australia and if traceable would be of enormous cultural significance. In this context, Jeremy Coote has described the occurrence of 'Natural Curiosities from Botany Bay' including 'the

²³ Shaw (2006) King, Philip Gidley. Also onboard the *Speedy* was naturalist George Caley, who had been sent to New South Wales as a plant collector for Banks. See Simpson, D. (2018) *Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting: The Royal Navy in Australia, c.1772-1855*. PhD Thesis. Royal Holloway, University of London, p.94

²⁴ The Journal of Philip Gidley King, 1791 – 1796, NLA: MS70, Object 26005434. Transcribed from the original by King descendant, Tom Freemantle 2018

²⁵ Again, it is not clear specifically which Enderby he was writing too, however, Samuel Snr had retired by 1790, so it is assumed to be Samuel Jnr. Melville is incorrectly referred to as 'Mitchell' by Gordon Jackson. Jackson (1978) *The British Whaling Trade*, p.97. However, it was Thomas Melville.

²⁶ Letter from Thomas Melville to Messrs. Samuel Enderby and Sons, 29 November 1791 SLNSW: Microfilm CY 4446

surprising, singular, curious Animal the Kongerrow' exhibited in Oxford in November 1790 as "remarkable" for its early date.²⁷ However, Daniel Simpson suggests that it "appears probable that a large number of Indigenous Australian objects circulated within late eighteenth-century Britain," citing the words of Watkin Tench, British marine officer with the First Fleet to Australia, who stated in 1793 that "very ample collections" of Indigenous Australian objects "are to be found in many museums in England."²⁸ While Simpson's thesis focuses on the transportation of ethnographic artefacts on naval vessels, it is important here to widen the focus to include natural history specimens, given that the two kinds of object were inextricably linked aboard whaleships. Taking into consideration the differing requirements of such collections during a lengthy sea journey, and the increased prospects of survival in the case of material culture, it remains possible that both kinds of object were transported from Australia on whaling ships during this early period. This would confirm Simpson's suggestion that there could be a larger quantity of Australian material culture entering Britain during this period than has been previously appreciated, including flora and fauna.

Unfortunately, no evidence can be found for what happened to the beautiful birds, animals and other curiosities collected for Samuel Enderby by Melville. There is no suggestion here that these specific 'Natural Curiosities' mentioned by Coote were linked to Melville's collecting directly. However, it is the case that whaleships offered one of the few means by which such curiosities *could* be transported into Britain at this time. Indeed, a year after Melville's letter, the *Atlantic*, an Enderby-owned whaler turned store ship for the colony, left for England in December 1792. On board were Governor Arthur Phillip, two Aboriginal men, and a collection of natural history specimens which (coincidentally) included four live kangaroos.²⁹ The *Atlantic* arrived in England in May 1793, the *Britannia* not until August of that year. The *London Packet, or New Lloyds' Evening Post*, noted the Kangaroos were, "lively and healthy," along with "some other animals peculiar to that country."³⁰ It is possible that

 ²⁷ Coote, J. (ed.) (2015) *Cook-Voyage Collections of 'Artificial Curiosities' in Britain and Ireland, 1771-2015.* (MEG Occasional Paper, No. 5), Oxford: Museum Ethnographers Group, pp. 74–122

²⁸ Tench. W. quoted in Simpson (2018) *Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting*, p.77

²⁹ Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.2004 Philip Gidley King also dispatched a selection of pine trees for Sir Joseph Banks onboard the Atlantic. See Philip Gidley King to Sir Joseph Banks, November 1794, in Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.1993

³⁰ London Packet, or New Lloyds' Evening Post quoted in Brook, J. (2001) 'The Forlorn Hope: Bennelong and Yemmerrawannie go to England', Australian Aboriginal Studies 2001(1)

Melville transhipped his collection of specimens for Enderby aboard his sister ship *Atlantic* knowing they would arrive before his own vessel. The two Indigenous Aboriginals onboard the *Atlantic*, Bennelong (c. 1764-1813) and Yem-merrawanie (c.1775-1794), were the first to visit Britain. They were dressed and educated in the European manner, visited the sights of London and gave a display of Aboriginal song.³¹ Yem-merrawanie died in Kent in 1794 of a lung infection, Bennelong returned to his native home the following year.

Meanwhile, almost immediately on his return to Norfolk Island in 1791 to take up the post of Lieutenant Governor, Philip Gidley King began utilising Enderby whaleships to transport specimens and artefacts. He also used them to procure Indigenous individuals, offering Eber Bunker, the American captain of Enderbys' *William and Ann*, one hundred pounds to bring two Maori to Norfolk Island. King noted in his journal that the vessel had arrived in port on 24th December 1791. Furthermore:

as the master of the *William & Ann* intends to try for whales on the NE coast of New Zealand, I proposed to him to endeavour by fair means to obtain two of the natives from about the Bay of Islands & Mercury Bay, the first of which places is not more than three days sail from hence with a fair wind; as some difficulty was made which could only be obviated by a recompense I took it upon me to promise on the part of government, to give him one hundred pounds if he succeeded & brought back two of the natives. The master promised to perform what I wished for & sailed from hence on the 19th with that determination.³²

The aim of recruiting the Maori was to induce them to teach the convicts the arts of flax production in order to render the convict settlement at Norfolk Island more self-sufficient. As it turned out, Captain Bunker was unsuccessful in procuring natives by "fair means" or otherwise on the coast of New Zealand. The *William and Ann* did however, become the first recorded whale ship to visit New Zealand when it called at Doubtless Bay in 1792,³³ thereby establishing Samuel Enderby and Son as the premier merchant discovers of the era. Eber

³¹ Brook (2001) The Forlorn Hope

³² Transcription of the Journal of Philip Gidley King, January 1792, p.13

³³ Morton, H. (1982) *The Whale's Wake*. Dunedin: University of Otago Press. See also Hodgkinson, H.R.T. (1975) *Eber Bunker of Liverpool: The Father of Australian Whaling*. Canberra: Roebuck Society. Two Maori were taken to Norfolk Island in the *Daedalus* in 1793 however, due to being male and high status knew virtually nothing about Flax production. Bunker is mentioned in later correspondence when captaining the whaleship *Albion* (owned by Enderby's neighbour and sometime business partner, Alexander Champion) transporting black swans from Tasmania as gifts for Governor King in 1803. Stackpole (1972) *Whales and Destiny*, p.191

Bunker was to name the Bunker Group, a group of islands off the Queensland coast, in 1802 on his return to Britain aboard the *Albion*. He returned to further his career as a whaleman and pastoralist in Tasmania to great success.³⁴

In November 1794, taking the first opportunity to send direct to Britain since the whaleships *Britannia* and *Salamander* departed in January 1792, King was again utilising whaleships to transport samples to Banks. Aboard the *Salamander* (belonging to Mellish & Co.) he sent "specimens of two pieces of canvas and about 40 fathoms of inch and a half rope made from the flax plan", along with

Several boxes of flax plant, pines, and other shrubs and plants to Sir Joseph Banks; also two boxes to be left with Governor Brock at St Helena [...] Those boxes contained 240 very fine plants of the New Zealand flax which had been carefully raised from seed and as the master of the *Salamander* assures me of his care of them and the great chance he has of meeting the *Lightning*, a whaler belonging to his owners, (Mellishes) which ship will be returning home by the time the *Salamander* arrives on the coast of Peru, and his assurance that the master of the *Lightning* will take great care of them, I entertain the hopes that this valuable plant will be preserved and delivered safe to those for whom it is designed.³⁵

This letter provides evidence of a transhipment train stretching from New South Wales to London via Brazil. Up until this point, evidence linking early colonial collecting and BSWF whaleships is evidenced by the collecting of curiosities by whaleship captains for their employers (Melville to Enderby); the physical transportation of plants, animals, and curiosities between high status individuals (Banks and King); and the geographical knowledge acquired by whaleships frequenting the New Zealand coast, in addition to the increased knowledge of cetacean behaviour around Australia and New Zealand. However, as we see from Governor King's instructions to Captain Bunker, and the two aboriginal men sent to England onboard the *Atlantic* in 1792, the transportation of 'goods' also included the movement of indigenous people.³⁶ At the same time Enderby vessels were moving goods for King and Banks to and

³⁴ Stewart, D. (2008) Bunker, Eber, *Dictionary of Sydney*. http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/bunker_eber, viewed (Accessed May 2022)

³⁵ Transcription of the Journal of Philip Gidley King. November 24th, 1794, p.183

³⁶ John Easty was a marine who returned to England onboard the *Atlantic* in December 1792 from Botany Bay. Part of his journal refers to his time aboard and mentions Bennelong and Yem-merrawanie. Easty, J. [1787-93] Journal. Mitchell Library, SLNSW: Q991.1/16A1

from New South Wales, Samuel Enderby Jnr. was also liaising separately with Banks to transport specimens for him from Brazil.

Letters written in 1793 indicate that Enderby whaleships were transporting specimens for Banks and the two parties appear to be in regular communication. In 1793 Samuel Enderby Jr. wrote to Banks stating that there was a cask of plants and insects for him aboard the Enderby whaleship *Hero*:

Captain William Folger of the ship *Hero* South Whaler from the coast of Peru informs me that he has on board the *Hero* 1 cask and box of the cochineal plants with some of the insects alive on them though he is fearful that many are killed by the villainy of one of his crew in throwing salt water on them. He received them from Dr Gillen at Rio de Janeiro on the 12th of December 1792 for you. He has likewise one box for you which he received from Sir George Staunton he supposes it contains drawings. We expect the *Hero* will be at her moorings this evening or tomorrow morning [...] Samuel Enderby jr.³⁷

While the overall responsibility for the transportation of live specimens aboard the whaling vessel fell to the captain, the inference from Enderby's letter is that a crew member, or members, had been deputised to care for the plants and insects during the voyage. This offered the whaleman the opportunity to develop an intimate understanding of [potentially new] species as they travelled through changing climates on the voyage home, thus turning a whaleman into a temporary plantsman and entomologist. Indeed, Banks' note of thanks to Sir George Staunton (1737-1801) on receipt of his shipment aboard the *Hero* indicated that among the plants Staunton sent was a "remarkable" example of grass, and some species new to science.³⁸ Banks had specifically requested a specimen of ipecacuanha plant (*Carapichea ipecacuanha*) from Staunton.³⁹ It arrived alive on the *Hero*, but with neither the flower nor fruit Banks had requested.⁴⁰ Staunton wrote to him that the Governor of St Catherine's would despatch a complete specimen to Banks, assuring him that "the whalers that touch here

³⁷ Samuel Enderby and Sons to Sir Joseph Banks, February 16th, 1793. Archives of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, BC 1.319

³⁸ Sir Joseph Banks to G.L. Staunton, February 1793. Banks & Chambers (2021). *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 4. eBook location: 10.490- 492. Sir George Staunton was an Irish botanist, physician, diplomat and slave owner. See, Wheeler, S. and Bulley, A. (2008) Staunton, Sir George Leonard, first baronet (1737–1801), physician and diplomatist., Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26324 (Accessed January 2022)

³⁹ *Carapichea ipecacuanha*- a plant native to Brazil whose roots were used to make a syrup which was a powerful emetic

⁴⁰ Goodman, J. (2021) Planting the World: Joseph Banks and his Collectors: An Adventurous History of Botany. London: William Collins, p.223

frequently will give him opportunity of sending it out."⁴¹ As to the difficulties of plant transportation he wrote, "I venture to send home a few specimens which my Gardener has endeavoured to preserve, he is however as yet but little practised in this Business; and a Ship of war is not always a convenient place for such operations."⁴² Staunton was referring to conditions aboard the HMS *Lion* which transported his specimens between the Cape Verde Islands and Brazil. It would appear that transportation on a whaleship was not much easier. Within Banks' letter to Staunton he indicated that, in addition to botanical specimens, Staunton also sent zoological specimens aboard the Hero, namely a specimen of bat and three specimens of bird and a collection of land snails.⁴³ The specimens had been badly damaged by pests on the journey, requiring Banks to air them in an oven to kill off any Dermestes sardonius beetles, then place then in a glass stoppered bottle to prevent further deterioration,⁴⁴ thus highlighting the difficulties of plant and specimen transportation aboard any sea-going vessel. It was not merely a case of passively transporting goods on behalf of Banks, but of whalemen actively engaging with the collection. In the case of the Hero the steward was tasked with keeping the plant specimens alive; watering, observing for pests and protecting from heat or cold. Without the crew's careful management, lifting the "Vast Case & a large Butt of Earth" up and down the decks as necessitated by the weather (and Banks subsequent payment of them), it is unlikely that any of the specimens would have survived.⁴⁵

Dr Hugh Gillen (d.1798, physician to the Macartney Embassy to China) wrote to Banks from Rio de Janeiro just before the *Hero* departed. His letter offers an insight into the specifics of specimen transportation aboard the ship, in addition to his payment of the crew:

I have the pleasure of informing you that I have just shipped on board the *Hero* a large wooden box containing three very fine plants with thousands of the Insects upon them and a Barrel with one very tall plant & equally covered with the Insects [...] The Captain expects to reach the Thames in two Months - The plants are to remain on the Quarter deck till he arrives in 35 or 36 North - They are properly supported and an awning of Bunting made for them to defend them from injury and allow fresh air to pass freely

⁴¹ G.L. Staunton to Sir Joseph Banks, December 1792, Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.60

⁴² G.L. Staunton to Sir Joseph Banks, December 1792, Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 4. eBook location: 10.52

⁴³ Sir Joseph Banks to G.L. Staunton, February 1793, Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 4. eBook location: 10.490- 492

⁴⁴ Sir Joseph Banks to G.L. Staunton, February 1793, Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.490- 492

⁴⁵ Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 4. eBook location: 10.780

around them - he promises to remove them to the lower deck and to cover them warmly when he gets to 36 or sooner if the weather be cold - he has received all the Directions I could think of and he has solemnly engaged to observe them he is to write you a note the moment he arrives [...] Just now I have however delivered to the Captain of the *Hero* two drawings one of the plant entire - and another of a Leaf with the insects grouped upon it the flower full blown and in bud springing from the top of the fig on which it grows and annexed to it a section of the fig. I must plead again the shortness of the time for not accompanying the drawings with a description & References.⁴⁶

In late May 1793 Banks replied to Gillen regarding the Sylvester Cochineal insects that he sent onboard the *Hero*. After receiving them in February "I carried them myself safe to my garden at Spring Grove where I placed them in my Hot house [...] with a cactus procured from Kew."⁴⁷ However, his experiment to breed the insect failed. Despite initial success in rearing the insects after a few weeks Banks found them to be "feeble and decay'd."⁴⁸ Undeterred, he wrote to Gillen that,

I have learned by it that the Insects are not difficult to transport by sea for the crew were well satisfied with a little gratuity which I gave them and the Capt. thankful for 20 Guineas the Freight agreed thus in proper hands 23 Guineas or 24 will bring Cochineal from the Brazils at any time it is wanted & if we live.⁴⁹

In the late eighteenth century, Sylvester Cochineal insects were of enormous economic value. The insect produced a bright red dye used in clothing manufacture and was also used as a medicinal drug.⁵⁰ Only the Spanish had been able to successfully culture Cochineal in South and Central America where it thrived on cactus plants and were exporting vast amounts into Europe, which with added importation duties, produced huge profits. The East India Company were attempting to cultivate commercially valuable crops in India, particularly Cochineal, as it would be free of importation duties because of Britain's control over India, thus allowing the EIC to corner the market.⁵¹ If Banks' experiment were successful and Cochineal could be transported "from the Brazils at any time it is wanted" for 23 or 24 guineas, both Banks and the East India Company stood to make significant profits.

⁴⁶ H. Gillen to Sir Joseph Banks, December 1792. Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 4. eBook location: 10.80

⁴⁷ Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.762

⁴⁸ Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.765

⁴⁹ Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location:10.768

⁵⁰ Sinha, A. (1996) 'Introduction of Cochineal Culture in India: English Plan to Break Spanish Monopoly', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 57, pp. 575–580

⁵¹ Sinha (1996) Introduction of Cochineal, p.576

The same day Banks wrote to Gillen he also wrote to the East India Company Secret Committee advising them of his experiments in raising Cochineal insects. Although this had been unsuccessful, he felt that that was reason to be optimistic. He drew their attention to the considerable plantations of cacti sent out from Kew to Madras and Bengal which had been prepared for the reception of Cochineal, "that are now Wholly unoccupied & useless tho the Company has been put to some charge on account of them."⁵² Banks suggested that should they wish it he could send out Sylvester Cochineal insects in a "Case provided to Keep it safe from injury [...] to be kept in the Cabin out of danger of rough treatment & that some Carefull person not liable to Leave the Ship for any length of time have the Charge of taking Care of it."53 This gives us some insight into the conditions required onboard the Hero for the successful transportation of Sylvester Cochineal insects, and the role the steward played in this. As does Banks' personal table of costs which outlines the scale of the 'little gratuity' (two guineas) he paid to the ships company "as a gratification for their Care and the trouble they had taken in removing a Vast Case & a large Butt of Earth in which the Cacti were Planted from the Deck to the hold & back again as occasion required." In addition to the one guinea, he paid "to the Ships Steward under whose immediate Care the plants were plac'd by the Captain" and the twenty-one guineas "paid to the Capt. Mr Folger by the hands of Messers. Enderby his Employers being the Freight agreed upon at Rio de Janeiro in Case the insects were delivered alive in England."54

During this period, the East India Company and the British Southern Whale Fishery were in direct conflict regarding the Fishery's requests to work in EIC controlled waters. The Company had exclusive monopoly over all Australian external trade routes (those between Sydney, Batavia, India and China) from the founding of the colony until 1813.⁵⁵ However, the transportation of convicts aboard whaleships to New South Wales was a clever way of sidestepping the EIC restrictions as their monopoly did not extend to the South Pacific. From Sydney eastwards as far as and including the Society Islands was considered part of the

⁵² Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 4. eBook location: 10.778

⁵³ Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.778

⁵⁴ Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 4. eBook location: 10.780

⁵⁵ Maude, H.E. (1968) *Of Islands and Men*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press. pp

Australian domestic maritime zone, thus allowing free commercial access from 1788 onwards. Therefore, it is unlikely that Banks told Enderby that he was potentially transporting goods that could be of enormous potential profit to the East India Company. Banks was not averse to playing both parties. Samuel Enderby Jnr wrote to Banks in 1801 "Sir Having on many occasions experience'd your friendly attention and interests and Encouragement of the South'n Whale Fishery" enclosing a letter written by Captain Quested of the whaleship *Speedy* to Governor King the previous year offering his first-hand opinion of the potential of a successful whale fishery on the East Coast of New Holland. He outlined the number of whales seen and the vessel's experience of bad weather. Enderby forwarded this letter on to Banks with a request to call on him (with Champion) to discuss petitioning Parliament to extend their fishing grounds further into territory restricted by the East India Company. He succeeded, as the following year fishing grounds were extended to include the coasts of northernmost Australia, New Guinea and Melanesia.

Within a few short years the British Southern Whale Fishery became embedded in all aspects of supplying the new colony. In 1800 Samuel Enderby Jnr (now head of the company after his father's death in 1797) successfully petitioned the government to allow his whalers to carry provisions to the New South Wales colony. The *Greenwich* under captain Alexander Law was dispatched with a cargo of speculative merchandise "carefully chosen to appeal to the needs of the colonists."⁵⁶ On her return to Britain in 1803 she carried official papers and correspondence from the colony, in addition to a significant collection for Sir Joseph Banks from Governor King. He wrote to Banks from Sydney in October 1802. "I had began making discoveries into the interior by the Means of Ensign Barrallier who is a protégé of Mr Greville, [...] Some native iron he also found, an important lime stone, & dung of an unknown Animal. Samples of everything he found will be sent by the *Greenwich*."⁵⁷ Also onboard were "ten boxes i.e all the *Porpoises* with plants that have been established in them these twenty

⁵⁶ Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 6. eBook location 10.1171 (note 4)

⁵⁷ P.G. King to Sir Joseph Banks. Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 6. eBook location: 10.1171. 'Mr Greville' was Sir Charles Greville (1749–1809) land agent and heir to the estates of his uncle Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803) in Milford Haven. It was Greville's vision to develop the area as a whaling port. He was also closely related to the Duke of Portland, whose mother was the Duchess of Portland, owner of the largest natural history collection in the country (see Chapter 2). He was a significant plant collector in his own right. Francis Barrallier was the son of a naval engineer and architect Jean-Louis Barrallier (1751-1832) who designed both buildings and vessels for the new whaling port of Milford Haven for Sir Charles (see Chapter 5)

months – Mr Brown said they were all New Plants in England – There is also a quantity of different Seeds sewed in them: I propose sending them [with] what else I have to send by the *Greenwich* whaler belonging to Messrs Enderby, which will leave this about Feby next" ⁵⁸ The *Porpoise* had sailed as a store ship from England in 1800 with a consignment of plants from Banks. In a reciprocal measure King appears to refer to new species of plants travelling back to Britain in the reused boxes from the *Porpoise*, onboard the *Greenwich*. Furthermore, in addition to the botanical specimens, samples of native iron, limestone and animal dung, King sent to Banks the journal and charts created by Barrallier on a surveying mission into the Blue Mountains. King asked that Banks "will be so good to make what use you have of it but be so good as to let the Manuscript be sealed up after you have done with it and sent to Mr Samuel Enderby for me."⁵⁹ Therefore leaving Enderby in safekeeping of the first maps of the Australian interior.⁶⁰

Recent research by Daniel Simpson has considered the pattern of Admiralty collecting in this period, specifically Sir Joseph Banks' use of naval vessels for the transportation of ethnographic artefacts, building upon previous work viewing it as an infrastructure for botanical collecting. However, other than a brief reference to the Banks-Enderby relationship and the whaleship *Hero* within Jordan Goodman's biography of Banks, researchers have yet to address his use of whaling vessels in any depth.⁶¹ In 1802 Enderby wrote to Banks on the eve of the return of the whaleship *Speedy* informing him that,

[The] ship *Speedy*, Geo. Quested, Master is arriving from Port Jackson with 170 tonnes spermaceti oil. The Master says he has a Black Swan, a Native Head in Spirits and a number of other things for Sir Joseph Banks. Mess. Enderby do not yet know when the *Speedy* will lay in the river, but they will be happy in doing anything in their power to serve Sir Joseph Banks.⁶²

⁵⁸ P.G. King to Sir Joseph Banks. Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 6. eBook location: 10.1172

⁵⁹ P.G. King to Sir Joseph Banks. Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 6. eBook location: 10.1934

⁶⁰ Lhuede, V. (2003) 'Francis Barrallier, Explorer, Surveyor, Engineer, Artillery Officer, Aide-de-Camp, Architect and Ship Designer: Three Years in New South Wales (1800-1803), *Explorations: A Journal of French Australian Connections*, 35

⁶¹ Goodman, J. (2021) *Planting the World: Joseph Banks and his Collectors: An Adventurous History of Botany.* London: William Collins, eBook location: 4709

⁶² Samuel Enderby and Company to Sir Joseph Banks, 24 November 1802. SLNSW: Series 23.19

Further documentation reveals that the consignment intended for Banks, including a small keg of insects, was from Governor King.⁶³ Banks wrote to King informing him that the skull "was among the best" he had received, having "caused some comical consequences when open'd at the Customs House."⁶⁴ Indeed, he stated that it was "very acceptable to our anthropological collectors & makes a figure in the museum of the Late Mr Hunter now purchased for the public."⁶⁵ This episode provides one of the few examples where one can trace the journey of a collected object from source to (semi-public) display. John Hunter's collection was purchased by the government in 1799 and given to the Company of Surgeons (later the Royal College of Surgeons of London) and formed the basis for a museum constructed as part of the new Royal College of Surgeons.⁶⁶ As the skull arrived in 1802, it was one of the earliest additions sourced from Banks' network of "anthropological collectors".

The following year King wrote to Banks suggesting that whaling vessels, particularly those of their mutual friend Enderby, could be used to transport live vaccine matter to inoculate the "upwards of 1200 children not one of whom has ever had this disease [cowpox and smallpox] and there is much reason to expect that it may one day [...] imported by some ship in the Natural way".⁶⁷ It had long been recognised that an individual only suffered once from the disease, and by deliberately exposing an uninfected person to the disease by exposing them to a lymph from a infected pustule (variolation) would render them immune.⁶⁸ In 1802 a carefully packaged lymph had been sent overland to Baghdad. By vaccinating children in Baghdad, it proved possible to generate a chain of live *vaccinia* virus which arrived in Bombay in June of that year. However, the transmission of a live virus half way around the world to Australia remained a serious logistical challenge.⁶⁹ An attempt in 1802 to inoculate passengers aboard the Admiralty vessel, HMS *Glatton* in a vaccination chain until arriving in

 ⁶³ Samuel Enderby and Company to Sir Joseph Banks, 13 December 1802. SLNSW: Series 23.20
 P.G. King to Sir Joseph Banks. Banks & Chambers (2021) *The Indian and Pacific Correspondence* Vol 6.
 eBook location: 10.1474

⁶⁴ Simpson (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting, p.74

⁶⁵ Banks quoted in Simpson (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting, p.74

⁶⁶ https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/museums-and-archives/hunterian-museum/about-us/history/ (Accessed December 2021)

⁶⁷ P.G. King to Sir Joseph Banks, Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 6. eBook location: 10.1937

⁶⁸ Bennett, M. J. (2009) Smallpox and Cowpox under the Southern Cross: The Smallpox Epidemic of 1789 and the Advent of Vaccination in Colonial Australia. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 83(1), p. 42

⁶⁹ Bennett (2009) Smallpox and Cowpox, pp.37–62

Australia was unsuccessful due to reluctance on the part of the captain and the ship's surgeon.⁷⁰ In 1803, perhaps fearful of a repeat of the 1789 smallpox outbreak at Sydney Cove (that had been particularly disastrous for the Aboriginal population) King wrote that he had written

in the most pressing terms to Lord Hobart respecting the Vaccine Matter being sent out by a person qualified to renew it during the passage...nor would it be unadvisable to send some out in the different ways by a Whaler as their general short passages would greatly ensure its arrival with sufficient virtue to produce the desired effect. For the latter advantage I have requested my friend Enderby to inform Mr Sullivan and yourself when one of his or any other Whaler is getting ready for this quarter.⁷¹

Despite the immense challenges involved in moving a live vaccine around the world this was achieved in 1804, and as it turned out, not via a whaleship. However, the fact that Philip Gidley King proposed the whaling fleet as a viable option, when attempts by the Admiralty had failed, represents his confidence in the BSWF as a tried and tested mechanism for moving global knowledge around the world.

The Will of Samuel Enderby Snr, proved in 1797, shows him to be a wealthy individual who bequeathed to his sons (in addition to several business such the tannery in Bermondsey) the contents of large houses including paintings, silverware, linens, and an extensive library.⁷² The subsequent generation, headed by Samuel Jnr., were not the tradesmen of their grandparents' or even parents' generation but can nonetheless be defined as merchant gentlemen. They owned substantial properties in Greenwich and Blackheath, a popular East London location for whaleship owners, with all the trappings and trimmings that accompanied them.⁷³ As Barbara Ludlow has pointed out, for Samuel Jnr. and his siblings,

When business was good the down-to-earth job of dealing in whale oil, blubber and skins was acceptable, but it did not equate with being a 'Gentleman'. Charles, Samuel and George had become part of Greenwich and Blackheath Society. They were Commissioners of the Land and Assessed Taxes, and Trustees of the New Cross Turnpike Road. George was a Vice-President of the Greenwich, Lewisham and Lee Savings Bank and had social aspirations.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Bennett (2009) Smallpox and Cowpox, p.51

⁷¹ P.G. King to Sir Joseph Banks, Banks & Chambers (2021) The Indian and Pacific Correspondence Vol 6. eBook location: 10.1937

⁷² Will of Samuel Enderby, Merchant of Earl Street, City of London. TNA: PROB/11/1297/8

⁷³ The Bennett, Champion and St Barbe families were all near neighbours, see Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys' (Part 1), p.184-185. Also see: Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*, pp.69-74

⁷⁴ Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys' (Part 1), p.184

The Enderbys' experience is indicative of the multiple maritime and terrestrial networks around East London within which whaleship merchants circulated, providing opportunities for knowledge to spread between select elite individuals and their respective peers.⁷⁵ In terms of Enderby collecting activities during the early nineteenth century little can be ascertained. While the shipments of curiosities in all likelihood continued from Australia and beyond, those initiated by Governor King himself would have ceased upon his resignation and return to England in 1807. As a close family friend Samuel Enderby Jnr's curiosity collection may well have benefited from the enormous quantity of specimens and artefacts that King had shipped home with him aboard the Buffalo.⁷⁶ These were for distribution to influential figures, including the Secretary of State for the Colonies, antiquarian and Fellow of the Royal Society, Sir Charles Greville,⁷⁷ the Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty, Sir Joseph Banks and other luminaries.⁷⁸ The shipment included King's personal collection of "Six boxes of war Instruments and other articles Human Bones and Head, Animals, Skins, A Cabinet of Insects, Shells, Minerals, Dried Plants. About 25 planks &c of different Woods, Six live Birds."⁷⁹ James Hardy Vaux, a former convict onboard the Buffalo described the number of live specimens being transported:

There were kangaroos, black swans, a noble emu, and cockatoos, parrots, and smaller birds without number; all of which, except one cockatoo, which was carefully nursed by its mistress, and half a dozen swans, fell victims to the severity of the weather. The latter birds, indeed, being natives of Van Diemen's Land, which is a colder climate than Port Jackson, were of a hardy nature, and survived our long and tedious voyage. On their arrival in England, they were sent by Captain King as a present to the Royal Menagerie in Kew-gardens.⁸⁰

After King's governorship ceased, the evidence of Enderby collecting changed to reflect a different type of knowledge generation, one of geographical discovery. This does not mean

⁷⁵ See Clayton (2016) *Shipowners*

⁷⁶ The *Buffalo* was an Admiralty vessel which appropriately considering the menagerie it contained, had a kangaroo as a figurehead much to the amusement of the indigenous Aboriginal community who encountered it. Collins, D. (1804) *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*. Vol 2. London: A. Strahan, (Chapter XVIII)

⁷⁷ See Chapter 5 for Sir Charles's interactions with Benjamin Rotch and the Milford Haven whaling settlement.

⁷⁸ Simpson (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting, p.95-96

⁷⁹ Schedule of Articles the production of the South Seas on board His Majesty's Ship *Buffalo* In Governor King's Care, 19 November 1807. SLNSW: Series 39.104 - NO. 0001

⁸⁰ Vaux, J.H. (2018) [1819] Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux. London: W. Clowes, p.200

that Enderby whaleships, or those of other whaleship owners such as the Rotches or the Bennetts, were no longer being used as a means to collect and distribute physical collections, or indeed that the whalemen themselves were not collecting from their own reasons. However, the ways and means by which new knowledge accrued by whalemen filtered into the intellectual discourse changed significantly in the early years of the nineteenth century. From this date, the evidence of collecting activity no longer hangs upon the correspondence between elite individuals but can be found to be circulating within more public spheres, specifically within the journals of educational and learned societies, and their associated museums. For example, the Edinburgh Philosophical Journal published extracts from the journal of Henry King, captain of a BSWF whaleship, in October 1820, reporting on a visit to Pitcairn Island in 1819 and the discovery of a nearby island, eleven months after his vessel the *Elizabeth,* returned to London. Whether Captain King was using the publication as a means to assert his claim on discovery remains to be seen. As Felix Driver argues "the explorer's search for a reputation depended on social relationships at 'home' as well as in the 'field' with patrons, publishers, editors and image makers acting as vital mediators."⁸¹ Publishing in the Journal would certainly be more effective than King's initial idea - to bury a letter in a bottle "near some remarkable place, in order that our prior discovery might be more easily proved, should it ever be disputed."82

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, official avenues of cartographic knowledge dissemination such as the Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty were predominantly focussed upon Royal Navy surveying and, as the work of Megan Barford clearly articulates, the periodicals for highlighting hydrographical discoveries were largely mediated by Admiralty men.⁸³ Furthermore, Admiralty maps for the merchant service did not become commercially available till 1823, and publications such as the *Nautical Magazine*, which was largely directed at the merchant marine service, was not published till 1832. This publication was however, clearly read by men working in and connected to the whaling trade. A short article on the use

⁸¹ Driver, F. (2001) *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire*. Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass., USA: Blackwell Publishers, p.11

⁸² King, H. (1820) 'Extract from the Journal of Captain Henry King of the *Elizabeth*', *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, 3(6), pp. 380–388

⁸³ Barford, M. (2015) 'Fugitive Hydrography: The Nautical Magazine and the Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty, c.1832–1850', International Journal of Maritime History, 27(2), pp. 208–226

of Prussic acid to kill whales by Captain Petrie of the Betsy appeared in the second volume in 1832.⁸⁴ The following year, John Lewthwaite, a Rotherhithe investigator of electrics, wrote to the editor of the Nautical Magazine to assert himself as the inventor of harpoons charged with prussic acid having instructed his brother-in-law Captain Kendrick of the whaleship Ann *Elizabeth* with trialling his invention on his South Seas voyage in 1828.⁸⁵ Lewthwaite stated that he had "communicated my ideas on the subject to Dr. Faraday and other scientific friends who encouraged me to go on." Furthermore, Kendrick had not merely undertaken the experiment but taken an active interest in its preparation, "he had himself inspected the construction of the harpoons, as well as, with me, frequently visited the laboratory of the chemist who made the acid in order that he should be acquainted with its nature and strength".⁸⁶ These examples suggest that societies and their associated publications could be a relatively direct means of publicising knowledge collected and created aboard whaling vessels directly to people of whom it was of practical use, and in the case of Captain King, also stating a claim on discovery. The following section of this chapter considers geographical discoveries made by Enderby whaleship captains, and specifically Charles Enderby's later use of the Royal Geographical Society as a means to promote such discoveries whilst also situating himself as a gentleman of science.

4.2 Charles Enderby, geographical discovery and learned societies

From the early years of their whaling business, the Enderbys had always encouraged their captains to be alert to new geographical discoveries, particularly those which would benefit the company.⁸⁷ Hence, Colnett's survey of the Galapagos Islands onboard the *Rattler*, and George Quested's report on the whaling grounds around New Zealand. In 1806 Abraham Bristow, Master of the Enderby owned whaleship, *Ocean* discovered the Auckland Isles, some two hundred miles south of New Zealand, returning the following year to claim possession for the Crown and undertake brief surveying sorties.⁸⁸ The Enderby vessel *Syren* is mentioned

⁸⁴ Anon (2013a) *The Nautical Magazine for 1832*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.741

⁸⁵ Anon (2013b) The Nautical Magazine for 1833. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.48-49

⁸⁶ Lewthwaite was the main instigator of the Rotherhithe Mechanics' Institution founded in 1825, he lectured at the East London Institution, the Southwark Mechanics' Institution (and the City of London Literary and Scientific Institution. See Flexner, H. (2014) *The London Mechanics' Institution Social and cultural foundations 1823-1830*, PhD Thesis, University College London, p. 435

⁸⁷ Mill, H.R., (1905) The Siege of the South Pole, F.A. Stokes company p.147

⁸⁸ Jones, A.G.E. (1970) 'Captain Abraham Bristow and the Auckland Islands', *Notes and Queries*, 17, p.370

in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* as having "made a noble, experimental cruise," during which she discovered the lucrative whaling grounds off Japan (known as the Japan Grounds) and sighted an unknown island which was named Syren Island in 1819.⁸⁹ The last (known) correspondence between Banks and Samuel Enderby Jr. is dated 1809 when he wrote to Banks outlining Bristow's discoveries in the Antarctic.⁹⁰ Highlighting the tensions between discovery and trade, he stated that they had not publicised their discovery until after the second voyage in the hope of obtaining a large haul of seal skins. Enderby wrote, "we thought we were fully entitled to the exclusive advantage of our Discovery for one Voyage, and I trust that this may serve as an apology for not disclosing it sooner."⁹¹ He added that as soon as Bristow submitted charts of the Islands to Enderby, he would deliver them to Banks. Bristow had named the group 'Auckland' after Lord Auckland, one of his father's friends, and another of the islands he called Enderby Island, after his employers (see Figure 4.1 for a map of the region).⁹²

The naming of islands after an aristocratic acquaintance or patron was a common enough occurrence but the naming of geographical discoveries after a merchant vessel's owner extended this patronage system further. These owners usually came from the middle-class sphere of society, rather than being elite governing individuals. Therefore, the naming of islands after men involved in global commerce is a cartographic representation of the rise of the merchant classes in the nineteenth century. Bristow's nod to his employers was an early example of this practice amongst the whaling fraternity. It became an increasing common occurrence during the nineteenth century as commercially funded voyages of exploration immortalised their sponsors. There are numerous Enderby references to be found upon maps of the Southern Oceans: while not all of them have a demonstrable link to the Enderby family, their presence on whaling routes would strongly suggest a connection.⁹³ For someone like

⁸⁹ Melville, H. (2016) [1851] *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*. London: Macmillan Collector's Library, p.596 Syren Island attributed to be Sylph's / Bayonnaise / Beyonesu Rock;

https://whalinghistory.org/bv/voyages/ (search term: Syren 1819. Accessed February 2022)

⁹⁰ Samuel Enderby to Sir Joseph Banks, 21 July 1809, SPRI, University of Cambridge: microfilm, MS 574/2;MJ

⁹¹ Samuel Enderby to Sir Joseph Banks, 21 July 1809, SPRI

⁹² Jones, A.G.E. (1964) 'John Biscoe (1794–1843)', *The Mariner's Mirror*, 50(4), pp. 271–281

⁹³ For example, Enderby Island (Isla Enderby) in the Magellan and the Chilean Antarctic Region, Chile; Enderby Islands (Puluwat Atoll) and Enderby Bank (coral reef) Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia; Enderby Island, Ecuador, South America; Enderby Island and Enderby Reef, Western Australia. Enderby Island, Auckland Islands, New Zealand; Enderby Land, Antarctica. Enderby Plain, an undersea plain located off Enderby land, Antarctica, and Enderby Point, Lively Island, Falkland Islands.

Samuel Enderby Jr. whose father had been an apprentice cooper and grandfather a tanner, to become a gentleman with his name indelibly inked upon on a map represented the cementing of his social status as a gentleman and the enduring legacy of the family firm.

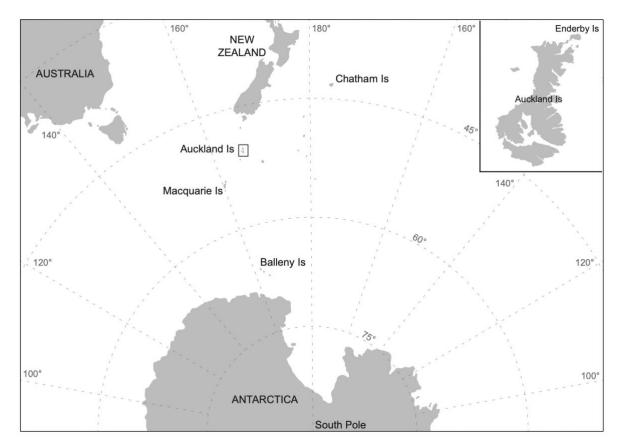


Figure 4.2 Map of the Antarctic region showing the Auckland Islands discovered by Abraham Bristow in 1806 (see insert for location of Enderby Island). Also indicated are the Balleny Islands, discovered John Balleny in 1838. Drawn by Jen Thornton

According to A.G.E. Jones, neither Bristow nor Enderby reported the discovery of the Auckland Isles to the Hydrographic Department of the Admiralty.⁹⁴ This suggests that Banks was the key figure in distributing, or not, Enderby's new knowledge of the Antarctic regions. However, many years later, Charles Enderby (then head of the family business) shared details of Bristow's journal entry regarding the discovery with Sir James Clark Ross RN in advance of his 1839 voyage to the Southern Oceans in the *Erebus* and *Terror* to conduct a series of magnetic observations in the southern hemisphere, and attempt to reach the South Magnetic Pole.⁹⁵ Both men were Fellows of the recently-formed Royal Geographical Society (RGS), of which Enderby was a founding member (see Figure 4.3 for his portrait).

⁹⁴ Jones (1970) Captain Abraham Bristow, p.370

⁹⁵ Jones (1970) Captain Abraham Bristow, p.370



Figure 4.3 Charles Enderby by William Brockedon, pencil and chalk, 1849. © National Portrait Gallery, London

The Royal Geographical Society was founded in 1830 with the aim of "the promotion and diffusion of that most important and entertaining branch of knowledge, Geography."⁹⁶ According to Felix Driver, "from the moment of its inception, the RGS was a hybrid institution, seeking simultaneously to acquire the status of a scientific society and also to provide a public forum for the celebration of a new age of exploration."⁹⁷ As a founding Fellow, Charles was situating himself, and the family business, at the forefront of this new age of exploration. Librarian at the Royal Geographical Society, HR Mill's wrote in his 1905 book *The Siege of the South Pole*, "there is, perhaps, no other instance of a private mercantile firm undertaking so extensive a series of voyages of discovery without much encouragement in the way of pecuniary returns."⁹⁸ Indeed, the lack of pecuniary returns had become a serious problem as

⁹⁶ Driver, F. (2001) *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire*. Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass., USA: Blackwell Publishers, p.30

⁹⁷ Driver (2001) Geography Militant, p.27

⁹⁸ Both Charles and his brother served on the Council of the RGS at various points during its early history. Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys' (Part 1), p.185

the whaling arm of the family business (the company had been renamed Enderby Brothers after their father's death) had been in steady decline for some years. By 1815 the firm only had five whaleships in operation, and by the 1830s they had diversified into rope and canvas making.⁹⁹ This was indicative of a wider downturn within the BSWF during the 1820s. As Dale Chatwin points out, the number of vessels halved in 1820-1 and again in 1824-5. Enderby himself estimated at the end of that decade that a total of only 85 ships were still involved in the trade.¹⁰⁰

During the 1830s Enderby Bros. sponsored a series of quasi commercial-cum-exploratory voyages into the Antarctic Ocean, with the hope of discovering new sealing and whaling grounds, but also of cementing their place in history as pioneers of Antarctic discovery. Between 1830-3 John Biscoe RN (1794–1843) commanded the Enderby brig *Tula* and the cutter *Lively* in circumnavigation of Antarctica, in which he discovered Enderby Land and Graham Land.¹⁰¹ He was only the third person to achieve this feat, the first being Captain Cook followed by Captain Thaddeus Bellingshausen of the Russian Imperial Navy.¹⁰² It is unlikely, according to historian Ann Savours, that Biscoe departed empty handed considering the Enderbys' resources, their extensive contacts with the RGS, the Royal Society and the Admiralty. He likely took with him the few available maps and charts of the Antarctic regions and the most uptodate knowledge gleaned from travel accounts. However, while he may have read Cook's account of the region, Bellingshausen's account was not published in English until the twentieth century.¹⁰³

Charles Enderby reported on Biscoe's achievements to the RGS in February 1833 and presented the logbook of the *Tula* and her sister ship the *Lively* to the Society.¹⁰⁴ The logbook described their harrowing journey and the deaths of crew members, in addition to listing

Mill (1905) The Siege of the South Pole, p.146

⁹⁹ Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys' (Part 1), p.184, p.188

¹⁰⁰ Chatwin (1989) *The Vigilant Journal*, p.9

¹⁰¹ Jones, A.G.E. (1969) 'New Light on John Balleny', *Geographical Journal*, 135(1), p.55

¹⁰² Savours, A. (2021) 'The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe', *The Journal of the Hakluyt Society*, p.10 [Preprint]. Available at: https://www.hakluyt.com/downloadable_files/Journal/Biscoe%20Savours.pdf (Accessed February 2022)

¹⁰³ Savours (2021) The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe, p.11

¹⁰⁴ Enderby, C. (1833) 'Recent Discoveries in the Antarctic Ocean from the Logbook of the Brig *Tula*, commanded by John Biscoe, R.N. Communicated by Messrs. Enderby. Read, 11th February 1833', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 3, pp. 103–112

measurements for air and water temperatures, species, landmasses encountered and phenomena such as icebergs and an Aurora Australis demonstration that Biscoe described "without exception the grandest phenomena of nature of its kind I ever witnessed."¹⁰⁵ Accounts of his voyage had a wide reach being published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, in the *Nautical Magazine* and in the *Bulletin de la Société Géographique de Paris*.¹⁰⁶ Enderby certainly acted as the linchpin in information distribution amongst his RGS colleagues and wider scientific peers. It was he who presented Biscoe's discoveries to the RGS, he who forwarded information to Captain Francis Beaufort, Hydrographer of the Navy, regarding meteorological data Biscoe had collected and it was he who informed the Treasury in January 1832 of Biscoe's discoveries and his belief that the Antarctic was a continent, something not proved conclusively until the twentieth century.¹⁰⁷ As Jones suggests, Enderby was a man of some character and persuasion.¹⁰⁸

After emigrating to Tasmania in 1840 Biscoe was able to centralise himself within his own polar narrative, away from the dynamic personality of Charles Enderby, in a way that he could not, or did not, do in London. Hobart had become an important centre for the study of magnetic variation and there Biscoe was able to meet and discuss with some of the premier scientific sailors of the day such as John Weddle RN, Commodore Charles Wilkes, Jules Sébastien César, Dumont d'Urville, and Sir John Franklin.¹⁰⁹ Despite receiving the premier medal of the Royal Geographical Society for his exploration work, only the second ever awarded, Biscoe received no monetary reward. After his death in 1842 on a return voyage to London, at least one of his children appears on the register of the London Orphan Asylum.¹¹⁰ Charles Enderby put his name to the Orphan Asylum application for seven-year-old James Walter Biscoe as did several Royal Society luminaries including Roderick Murchison and Edward Sabine.¹¹¹ While they may well have been doing their utmost to offer support to Biscoe's destitute family, there is a certain painful irony that these same men had backed

¹⁰⁵ Biscoe, J. March 5th, 1831. Journal of a voyage towards the South Pole on board the brig *Tula* under the command of John Biscoe, with the cutter *Lively* in company. RGS-IBG Collections: RGS 303662

 $^{^{\}rm 106}\,$ Savours (2021) The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe, p.33 $\,$

¹⁰⁷ Savours (2021) The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe, p.18

¹⁰⁸ Jones (1969). New Light on John Balleny, p.56

¹⁰⁹ Savours (2021) The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe, p.37-8

¹¹⁰ Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys', (Part 1), p.185

¹¹¹ Savours (2021) The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe, p. 41

Enderby's election to the Royal Society only a few years before, partially off the back of Biscoe's success. Enderby's nomination by Murchison, Sabine and Beaufort was based on his "promotion of geographical discovery in the Antarctic regions".¹¹² The contrast between Enderby's elevation and Biscoe's fate is indicative of attitudes towards whalemen as fieldworkers in that they were often overlooked, or their role diminished, as reliable authenticators of new knowledge.¹¹³ As Sarah Millar suggests, knowledge produced aboard whaleships or sealers during the nineteenth century was regarded as lacking in credibility by many. For example, Dumont D'Urville doubted the veracity of the claim that an American whaleship had got close to the South Pole as he believed the information to have come from "simple seal hunters."¹¹⁴ In 1845 Commodores Wilkes of the USS Exploring Expedition was quoted in *The Times* suggesting that the expedition had discovered a landmass to the south of Australia. Despite having met John Biscoe personally in Hobart five years before,¹¹⁵ he wrote

Who had the least idea that any large body of land existed to the South of new Holland? Examine all the maps and charts published up to that time and upon them will any traces of such land be found? They will not and for the very best of reasons - none was known, or ever suspected to exist.¹¹⁶

The *Spectator* acerbically responded identifying the Enderbys as the "discovers" and Balleny and Biscoe as their "agent.":

The Messrs. Enderby, under whose auspices they were commended and prosecuted for ten years are the discovers. Balleny was their agent and only followed out what their other agent Biscoe had so ably begun. D'Urville and Wilkes, like Balleny, only followed out the discovery of Biscoe. Ross again took up the chase where Balleny and Wilkes had left off. The Enderbys were the originating and directing spirits.¹¹⁷

Prior to his death Biscoe had been re-enlisted by the Enderby Bros. to undertake a further voyage to search for new land and sealing grounds in 1833, but withdrew his services to be replaced by William Lisle, a successful whaling captain from Newbiggen in the north of

¹¹² Fellowship of the Royal Society 1841 - Certificates of Election 1841, RSA: EC/1841/02

¹¹³ However, Biscoe's Antarctic voyages have been recognised in the twentieth century by the naming of the survey vessel the RRS *John Biscoe*

 ¹¹⁴ Millar, S.L. (2018) Science at Sea: Voyages of Exploration and the Making of Marine Knowledge, 1837-1843.
 PhD Thesis. University of Edinburgh, p.60

¹¹⁵ Savours (2021) The Life and Antarctic Voyages of John Biscoe, p.18

¹¹⁶ Wilkes quoted in Fotheringham, B.I. (1995) *The Southern Whale Fishery Company, Auckland Islands*, M. Phil Thesis, SPRI, University of Cambridge, p.18

¹¹⁷ The Spectator magazine, quoted in Fotheringham (1995) The Southern Whale Fishery Company, pp.18-19

England. As it turns out this voyage ended in financial disaster and was aborted mid-way and therefore does not feature in Charles Enderby's resumé of sponsored expeditions.¹¹⁸ William Lisle remained in the employ of Enderby Bros. captaining their only remaining vessel (albeit a very impressive, purpose-built whaling ship named after their grandfather), the *Samuel Enderby* (see Figure 4.4).¹¹⁹ A sperm whale jaw, now on display in the Great North Museum, was donated by Lisle to the Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne (an offshoot from the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne).¹²⁰ He is also known to have collected a significant number of shells which he distributed amongst family members in the Northeast of England (discussed in Chapter 6).



Figure 4.4 The *Samuel Enderby* [...] leaving Cowes Roads for London, September 1834. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. Hand coloured aquatint, original by William Huggins. NMMG: Object ID, PAH8498

¹¹⁸ Jones (1969) New Light on John Balleny, p.59

¹¹⁹ A scale model of the Samuel Enderby is in the collection of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-66709 (Accessed June 2022) The vessel also makes an appearance in *Moby Dick*: Melville, H. (2016) [1851] *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*. London: Macmillan Collector's Library, p.595-596

¹²⁰ As shown in Figure 6.1. I am grateful to Kelvin Wilson for sharing information on Lisle and his collecting activities with me.

By 1834 Charles Enderby was diversifying away from whaling and had become a director of the Anti-Dry Rot Company.¹²¹ As prosaic as this may sound, he was aligning his business interests with new pioneering technologies and using the company's only remaining whaleship as a floating experiment. The Samuel Enderby was treated (along with the John Palmer owned by Benjamin Rotch) with the newly patented 'Kyanising' dry rot prevention process which had attracted serious interest from the Admiralty and men of science alike.¹²² In order to assess how the Kyanizing process affected the *Samuel Enderby*, Enderby requested that on completion of her maiden voyage Lisle report upon the following aspects: sailing and trim of the ship, health of the crew during the voyage, effect of the process on the bilge water, state of the timbers and masts, state of the sails and riggings, effects on the metal bolts by the prepared timber.¹²³ On her return the hull of the vessel was "minutely inspected" by John Brindley, Surveyor of Shipping and architect and surveyor, William Inwood.¹²⁴ Samples of the bilge water, sail and copper and iron bolts were sent to the Royal Institution for investigation by chemist, Michael Faraday, who subsequently issued a report, in addition to proposing Enderby for membership of the Royal Institution.¹²⁵ Enderby was duly elected on the 2nd June 1834.¹²⁶ The results of Lisle's findings informed a lecture delivered to the Institute of British Architects in 1837 by Dr. Robert Dickson. Dickson was a Fellow of the Linnean Society, of which Enderby was also a member, having been elected in 1833.

Further Enderby-sponsored voyages took place in in 1838–9. John Balleny captained the *Eliza Scott,* and Thomas Freeman the smaller *Sabrina* on a voyage to the Antarctic, discovering the Balleny Islands, at the entrance to the Ross Sea (as it was to become), together with Sabrina

¹²¹ Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys', (Part 1), p.186

¹²² Developed by John Howard Kyan (1774 - 1850), patented in 1832. Michael Faraday spoke on the topic during his inaugural lecture at the Royal Institution. Faraday, M. (1837). On the practical prevention of dry rot in timber: Being the substance of a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, February 22, 1833: with observations. London: J. Weale. Also, Dr. George Birkbeck (1776-1841) gave a lecture on the topic to the Society of Arts. See, Birkbeck, G, (1837) A lecture on the preservation of timber by Kyan's patent for preventing dry rot. London: J. Weale

¹²³ Dickson, R. (1838) A Lecture on the Dry Rot, and on the Most Effectual Means of Preventing it; delivered before the Institute of British Architects, 3 April 1837. With 'Documents relative to the Ship "Samuel Enderby",' and Documents relative to the Ship "John Palmer". London: J. and C. Adlard, p.32

¹²⁴ Dickson (1838) *A Lecture on the Dry Rot,* pp.35-37. For Inwood see, Wroth, W.W. (2004) Inwood, William (1771/2–1843), architect and surveyor, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

¹²⁵ Faraday, M. 'Report from Professor Faraday on the bilgewater, canvas and metal bolts of the "Samuel Enderby"', in Dickson (1838) A Lecture on the Dry Rot, p.37

¹²⁶ Fotheringham (1995) *The Southern Whale Fishery Company*, p.17

Land, part of the coast of Antarctica.¹²⁷ According to Jones both the limited stock of whaling equipment, in addition to the meteorological equipment onboard, suggests that the emphasis of the voyage was one of exploration rather than commercial gain.¹²⁸ Balleny undertook to measure the height of the mountain on West Cape, New Zealand, make barometrical observations for Hydrographer, Captain John Washington, and to take measurements of magnetic variation.¹²⁹ Enderby again communicated the discoveries of his captain to the Royal Geographical Society on Balleny's return in 1839. However, he did not donate Balleny's journal (logbook) written on board the *Eliza Scott*, until 1858.¹³⁰ The successful discoveries made by Balleny were communicated directly to Captain James Clark Ross prior to his departure to Antarctica in the HMS Terror and Erebus (what would become known as the Ross Expedition (1839–1843) by Hydrographer of the Navy, Francis Beaufort. However, comments Beaufort made in a letter to Ross, referring to the "supposed" land identified by Bellany, suggested he felt that not all the new information could be relied upon.¹³¹ When Ross departed, just days after Balleny's return, he left with a chart and notes from Balleny's logbook, in addition to the information Enderby had given him regarding Bristow's discovery of the Auckland Islands in 1806. In response to Bellany's information Ross adapted his course in opposition to his Admiralty instructions which were to "proceed directly to the South of Van Diemen's land."¹³² Following Balleny's track Ross managed to penetrate the pack ice and enter the Ross Sea.¹³³ Therefore, as the *Spectator* newspaper reported, Ross built upon the discoveries of Balleny, who built upon the discoveries of Biscoe, reinforcing the credibility of their original observations.134

¹²⁷ The Sabrina was lost on the return journey. The Eliza Scott was co-owned by whaleship owner Thomas Sturge amongst others. See Enderby, C. (1839) 'Discoveries in the Antarctic Ocean, in February 1839. Extracted from the Journal of the schooner Eliza Scott, commanded by Mr. John Balleny', Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London, 9, pp.526–7

¹²⁸ Jones (1969). New Light on John Balleny, p.57

¹²⁹ Jones (1969). New Light on John Balleny, pp.57-58

¹³⁰ See Enderby (1839) 'Discoveries in the Antarctic Ocean, pp.526–7. Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys' (Part 2), p.259

¹³¹ Francis Beaufort quoted in Millar (2018) Science at Sea, p.75

¹³² Fotheringham (1995) The Southern Whale Fishery Company, p.18

¹³³ Jones, (1969). New Light on John Balleny, pp.57-59

¹³⁴ Millar (2018) *Science at Sea*

4.3 Conclusion

By the 1830s Charles Enderby was operating in a range of overlapping and interconnected social networks, corresponding with explorers such as James Clark Ross, scientists like Faraday, inventors such as Charles Wheatstone, pioneer of the electric telegraph (a project with which Enderby was involved in the supplying of cable),¹³⁵ botanists like Aylmer Bourke Lambert (1761–1842), who seconded his election to the Linnean Society, and Admiralty hydrographers like Beaufort, a fellow founder of the RGS. Amongst these communities, Enderby was positioning himself as a man of enterprise and entrepreneurship, but also as a man of science. There is in fact no mention of whaling on his recommendation for Fellowship of the Linnean Society in 1833 or of the Royal Society in 1841: he is listed variously as merchant, student of natural history, and Promoter of Geographical Discovery in the Antarctic Regions.¹³⁶ On his proposal for election to the Linnean Society Enderby was described as "a gentleman much attached to the study of Natural History."¹³⁷ Lambert had been a founding member of the Linnean Society, having been elected to the Royal Society in 1791 and was a close associate of Sir Joseph Banks.¹³⁸ His early work focussed on the botany of New South Wales, particularly the pines of Australia, and he benefitted from access to Banks' herbarium, but also from information gathered aboard Enderby vessels by the surgeon Dr Brown (see Chapter 6).¹³⁹ It is highly likely that the specimens of Australian pine that Banks shared with him were those dispatched by Philip Gidley King in 1794 (in the era of Charles's grandfather, Samuel Enderby Snr.) thus directly informing Lambert's best known and important work. It is interesting to note that another of Enderby's referees in his election to the Linnean Society was Alan Cunningham, who had been botanist aboard HMS Mermaid under Phillip Parker King from 1817 to 1820. P. P. King was Philip Gidley King's son who had been under the guardianship of the Enderby family until 1807 when he joined the Royal Navy. The family connection continued into the next generation with P. P. King's son joined Charles Enderby

¹³⁵ Ludlow (2014) The Rise and Fall of the 'Enterprising Enderbys', (Parts 1), p.188

¹³⁶ Certificates of election to the Linnean Society, Charles Enderby, certificate reference: CR/46 Fellowship of the Royal Society 1841 - Certificates of Election 1841, RSA: EC/1841/02

¹³⁷ Certificates of election to the Linnean Society, Charles Enderby

¹³⁸ Miller, H. S. (1970). The Herbarium of Aylmer Bourke Lambert: Notes on Its Acquisition, Dispersal, and Present Whereabouts. *Taxon*, Vol.19(4), pp.489–553

¹³⁹ Miller (1970) The Herbarium of Aylmer Bourke Lambert, p.494

on the Auckland Isles in 1849 during Enderby's ill-fated attempt to colonize the islands and revive whaling in the Southern Oceans.¹⁴⁰

It is from a farewell dinner held for Charles Enderby in the London Tavern prior to his departure to the Auckland Islands in 1849 that we gain the strongest sense of the overlapping networks within which he moved can be ascertained. The list of guests is extensive: 240 names are listed in the pamphlet held by the SPRI archive, while Robert McCormick later recalled that three hundred people sat down to dinner.¹⁴¹ They included men of commerce and industry, fellow whaleship owners and captains, several Members of Parliament including the President of the Board of Trade, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Professor Airey, Astronomer Royal and members of the Royal Navy and Royal Artillery, Fellows of the Royal Society, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Royal Geographical Society, the Heraldry Society, the Linnean Society and the Zoological Society.

While Charles Enderby's star rose in the sphere of science, the Southern Whale Fishery Company ended in disaster in August 1852.¹⁴² The firm of Enderby Brothers was finally wound up in 1854 having suffered severe financial hardship due to multiple factors: its heavy investment in voyages of discovery with little financial return, the steady decline of whaling stocks, and a devastating fire which had previously destroyed much of their property and rope works in Greenwich in 1841.¹⁴³ Charles Enderby himself died in relative poverty in 1876. None of his personal collections, or those of his forebears have been traced: indeed, it is possible they may well have been damaged in the Greenwich fire. However, some of his personal collections must have survived as in 1849 at a dinner hosted at Enderby House, Charles showed his guests (including the Astronomer Royal, George Airy and Robert McCormick, veteran of the *Beagle* voyage and chief surgeon onboard the HMS *Erebus* during the Ross Expedition) a stuffed New Zealand Tui bird that he had kept alive for two years, presumably

¹⁴⁰ Mackworth. W.A., & Dingwall. P. R., & Munce. W.J. (1999) Enderby Settlement Diaries, Records of a British Colony at the Auckland Island, 1849–1852, Wellington, N.Z: Pakuranga, N.Z: Wild Press; Wordsell Press

 ¹⁴¹ Anon (1849) Proceedings at a public dinner given to Charles Enderby, Esq., F.R.S., at The London Tavern, Bishopsgate Street, on Wednesday, the 18th of April, London: Pelham Richardson. SPRI: 3144. McCormick, R. (1884) Voyages of Discovery in the Arctic and Antarctic Seas, and round the World, Volume 2: Being Personal Narratives of Attempts to Reach the North and South Poles. Cambridge University Press, p.302

¹⁴² An in-depth analysis of the Southern Whale Fishery Company and its activities can be found in Fotheringham's 1995 PhD thesis, *The Southern Whale Fishery Company*

¹⁴³ Ash (2015) *The Eponymous Enderby's of Greenwich*, pp. 89-92

brought back on one of his company vessels.¹⁴⁴ Enderby's family association with Sir Joseph Banks, who distributed the goods and information brought back from the Antipodes on Enderby whaleships, including knowledge of unknown animals, plants and peoples, helped in a small way to shape the pattern of global circulation of specimens during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The dawning century brought an explosion of new societies, organisations and publications through which whaler knowledge could be distributed. After 1830, using his association with the RGS, Charles Enderby managed to cement himself as a man at the centre of Antarctic discovery while remaining in London. When he subsequently did leave the country to go to the Auckland Isles, he was able to draw upon these contacts in order to furnish himself with the requisite knowledge regarding the geography, flora, and fauna of these remote islands whilst canvasing these individuals for their personal support for his new company. Enderby's election to the Linnean Society in 1833, and to the Royal Society in 1841, supported by the scientific elite particularly those involved in the magnetic crusade, helped to establish his credentials as a true polymath.

¹⁴⁴ McCormick (1884) Voyages of Discovery, Volume 2, p.297

Chapter 5:

Whaling families, material culture and the transatlantic connection: the Rotch family of Milford Haven, New Bedford and Bristol

Between 1824 and 1831, whaleship owner Benjamin Rotch (1764-1839) donated a wide range of objects to the newly-formed Bristol Institution for the Advancement of Science and Art (henceforth the Bristol Institution). While these donations comprised both ethnographic artefacts and zoological specimens, today only the articles of material culture survive, held in the object storage facility of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery (henceforth BMAG). The natural history specimens, of which there are now no trace, are thought to either have become separated from their provenance information or been destroyed by bomb damage during the Second World War.¹ The surviving Rotch collection includes weaponry, paddles, clothing, headrests, adzes, an outrigger canoe with sail, basketry, tapa cloth and items of ornamentation. The collection is significant for several reasons: as part of the founding collection of the museum of the Bristol Institution precursor to the BMAG it was one of the earliest collections of Pacific ethnography to be presented within the formal setting of a learned society in the Southwest. It includes artefacts of considerable historical interest including an Aleutian seal gut parka, and a pair of Marquesan earplugs made of elephant ivory, rather than the traditionally used material, sperm whale ivory. Furthermore, it is one of the few known museum collections with a traceable provenance to South Seas whaling in Britain.

The Rotches were an American family heavily embedded within the whale fisheries of New Bedford, Dunkirk and the BSWF based in Milford Haven and London. That curiosity collecting was a family affair as far back as the late eighteenth century is evidenced within a letter written by a visitor to New Bedford in 1794. The author stated he had visited the "considerable collection of Natural Curiosities belonging to W and T Rotch" (referring to Benjamin's father and his uncle, William and Thomas Rotch).² Therefore, their collecting presents the opportunity to consider the international procurement networks Benjamin Rotch had available to him and how his familial associations with the whaling trade informed these collecting practices. Indeed, the overwhelming Pacific focus of his collection,

¹ BMAG Curator of World Cultures, Lisa Graves, pers comm, June 2018

² Bullard, J. M. (1947) *The Rotches*. Milford, New Hampshire: The Cabinet Press, p.82

encompassing artefacts from both North and South, and its palpable links to whaling with the inclusion of such artefacts as the "head of a harpoon taken out of a Whale captured in the Pacific, "whale's teeth and items made from whalebone,"³ would suggest he drew heavily upon his whaling employees in order to compile his collection. Furthermore, the inclusion of Aleutian material culture, and an 'Indian' canoe suggests a wider network of contacts than his own South Sea whaleships.

Rotch's vessels were based in Dunkirk from the late 1780s and subsequently in Milford Haven, West Wales, from 1800-1820. His Dunkirk fleet fished mainly off the Falkland Islands and his Milford Haven fleet (as British registered whaling vessels) were subject to restrictions imposed by the East India and South Seas Companies keeping them away from the lucrative North Coast trade networks of furs from North America and tea from China (as summarised in Chapter 1). However, the wider Rotch family had, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, held interests in an extensive array of vessels based on the east coast of America which were not curtailed by such restrictions.⁴ (See Figure 5.1 for an amalgamated Rotch family tree). This American arm of the family business was headed by Benjamin's grandfather Joseph (1704-1784) until his death then passed to Benjamin's father and uncle, then ultimately to his brother William. By the 1820s, with William Rotch Jnr. in charge of the family business, New Bedford whaling vessels were active in the North Pacific thus providing their crew the opportunity to collect North American artefacts, gut skin parkas being a commonly traded artefact, and supply their employers with such curiosities back on the American East Coast.⁵

³ Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry No. 393, January 4th1827

⁴ McDevitt J.L. (1986) *The House of Rotch: Massachusetts Whaling Merchants, 1734-1828.* New York: Garland Publishing Company, pp. 592-609

⁵ Whaleship captain David Walker of Groton, Connecticut collected a gut skin parka in 1858 that was worn to school by all three of his daughters. It is now in the Mystic Seaport Museum. https://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/intestine_raincoat/ (Accessed September 2021)

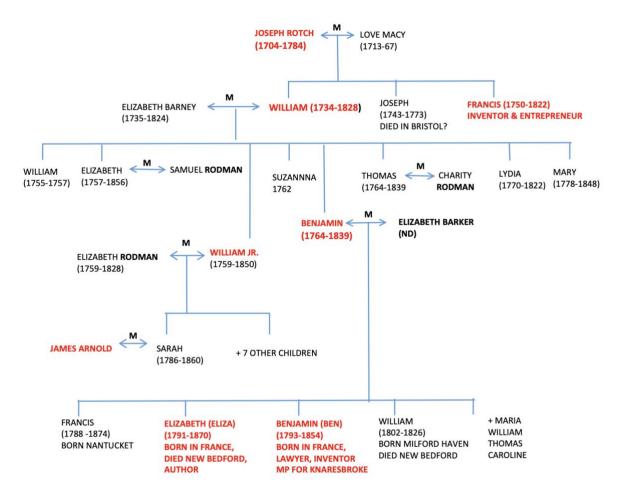


Figure 5.1 Abbreviated genealogy of the Rotch family. Individuals marked in red are mentioned in this text. Information amalgamated from McDevitt (1986) *The House of Rotch*, p.562 and from Arato and Eleey (1998) *Safely Moored at Last*, p.113

The chapter first introduces the contents of the Rotch collection at BMAG, identifying key pieces that highlight wider issues pertaining to trade in the Pacific and suggesting pathways for their acquisition by Benjamin Rotch (section 5.1). This is followed by an account of the Rotches' move to Milford Haven in Wales, after a hasty departure from Dunkirk due to the intense revolutionary upheaval in France (section 5.2). The third section considers the Rotches' role in Milford Haven polite society in the early 1800s, highlighting a growing spirit of natural philosophical enquiry connected to collecting and science (section 5.3). The final part of the chapter addresses the Rotches' subsequent move to Bristol, where the donations of Pacific artefacts were made to the Bristol museum in the 1820s, during the tenure of museum curators Johann Samuel Müller and Samuel Stutchbury (section 5.4).

5.1 The Benjamin Rotch collection

The Rotch collection at BMAG consists mainly of material culture from the islands of the South Pacific with the exception of Aleutian gut parka and an unidentified 'Indian' canoe. Of the remaining artefacts presented to the Bristol Institution by Benjamin Rotch, all originate from either the South Pacific Islands or New Zealand. His collection consists of weaponry, paddles, clothing, headrests, adzes, basketry, tapa cloth and items of ornamentation (see Figures 5.2-5.6 for examples). Over time several have become separated from their provenance and their original location is unidentified. Others were so sparsely recorded in the Bristol Institution's Donations Book that contemporary curators at BMAG have attempted a process of retrospective documentation in which artefacts with no provenance data are cross-referenced with descriptions, allowing the tentative identification of historical provenance by a process of elimination.⁶ This is a common endeavour within collections management, when descriptions such as "Indian Weapons" (No. 156, August 21st 1824), or "two finely carved Paddles and a Spear" (No. 347, May 4th 1826) offer little to go on.

Amongst Rotch's natural history specimens, which as previously mentioned are thought to have been destroyed when a bomb hit the museum on 24th November 1940,⁷ one of his earliest donations in 1824 was a swordfish bill. As discussed in Chapter 7, these were commonly found embedded in the hulls of whaling ships (see also Appendix 6). In addition Rotch is listed amongst others who donated a "variety of quadrupeds and birds" which were "preserved and added to the collection."⁸ Of these there is no further information. Non-ethnographic artefacts donated by Rotch all reference his links to the whaling trade either via their material (whalebone or whale ivory) or by their nautical utility with the exception of one artefact, a "finely illuminated missal" which Rotch donated in his acceptance letter on becoming an Associate Member of the Bristol Literary and Philosophical Society in 1825.⁹

⁶ Lisa Graves pers com, June 2018

⁷ See https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blog/flares-fires-and-destruction-the-air-raid-of-24-november-1940/ (Accessed May 2022)

⁸ Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry No. 331, n/d 1826

⁹ Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry No. 212, February 3rd 1825. Rotch's letter of acceptance, 9th February 1825. Letter book from Honorary Members of the Bristol Literary and Philosophical Society, BRO: 32079/148

Additional items include: a small tub, a model of a cannon, a mortar made from the jawbone of a whale & Sperm whale teeth, a double and a treble block made from spermaceti teeth.



Figure 5.2 Polynesian club, BMAG accession number: E1179. Image: author



Figure 5.3 Kiribati shark tooth dagger, BMAG accession number: Ea735. Image: author Figure 5.4 (right) Marshall Islands shell belt, BMAG accession number: E1203. Image: author



Figures 5.5 Wooden headrest, BMAG accession number: E1176. Image: author



Figure 5.6 Aleutian seal gut parka, BMAG accession number: E6182. Image: author

The Aleutian seal gut parka (Figure 5.6) is a potentially revealing artefact, especially in the context of Rotch's potential procurement networks. As discussed by textile historian Fran Reed, these highly waterproof garments were made by the Unangax people,¹⁰ from the intestines of sea mammals or bear and embellished with hair, fur, leather, yarn, cloth, feathers and beaks, and worn in kayaks, when tide pool collecting, or at dances and celebrations.¹¹ Reed has suggested that "from village to village different preparations, stitching methods and artistic styles are apparent and expressed in the embellishments that

¹⁰ The people of the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands prefer to call themselves Unangax rather than Aleut. Alaska Native Language Center. https://www.uaf.edu/anlc/resources/inuit_or_eskimo.php (accessed September 2021)

¹¹ Reed, F. (2008) Embellishments of the Alaska Native Gut Parka, *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings*. 127, p.1. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/127 (accessed May 2022)

define the region, the culture and the function of these beautiful outer garments."¹² Therefore, there is the potential to identify specific details of the parka's biography through further investigation of its design features.¹³ The lack of consistent description for this artefact would suggest that somewhere along the object's journey both its materiality and geographic provenance became confused. It was listed in the Bristol Institution's donations book as "a Surplice made of the Bowels of the Rein Deer from the Southwest Coast of America" in 1827.¹⁴ However, it was re-classified as seal gut and attributed to the Aleutian Islands in the early twentieth century when much of the collection was originally numbered.¹⁵

As Rotch donated his parka in 1827, only forty-nine years after Captain Cook surveyed these Islands on his third and final voyage, it is interesting less for its rarity as an exchange item (these were common exchange artefacts in the later nineteenth century) than its early collection date. According to Don Charles Foote, the extent of American whaling activity in the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean in what he describes as the early period of American contact (between 1820-1848) is unclear.¹⁶ He suggests that it "is highly probable that some [whale] ships operated in these waters, although most historians assume United States whalers first hunted off the Aleutian Islands in 1835 and the Kamchatka coast in 1843."¹⁷ However, as Bockstoce's extensive research on trading activities in and around the Bering Strait illustrates, Americans were trading (if not whaling) within this region far earlier than Foote suggests: "from about 1790 onwards American ships dominated the maritime fur trade via highly lucrative trade triangles carrying manufactured goods and rum from the north eastern states to the North West coast carrying furs from there to Canton and returning with Chinese products."¹⁸ Furthermore, an agreement was made between the Russian Tzar and an American whaling conglomerate which gave exclusive rights to conduct a whale fishery for 10 years beginning in 1821 on the eastern shores of Siberia, in return for selling the whale

¹² See Reed (2008) Embellishments of the Alaska Native Gut Parka, p.1

¹³ Unfortunately, COVID -19 restrictions prohibited this avenue of research being pursued further.

¹⁴ Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry No. 393, January 4th 1827

¹⁵ Lisa Graves pers com, June 2018

¹⁶ Foote, D.C. (1964) 'American Whalemen in Northwestern Arctic Alaska', Arctic Anthropology, 2(2), p.16

¹⁷ American whale ships whaled further and further to the north of the Aleutian Islands following the migratory pattern of the Pacific right and the Greenland (or Bowhead) whale. However, it was not until 1848 that American whalers broke through the Bering Strait into the Arctic Ocean. See Foote (1964) American Whalemen in Northwestern Arctic Alaska, p.16

¹⁸ Bockstoce, J.R. (2010) Furs and Frontiers in the Far North: The Contest among Native and Foreign Nations for the Bering Strait Fur Trade. New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, pp. 6-8

products to the Russians.¹⁹ Although the areas under discussion by Bockstoce are to the west and north of the Aleutian Islands, whalers and other traders would have to passed near, or through, the Aleutian Islands to reach these destinations, and there is no guarantee that the parka was collected *in situ*. Indeed, that artefacts such as Rotch's seal gut parka were traded from the North Pacific regions with American whalemen can be seen within Figure 5.7 which provides a view of the interior of the museum of the Nantucket Atheneum. Although not officially named as such till 1834, the Atheneum had its genesis in societies founded earlier in the century, including a small museum which was largely supplied by the Island's returning whalemen.²⁰ On the rear wall can be seen artefacts from the Pacific Northwest, an Aleutian gut parka similar to the example in Bristol, and a Haida cloak from British Columbia.²¹



Figure 5.7 Interior of the Atheneum museum, c.1881. Courtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association, NHA: P3030

¹⁹ The agreement was later nullified under suspicion of spying and illicit trading activities. Bockstoce (2010) Furs and Frontiers in the Far North, p.8

²⁰ https://www.nps.gov/places/nantucket-atheneum.htm

²¹ See Zilberstein, A. (2007). Objects of Distant Exchange: The Northwest Coast, Early America, and the Global Imagination. *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 64(3), pp.591-620. See also Richards, R. and Richards, M. (2000) *Pacific Artifacts Brought Home by American Whalemen: Pacific Islands Curiosities, Objects, Artifacts and Art in Museums in New England and Long Island: A Report*. New Bedford: New Bedford Whaling Museum

Evidence that vessels managed by the American arm of the Rotch business owned by Benjamin's father were active in the same latitudes as the Aleutian Islands as early as the late 1820s is found within the memoir of whaleman Horace Holden.²² Holden wrote that he went to sea on a New Bedford vessel "that had seen service in the Pacific already, having made two cruises as far as Nootka Sound, on Vancouver's Island."²³ This was in 1831 and the vessel was the *Mentor*, owned by Benjamin's nephew William Rodman Rotch (1788-1860).²⁴ This is not to suggest that Benjamin Rotch's Aleutian gut parka was definitively collected on a family vessel, but that Rotch vessels were frequenting the area. As found in Rhys and Margaret Richards' survey of Pacific collections in New England museums with a known whaling connection, it is incredibly hard to confirm a whaling provenance with any level of certainty.²⁵ Rotch's family whaling connection offers one plausible hypothesis as to how he came to own such artefacts though it must be acknowledged that it is one of innumerable procurement sources. For example, the gut parka could have been purchased commercially during Rotch's time in Britain or gifted from an acquaintance in France. It does, however, highlight the intersecting Atlantic networks in which Benjamin Rotch was firmly embedded by his familial and Quaker connections. With a family business empire of such geographic scope, it would be easy to tranship artefacts from around the world. Benjamin's brother, Thomas, who ran a successful general store in Hartford, Connecticut indicated that in the early nineteenth century luxury goods were being transported for his business on Rotch family vessels from Europe, suggesting trade both ways. This coincides with the years when Benjamin was residing in Milford Haven and offers one potential transhipment link.²⁶ As the work of Renny Stackpole identified, in 1803 four ships arrived in New Bedford from Europe, seven in 1804, and in 1805 and 1806 three arrived. In 1807, however, seven arrived.²⁷ Indeed, Stackpole further documents that annual voyages from Russia to New Bedford, which began in 1796 initiated by Benjamin's brother William Rotch Jnr., imported hemp for the Rotch ropemaking

²² Nootka Sound is at latitude 49° North, the Aleutian Islands run from 52° and 55° North.

²³ Holden, H., & Lyman, H. (1902). Recollections of Horace Holden. *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, 3(2), p,165

²⁴ The Mentor was wrecked on the Palau Islands in 1832 with Holden onboard. Information on ownership from https://whalinghistory.org/?s=AV09541 (Accessed September 2021)

²⁵ Richards and Richards (2000) Pacific Artifacts Brought Home

²⁶ Wittman, B.K. (2015) *Thomas and Charity Rotch: the Quaker experience of settlement in Ohio in the early republic, 1800-1824.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p.101

²⁷ Stackpole (1968) *Quaker merchants to the Old World*, p.42

business and sail cloth for the vessels.²⁸ In addition, these Russian voyages brought luxury goods such as linen and damask, pillows and feather beds, which were according to Stackpole in great demand in New Bedford.²⁹ William Rotch jnr. also took the opportunity to import live specimens from Russia, such as a species of large Russian goose, admitting "my curiosity induces a fondness for things that are rare."³⁰ From 1800 Rotch vessels were also importing cargos of indigo and tea from the Manilla in the Philippines further widening the scope of Rotch business connections. This brief case study thus highlights some of the extensive business and familial contacts Benjamin had at his disposal to aid in his collecting endeavours.

With the exception of the Aleutian gut parka, the only other artefact possibly from the North Pacific is described within the donations book as an "Indian Canoe, Outrigger, Paddles & Sail" donated in 1826.³¹ There is no indication if this description refers to a model or full-size craft. Additionally, the term 'Indian' which was also used to describe weaponry donated by Rotch that is demonstrably from the South Pacific Islands, adds to the confusion as its unclear to which region of the world, or peoples this archaic term refers to. It thus offers no firm indication of geographic provenance. However, there is evidence that Benjamin's son Benjamin Rotch Jnr. (henceforth Ben Rotch) was observed sailing in what was described as an "Indian Birch canoe" in the harbour at Milford Haven, providing the local population with an unusual display of indigenous seacraft. Referring to a period prior to 1819 (before Ben left for London to study Law) his sister Eliza stated he spent much time "endangering his life by hoisting a sail on an Indian Birch canoe and skimming over the haven to the astonishment of everyone who saw his small, frail bark."³² This reference to a birch canoe would suggest a North American provenance rather than a South Pacific one where birch bark is rarely used as a canoe building material. In addition, Eliza's description is of a navigable craft, therefore either she refers to a full-size model or a smaller version fit for sailing. Based on this description, I propose a North American provenance. However, as this artefact cannot be located within the collection, further investigation has proved impossible.

²⁸ Stackpole (1968) *Quaker merchants to the Old World*, pp.43-45

²⁹ Stackpole (1968) *Quaker merchants to the Old World*, p.44

³⁰ Stackpole (1968) *Quaker merchants to the Old World*, p.43

³¹ Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry No 347, May 4th 1826

³² Eliza Farrah (nee Rotch) quoted in Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, p.131

Of particular interest within the Rotch collection are a pair of Marquesan earplugs (*haakai*) donated by him to the Bristol Institution in 1824 (Figures 5.8a & b). These are ear ornaments worn by both men and women in the Marquesan Islands and made from a variety of materials including shell and wood or carved from a large sperm whale tooth.³³ *Haakai* were worn with the large disc in front of the ear and the curved spur passing through the lobe projecting behind the ear (see Figure 5.9 for an example). The ornament was held in place via a small stick passed through a hole drilled through the spur. On occasion the considerable weight of these ornaments was supported by a length of cordage passed over the top of the head and attached to the spurs.³⁴



Figures 5.8a 5.8b Marquesan earplugs (haakai), BMAG accession numbers E1189a and E1189b

³³ See, Van Santen, C. (2021) Nuku Hiva 1825: Ethnohistory of a Dutch- Marquesan Encounter and an Art-Historical Study of Marquesan Material Culture. PhD Thesis, Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas School of Art, Media and American Studies, University of East Anglia, p.170-173

³⁴ Kjellgren, E. (2007). Oceania: Art of the Pacific Islands in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. United States: Metropolitan Museum of Art, p.308

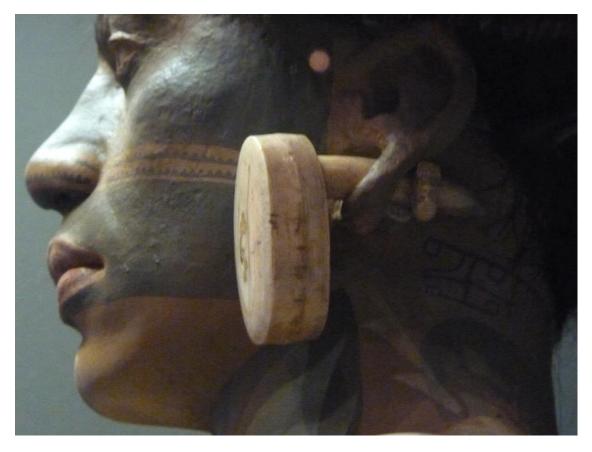


Figure 5.9 Detail of *Mannequin (Toa- Marquesan warrior)*, 1959. Plaster and paint, created by Gordon White, New Zealand. Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, 2019. Accession number: (FE012002) Image: author

On examining the *haakai* during a visit to BMAG stores in 2018 it became clear from the presence of the distinctive herringbone pattern known as Schrager lines (shown in Figure 5.10) that the material used to carve these earplugs was not the traditionally used material of sperm whale ivory, but elephant ivory. This identification was provisionally endorsed by Rhian Rowson, Natural Sciences Curator at BMAG, and then subsequently confirmed by ivory specialist, Dr Sonia O'Connor of the Archaeological and Forensic Sciences department at the University of Bradford.³⁵

³⁵ Lisa Graves and Rhian Rowson, pers com, April 2019. Sonia O'Connor, pers com April 2019



Figure 5.10 Reverse detail of E1189a, showing Schreger lines which are unique to elephant and mammoth ivory. Image: author

In the pre-contact era, sperm whale teeth could only be obtained from strandings around the Marquesan Islands, making whale ivory a highly-valued material used for a range of body ornamentation such as necklaces and ear ornaments.³⁶ During the early contact period (defined by Marquesan specialist Carol Ivory as between 1774-1821), visiting traders and whalemen brought with them a large quantity of whale's teeth.³⁷ Despite this, they remained a valuable commodity to the Marquesan Islanders as evidenced by comments made by Captain David Porter, the American naval officer and commander of the USS Essex. When visiting the islands in 1813 Porter observed "no jewel however valuable is half so much esteemed in Europe or America as is a whale's tooth here."³⁸ The influx of whale's teeth and steel carving tools into the Marquesan Islands in the early nineteenth century led to stylistic

³⁶ Carol Ivory in Kjellgren (2007) *Oceania*, p.308

³⁷ Ivory identifies 1774-1821 as the first continuous period of contact with Europeans. See Ivory C. (1990) Marquesan Art in the Early Contact Period, 1774-1821. PhD Thesis, University of Washington, Seattle

³⁸ Porter quoted in Kjellgren (2007) *Oceania*, p.308

developments in *haakai* design such as the inclusion of the small human figures (*tiki*) on the ear spur.³⁹ Prior to Porter's visit no Marquesan ear ornaments bearing the *tiki* design had been documented, or collected.⁴⁰ Therefore the creation of Rotch's ear ornaments can be dated to the period between 1813, the date of Porter's visit, and 1824, the date of their donation to the Bristol Institution.

The writings of explorer-trader Camille de Roquefeuil (1781-1831) in his *Voyage around the World in 1816 – 1819* offer some explanation as to the curious presence of elephant ivory in the Marquesan Islands in the early 1800s.⁴¹ Roquefeuil discussed the case of Captain Rogers, an American trader who when trading for sandalwood in 1810, attempted to trick the Marquesans by substituting elephant ivory as a trade commodity instead of whale's teeth. On his initial visit Captain Rogers "procured above 260 tonnes [of sandalwood] in exchange for goods [..] composed of hatchets and other utensils, and some whale's teeth which happened to be onboard one of which was then worth three or four tonnes."⁴² After making a significant profit in China Rogers returned to the Marquesas: "this time he had [elephant] ivory which he fashioned on board into the form of whales teeth not having been able to procure them in sufficient quantities. This fraud produced him a large profit, but the natives soon discovered it and cannot now be deceived by it."⁴³ Highlighting the perceived relative importance of the two materials to the Marquesans, Captain Porter wrote in his narrative that "[Elephant] Ivory is worn by the lower and poorer classes, made into the form of whales' teeth, and as ear ornaments, while the whales' teeth [sic] is worn only by persons of rank and wealth."⁴⁴

This substitution of materials within Pacific material culture is in no way unique. Recent work by PhD researcher Caroline Van Santen has identified Marquesan ear ornaments made from elephant ivory in collections in America and Germany that, like Rotch's ear ornaments in BMAG, have until now been misidentified as sperm whale ivory.⁴⁵ The use of elephant and

³⁹ Kjellgren (2007) *Oceania*, p.308

⁴⁰ Kjellgren (2007) *Oceania*, p.308

⁴¹ I am grateful to PhD researcher Caroline Van Santen for bringing this example to my notice and for sharing her research with me.

 ⁴² Roquefeuil, C. de (1981) Voyage Around the World, 1816-1819, and Trading for Sea Otter Fur on the Northwest Coast of America. Fairfield, Wash: Ye Galleon Press, p.52-53

⁴³ Roquefeuil (1981) *Voyage around the world,* p.52-53

⁴⁴ Porter quoted in Van Santen (2021) Nuku Hiva 1825, p.172

⁴⁵ Van Santen (2021) *Nuku Hiva 1825,* p.192

walrus ivory as a substitute has also been observed in certain Hawaiian artefacts, such as the example of a whale tooth necklace (Lei niho palaoa) in the New Bedford Whaling Museum made of elephant ivory, or another Lei niho palaoa made of walrus ivory in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. The perceived rarity of such objects can be accounted for in two ways. Firstly, whalers and traders flooded the Islands with sperm whale teeth as a trade commodity in the early nineteenth century; with high status whale ivory now abundant, it was almost universally used.⁴⁶ Secondly, as discussed by Schuyler Cammann, materials have been misidentified within collections documentation due to an assumption that the material used in the creation of such artefacts was always sperm whale ivory.⁴⁷ Although Cammann was writing in the early 1950s his comments are still relevant today as more artefacts and their materials are correctly identified. This begs the question of how many other supposed whale teeth artifacts in national and international museum collections are in fact made from substitute ivories such as elephant or walrus. Carol Ivory has written about the trade in fakes, forgeries and artefacts made specifically for trade from the Marquesas, albeit in the latter part of the nineteenth century. She cites examples of Marquesan artefacts made for trade such as stilt steps and stone pounders made en masse in Germany from Marquesan stone shipped as ballast by a German trading company. These were carved to shape then returned the Islands to be finished off in the traditional Marquesan manner for sale as curios.⁴⁸ However, there is no suggestion, or indeed evidence, that the *haakai* in BMAG stores were created to deceive, only that these ear ornaments date from a key period in cultural contact between Euro-Americans and Marquesan Islanders and represent a very early adaptation in the use of traditional materials. How they actually arrived in Britain is unknown. However it is interesting to note that the *Montezuma* and the *New Zealand*, two of the twelve British whaling vessels captured by Captain Porter off the Galapagos Islands during the War of 1812, were owned by Benjamin Rotch.⁴⁹ The crew and the captain of the *Montezuma*, David Baxter, a Nantucketer who had emigrated to Milford Haven with Rotch, were taken aboard the USS *Essex* as prisoners.⁵⁰ At this point they were offered the chance to join the crew of the *Essex*

⁴⁶ Kjellgren (2007) *Oceania*, p.318

⁴⁷ Cammann, S. (1954) 'Notes on Ivory in Hawaii', *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 63(2), pp. 133–140

⁴⁸ Ivory, C. (2012) 'Buyer Beware: Fakes, Forgeries, Reproductions, and Art for Sale from the Marquesas Island'. Paper delivered at the De Young Museum, San Francisco, 2012

⁴⁹ Hughes, B. (2016). In Pursuit of the Essex: Heroism & Hubris on the High Seas in the War of 1812. United Kingdom: Pen & Sword Books, p.93

⁵⁰ Hughes (2016) *In Pursuit of the Essex*, p.93

and at least three whalemen from the *Montezuma* agreed, shortly before the *Essex* sailed to the Marquesas Islands.⁵¹ The *Montezuma* is thought to have been burnt in Valparaiso, although in an alternative version of events it was sold to the Chilian navy.⁵²

5.2 The Rotches from Dunkirk to Milford Haven

As a whaleship owner rather than a whaleman, there is no evidence Benjamin Rotch ever travelled to the Pacific himself. This is not to suggest he was a mere armchair traveller: he lived and worked in America, France, Wales and London and was embedded within a familial and business network that stretched across the Atlantic world.⁵³ After the American Revolution, significant numbers of whalemen and whaleship owners from Nantucket, a small island off the American East coast, relocated with their families to Dartmouth in Nova Scotia, to the French port of Dunkirk, and ultimately to Britain to establish new whaling ventures lured by generous government incentives.⁵⁴ Nantucket's neutral status had led to blockades, near starvation due to the inability to land provisions, and the virtual destruction of the whaling fleet which was the island's economic mainstay.⁵⁵ Therefore, in 1785 Benjamin Rotch travelled to England with his father William, a whaling merchant and spermaceti-candle manufacturer of Nantucket, to petition the British government for favourable terms on which to relocate the family whaling concern.⁵⁶

An initially favourable meeting between the Rotches and Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Pitt, was followed by many months of protracted negotiations. By the time the British government had decided to agree the terms and conditions, the French government had beaten them to it.⁵⁷ They offered a favourable deal to the Rotches for them to settle in

⁵¹ Hughes (2016) *In Pursuit of the Essex*, p.94

⁵² Dolin suggests the Montezuma was burnt however Hughes suggests she was sold. See Dolin, E.J. (2008) Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America. United Kingdom: W. W. Norton, p.200. Hughes (2016) In Pursuit of the Essex, p. 225

See McDevitt J.L. (1986) *The House of Rotch: Massachusetts Whaling Merchants, 1734-1828*. New York: Garland Publishing Company

 ⁵⁴ Jones, A. (1901) William Rotch of Nantucket. Philadelphia: The American Friend Publishing Company, p.4.
 See also, Stackpole, E. A. (1972) Whales and Destiny: The Rivalry Between America, France, and Britain for Control of the Southern Whale Fishery, 1785-1825. University of Massachusetts Press, pp.32-35

⁵⁵ Jones (1901) William Rotch, pp.4-6

⁵⁶ The candle factory belonging to the Rotch family now houses the Whaling Museum of the Nantucket Historical Association

⁵⁷ Rotch, W. (1916) *Memorandum Written by William Rotch in the Eightieth Year of his Age*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co, pp.38-45

Dunkirk.⁵⁸ The Rotches returned to America in 1786 to settle their affairs and prepare. Benjamin returned to France a year later to oversee the fledgling whaling fleet of just two vessels.⁵⁹ When William Rotch returned to France four years later in 1790, accompanied by his wife and daughters and Benjamin's wife and child, the number of vessels under their control had risen to fifty under Benjamin's astute leadership.⁶⁰ Benjamin remained in France with his wife and children until 1795-6, living through the highly politically unstable period of the French Revolution. William Rotch had already removed his wife and daughters to England and thence to America in 1793, leaving in such a hurry many of his business papers were lost.⁶¹ Benjamin Rotch along with Elizabeth and the children sailed for England soon after,⁶² Benjamin having ordered all his ships but one to return to New Bedford. Into the remaining vessel, ostensibly bound also for America, he loaded his family and his valuables and sailed to England. Bearing in mind the febrile atmosphere at the time one assumes that the collecting and transportation of curios was not a priority, although Rotch's daughter Eliza hinted that the family left with their "valuables" and that goods were smuggled out on her father's ship but failed to offer any specific details.⁶³ An extended court case saw the family settle in London for the next five years where they maintained an active social life within English high society, both Quaker and secular. These included philanthropists, painters such as Benjamin West, historical painter to George III and President of the Royal Academy, poets, and authors.64

When the British government realised that its short-sightedness in failing to settle the Rotches in Britain in 1785 had benefitted its neighbour France, it set about inducing those Nantucket whalemen previously settled in Nova Scotia to move to Milford in Wales.⁶⁵ At the invitation of Sir Charles Greville (1749–1809), who, according to Eliza Rotch, cultivated her father's acquaintance "very assiduously", Benjamin travelled to west Wales to consider joining the

⁵⁸ Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, pp.189-193

⁵⁹ See, Rotch (1916) *Memorandum*

See, Rotch (1916) Memorandum, p.52
 Jones (1901) William Rotch of Nantucket, p.14

⁶¹ <u>https://nha.org/research/nantucket-history/history-topics/adamss-revenge/ (Accessed July 2021)</u>

⁶² For the date of Rotch's coming to London, see McKay, K.D. (1996) *The Rotches of Castle Hall*. Milford Haven: Gulf Oil, pp.41-42

⁶³ Farrar, J. (1866) *My Life's Romance, or Recollections of 70 Years.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, p.20

⁶⁴ Farrar (1866) *My Life's Romance*, pp.23-32

⁶⁵ See Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, pp.189-193 for Lord Hawkesbury's obstinate stance on this.

fledgling whaling community at Milford Haven.⁶⁶ This was a venture championed by two men in power, Sir Charles Greville (1749–1809), and his uncle Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803). Hamilton owned the manor of Hubberston, overlooking the harbour of Milford Haven, his nephew was his land agent and heir. It was Greville's vision supported by his uncle, to develop the area as a whaling port.⁶⁷ The large community that had moved to Nova Scotia had failed to flourish, and Greville petitioned the government to relocate them to Milford Haven. Enticed by generous resettlement payments many of these Nantucket whalemen and their families moved from Nova Scotia to Milford Haven in 1792.⁶⁸ These included the Starbucks, Folgers, Bunkers and Grieves, all Nantucket names familiar to the Rotches. Therefore, by the time Benjamin Rotch agreed to relocate with his family at the close of the century, there was already a fledgling town with warehouses and a custom house and most importantly a Quaker community of friends and relatives waiting to receive them.⁶⁹

5.3 Natural philosophy and genteel society in Milford Haven

The main source of information on Benjamin Rotch's time in Milford Haven comes from a seldom heard voice within this thesis, that of a woman. Elizabeth (Eliza) Farrar, nee Rotch, was the daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth born in 1791 in France. Eliza authored *Memoirs of the life of Elizabeth Rotch* in 1861 and *My life's romance, or recollections of 70 years*, published in 1865.⁷⁰ She described her father as having a "ready flow of conversation, his cordial manner and generous heart won him many friends, whilst he was always seeking fresh acquisitions of useful knowledge." Furthermore, he had a great love of mechanics and manufacturing inspecting "with interest all the manufacturers that came in his way" including the mines and foundries of Wales.⁷¹ In the early 1800s Rotch bought an extensive house set in one hundred and eighty acres in Milford Haven called Castle Hall formerly belonging to the

⁶⁶ Bullard (1947) The Rotches, p.115 & p.338-9

⁶⁷ See, Barton Follini, M. (2006) 'A Quaker Odyssey: The Migration of Quaker Whalers from Nantucket, Massachusett to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and Milford Haven, Wales', *Canadian Quaker History Journal*, 71, pp.8-9. Sir William Hamilton was the husband of Admiral Lord Nelson's lover Emma Hamilton. Emma had been introduced to Hamilton by his nephew, Sir Charles Greville who at the time was also her lover.

⁶⁸ These payments are outlined in a document in the British Library, MS Add.38227. See also, Allen R, (2010) Nantucket quakers and the Milford Haven whaling industry, c. 1791–1821, *Quaker Studies, 15.1* pp.6-31

⁶⁹ The date of 1801 is given by Eliza Rotch in Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, p.341. For Milford Haven see Griffith, S. (1990) *A History of Quakers in Pembrokeshire*. Milford Haven: Milford Haven Preparative Meeting of the Society of Friends.

⁷⁰ Eliza Farrar also wrote extensively for children and a manual of advice, *The Young Lady's Friend* (1836)

⁷¹ Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, p.113, p.335

Governor of Bengal (see Figure 5.11).⁷² He immediately began extending and landscaping the extensive grounds to create a home that both befitted and asserted their upper-class status.

Seven acres of ornamental grounds and gardens gave my father ample scope for his love of improving and embellishing the place, he made ugly slopes into pretty terraces, formed new land in front of the house, built an orangery eighty feet long and twenty feet high, entirely of iron and glass, and filled it with the finest orange, lemon, and citrus trees from a celebrated orangery in a distant country, sold on the death of the owner. He made pineries too, three houses, hot, hotter, and hottest, in which three hundred fine large pine-apples were produced in one year. The climate was very mild. We had monthly roses blooming out of doors all winter, and a hedge of laurestine, which enclosed a rose garden, was always in full bloom in February.

All these improvements, with the high cultivation of English gardening, not usually practised in Wales, made Castle Hall a showpiece. The orangery and pinery were a great novelty in Pembrokeshire and I remember being very tired of showing them to our visitors.⁷³



Figure 5.11 View of Castle Pill and Castle Hall, 1881. Oil on canvas by Vivian Crome (1842–c.1926) Scolton Manor Museum. Accession number: SCO.FA.Op.194 © Pembrokeshire County Council's Museums Service

⁷² McKay, K. D. (1989) A Vision of Greatness: The History of Milford 1790-1990. Milford Haven: Brace Harvatt Associates in association with Gulf Oil Great Britain, p.105

⁷³ Farrar (1866) My Life's Romance, p.53

The diary of Abial Coleman Folger, wife of whaling captain Timothy Folger (1732–1814),⁷⁴ identifies Castle Hall as the central nexus of the Milford Haven whaleship owner community used for both business and pleasure.⁷⁵ Abial kept her diary from 1806 and 1811 and along with her husband were regular visitors to Castle Hall. She writes about receiving pineapples as a gift from Rotch on more than one occasion and collecting seeds from the estate for planting, although she does not specify what variety of plant.⁷⁶ Josephine Teakle states in her work on the Irish poet, Mary Birkett who visited the Rotches at Castle Hall, that he imported botanical specimens, and had "established an arboretum with trees brought in his ships" [my emphasis].⁷⁷ However, an in-depth review of the gardens at Castle Hall carried out by Milford Haven Community Council [n/d] rather romantically suggests that the Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) native to North America, might have been "planted by the pond (as it then was) by Rotch to remind the family of home."⁷⁸ More specifically, historian Maida Barton Follini wrote "He assigned his whaling captains the task of bringing home from the South Seas exotic trees bearing flowers and fruit rare in England" [my emphasis].⁷⁹ Unfortunately, neither Teakle or Follini state a source for this information, and no Customs returns that might shine a light on imports have been found for Milford Haven before the year 1827.⁸⁰

Rotch's purchase of citrus trees from a 'celebrated orangery' and the act of building three hot houses for growing pineapples (a rare delicacy) were all acts of conspicuous cosmopolitanism, particularly from a Quaker. As pineapples could only be grown in a tropical climate and each plant takes two years to bear only one fruit, their cultivation on the Rotch estate signified a significant investment in time and money. In addition, they indicate an appreciation on Rotch's behalf of social status markers of the new upper classes, people newly risen up from

⁷⁴ Whaleship captain Timothy Folger revealed the existence of the Gulf Stream to his relative Benjamin Franklin, see section 8.1

⁷⁵ I am grateful to David Doorman of the Milford Haven Society of Friends for supplying me with a transcript of Folger's diary.

⁷⁶ Transcript of the Diary of Abial Coleman Folger. 24 December 1806 – 22 March 1811, [n/p]. Pineapples are mentioned on 19th January 1809 & 23rd November 1809. Seed collection on 1st April 1810

⁷⁷ Teakle, J. (2004) The Works of Mary Birkett 1774-1817, Originally Collected by her Son Nathaniel Card in 1834. An Edited Transcription with an Introduction to her Life and Works in Two Volumes. PhD Thesis. University of Gloucestershire, p.108

⁷⁸ Anon (no date a) Castle Hall, Ref no. PGW (Dy) 16 (PEM), p.9 Available at: https://coflein.gov.uk/media/16/935/cpg134.pdf (Accessed May 2021)

⁷⁹ Barton Follini (2006) A Quaker Odyssey, p.17

⁸⁰ For attempts to trace early shipping records for Milford Haven see Clayton J.M (2007) 'Nantucket Whalers in Milford Haven, Wales', *Historic Nantucket*, 56(1), p.7

the merchant middle class. Such acts were an integral part of constructing an identity as part of the wealthy landed gentry.⁸¹ They also indicate he was immersed in trade networks not restricted to whaling. As one contemporary author put it, Rotch beautified the house and grounds with all the "necessary appendages of fashionable luxury and taste."⁸² It is surely likely that Castle Hall with its landscaped gardens and botanical specimens would also have held a collection of curiosities such as the one owned by Rotch's father and uncle in New Bedford. Whether Rotch displayed his collection at Castle Hall is currently unclear. However, the presence of various faded labels upon some of the weaponry thought to be in Rotch's hand might suggest this. In one instance these offer comparisons between certain types of war club suggesting an early interest in comparative ethnography.

The Rotch family enjoyed the life of high society, mixing with both local aristocracy and the elite of the country towns. Passing travellers both American and British were always welcome and as Eliza put it, "every Quaker made our house his home."⁸³ She further stated that her father's hospitality "knew no bounds, and our house was filled with the greatest variety of visitors. For months together we never sat down to a meal alone." The Rotch family were present at the visit of Admiral Lord Nelson and his lover, Lady Hamilton, to Milford Haven in 1802 which apparently scandalised Mrs Rotch. The fact that Lady Hamilton, refusing to be snubbed, sought out Elizabeth Rotch at Castle Hall further confirms that the Rotches were people of some standing within the community.⁸⁴ After all, the success of Sir William Hamilton's estates and the thriving town of Milford Haven were largely down to Benjamin Rotch's endeavours. According to Eliza, it was due to her father that "coopers, and sail makers, ship carpenters, and all the other tradesmen necessary to my father's business, came and settled in Milford on the prospect of the whale fishery being carried on from that port."⁸⁵

⁸¹ For an overview of this phenomena see Finn, M. and Smith, K. (eds) (2018) *The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857*. London: UCL Press. For a specific Welsh example see Davies, J.E. (2019) *The Changing Fortunes of a British Aristocratic Family, 1689-1976: The Campbells of Cawdor and their Welsh Estates*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, (particularly Chapter 8 for a discussion on gardens and pineapples as social markers)

⁸² Fenton R, (1811) An Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire. London: Longman Hurst Rees Orme, p. 192. The presence of a grotto and species of North American tree have also been attributed to Rotch. See, Anon (no date a) Castle Hall, Ref no. PGW (Dy) 16 (PEM)

⁸³ Farrar (1865) *My life's romance,* p.55

⁸⁴ Farrar (1865) *My life's romance,* p.50-51

⁸⁵ Farrar (1865) *My life's romance,* p.39

a site of serious scientific enquiry. Greville was a Fellow of both the Royal Society and the Linnean Society, a keen collector of minerals and gems and with his close friend Sir Joseph Banks, a founding member of the Royal Horticultural Society in 1804.⁸⁶

The antiquary and historian Richard Fenton noted in his 1811 publication, *An Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire* that

Milford has now to boast of an observatory furnished with a most extensive apparatus of instruments by the first makers, [...] To superintend this department, and give full effect to its application, Mr Firminger, eight years sole assistant to Doctor Maskelyne, has been appointed to the place of astronomer, so that we may augur the most beneficial effects from such a design.⁸⁷

Nevil Maskelyne FRS (1732-1811) was a Commissioner of Longitude and Astronomer Royal from 1765 - 1811.⁸⁸ He was heavily involved in sea trials to establish an accurate method for estimating a ship's longitudinal coordinate at sea. In 1763 he travelled to Barbados at the behest of the Board of Longitude to test potential methods, including that of lunar distances.⁸⁹ Shortly after his return he published the first volume of the *Nautical Almanac* which ran from 1766 until his death. The *Almanac* contained the accurate tables of the moon's predicted positions, information required for the lunar distance method to work.⁹⁰ These tables were assembled by Maskelyne and "a team of human 'computers' - assistants versed in arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry and observational acuity".⁹¹ Such assistants endured a lonely, repetitive and sleep-deprived life at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, rising at all hours to make astronomical observations and performing complex astronomical calculations. John Pond, Maskelyne's successor as Astronomer Royal made the requirements clear:

I want indefatigable hard working & above all obedient drudges ... men who will be contented to pass their day in using their hands & eye in the mechanical act of observing & the remainder of it in the dull process of calculation.

⁸⁶ For his mineral collecting see, Wilson, W.E. (1994) 'Charles Greville (1749-1809)', *The Mineralogical Record*, 25(6), p. 75 For his role in the foundation of the RHS see Fletcher, H.R. (1969) *The Story of the Royal Horticultural Society*, 1804-1968. London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Horticultural Society

⁸⁷ Fenton (1811) An Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire, p.186

⁸⁸ Howse, D. (2009) 'Maskelyne, Nevil (1732–1811), astronomer and mathematician' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

⁸⁹ http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/ES-LON-00026/1 (Accessed June 2021)

⁹⁰ http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/ES-LON-00024/1 (Accessed June 2021)

⁹¹ Lewis-Jones, H. (2018) 'Explorers at Sea: Centuries of Science Afloat', Nature, 564(7736), p.341

Thomas Firminger was one such assistant. Clearly, he excelled as he stayed for over seven years (1799-1807) making him of the longest employed assistants.⁹²

The observatory to which Fenton referred was the Hakin Observatory just outside Milford Haven. It was central to a plan by Greville to establish a college to teach mathematics and navigation to naval officers. Yet despite Greville's best efforts, the proposed training college came to nought and the "extensive apparatus of instruments" as described by Fenton arrived at the docks but were never installed in the observatory.⁹³ Had they been they would have created the first astronomical observatory in Wales.⁹⁴ Greville died in 1809 and the project was abandoned soon after.⁹⁵ And contradicting Fenton's statement above, McKay suggests that Firminger never actually took up his appointment.⁹⁶ It possible that he was selected because of his experience with Maskelyne, and to instruct students in lunar-distance methodology. However, by the time the Observatory was (potentially) operational, the method had been overtaken by technical innovations in marine chronometers.

While Greville had engaged the finest instrument makers for his Observatory, a few years later Ben Rotch was making and using his own instruments at Castle Hall. His sister related how he was much

engaged in experiments in natural philosophy. He had a great deal of apparatus given him in exchange for a mathematical instrument which he invented to enable us to make the parallel of latitude on our school maps (called a cyclograph) by which a portion of the largest circle may be drawn without having its radius.⁹⁷

While the person to whom Ben sold his invention is unknown, the invention of the cyclograph, "an instrument for describing the arcs of circles that have too large a curvature for compasses", is generally attributed to Scottish architect and mathematician Peter Nicholson

⁹² Firminger's replacement stayed for 28 years, the shortest length of time an assistant lasted in the role was 14 days. Croarken, M. (2003). Astronomical Labourers: Maskelyne's Assistants at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, 1765-1811. Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London, 57(3), pp.285-298. See Table 1, List of Nevil Maskelyne's assistants at Greenwich, for lengths of time assistants were employed.

⁹³ McKay (1996) The Rotches of Castle Hall, p.58

⁹⁴ As it was the next to be built in Wales was the Penllergare Observatory in 1851 near Swansea. See Birks, J.L. (2005) 'The Penllergare Observatory, The Antiquarian Astronomer', *Journal of the Society for the History of Astronomy*, (2), pp. 3–8. In an interesting twist, the daughter of John Dillwyn Llewely, the observatory's creator, married the grandson of Astronomer Royal Nevil Maskelyne.

⁹⁵ https://biography.wales/article/s-GREV-FRA-1749

⁹⁶ McKay (1996) The Rotches of Castle Hall, p.58

⁹⁷ Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, p.131

c.1815.⁹⁸ Ben's invention can be loosely dated by Eliza's assertion that their brother Francis, had "entered his father's counting house and assisted him in the whaling business." Francis left for America in 1817, placing the date of Ben's invention some time prior to this date.⁹⁹ Therefore, it is possible Ben actually invented the first cyclograph, or unbeknownst to him re-invented a (very) newly invented product. Either way, it indicates the inventiveness of this young man engaging in 'amateur' natural philosophical experiments and the real-world practical application of the results. Within Castle Hall the spirit of enquiry was truly alive. As Eliza relates

Our school room in the summer house became the scene of his experiments, and the brass handle of the door was often charged with electricity to startle someone of the family or alarm a countryman. There he planned and executed his famous flying machine, at which I assisted by making the silken wings.¹⁰⁰

It is pertinent that during the same era, parallel commitments to country houses and the arts of improvement were in evidence across the Atlantic, where the Rotch family was building significant, grand properties in New Bedford.¹⁰¹ As one visitor noted,

The fortunes suddenly made at this place have poured themselves out upon the surface in the shape of Houses and grounds. We were taken to see the street which has lately risen like magic and which presents more noble looking mansions than any other in this Country.¹⁰²

According to Herman Melville, "all these brave houses and flowery gardens came from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans", confirming the wealth that whaling had brought to the town.¹⁰³ They included those of James Arnold (1781–1868), a Rotch relative and a successful merchant who in 1821 was creating a "great estate" in a manner "after the English type". Arnold married Benjamin's niece Sarah and was also business partner to his brother William Rotch Jr. Sharing significant similarities with the gardens at Castle Hall, his eleven-acre garden estate included "two graperies and a greenhouse [...,] a parterre with flower beds in fancy

⁹⁸ Nicholson, P., Varley, C. and Fulton, H. (1815) 'Papers in Polite Arts', *Transactions of the Society, Instituted at London, for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, 33(8), pp. 69–86

⁹⁹ Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, p.131, p.138

¹⁰⁰ Bullard (1947) The Rotches, p.131

¹⁰¹ McDevitt (1986) *The House of Rotch*, p.525. See https://jamesarnoldmansion.org/mansion (accessed September 2021)

¹⁰² Diary of Charles Francis Adams, Vol 6, Saturday 19th 1835. https://bit.ly/2Nct6yZ (accessed January 2021) Charles Francis Adams was the son of John Quincy Adams.

¹⁰³ Herman Melville quoted in McDevitt (1986) *The House of Rotch,* p.525

pattern" and a fruit garden with peach trees trained on trellises. In addition, there was a grotto decorated with a mosaic of shells by Mrs Arnold (Rotch's niece) and a maze that replicated the design at Hampton Court.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the extensive garden, in later years the house itself drew attention from such luminaries as John Quincy Adams who visited in September 1835. The former President remarked that the Arnold house was "graceful and comfortable, and furnished with elegance, and at great cost. It is now embellished with many articles of exquisite luxury from Italy, so that it is like a second princely palace."¹⁰⁵ A Rotch relative related her experiences of visiting the house as a young girl stating that "in the south wing was a room called 'the cabinet,' surrounded with mahogany cases filled with shells," adding that it was a "rather dark and awesome room."¹⁰⁶

From the above, it would seem that the Rotch family on both sides of the Atlantic were embracing what historian Zephaniah W. Pease described as "tendencies toward extravagance" during the early nineteenth century. He suggests that the younger generation of Rotches were enjoying a worldlier upbringing than that of their parents, citing the example of Benjamin and his father's expatriate years in France and Wales, arguing that this was where they developed a taste for the trappings of wealth. Pease suggests these trappings reflected a lifestyle far from the Quaker ideals of simplicity and illustrates the point by quoting Josiah Quincy, American politician and academic who, writing in his journal in 1825, stated "the picture presented by the venerable William Rotch [Benjamin's father][...] standing in between his son and his grandson, the elder gentlemen being in their Quaker dresses and the youngest in the fashionable costume of the day."¹⁰⁷ Josiah Quincy was a founding member of the American Antiquarian Society (1812) and was at the time of his visit Mayor of Boston. That politicians such as Quincy Adams and Josiah Quincy, well-connected individuals with antiquarian interests, were visiting the Rotches in New Bedford, illustrates the circles of influence within which the extended family moved in the new Republic.¹⁰⁸ Arato and Eleey

¹⁰⁴ Pease, Z.W. (1924) 'The Arnold Mansion and its Traditions', *Old Dartmouth Society Historical Sketches*, 52(7), n/p. On Arnold's death in 1868 he left a significant bequest that led to the creation of the Arnold Arboretum. Rotch's niece was Sarah Rotch Arnold (1786–1860)

¹⁰⁵ John Quincy Adams quoted in Pease (1924) The Arnold Mansion, n/p. See also, Crapo, W.W. (1919) Extracts from Diaries of John Quincy Adams and Charles Francis Adams, Relating to Visits to Nantucket and New Bedford, Old Dartmouth Historical Society, Historical Sketches, No. 47, pp. 12–21.

 $^{^{\}rm 106}\,$ Miss Stone quoted in Pease (1924) The Arnold Mansion, n/p.

 $^{^{\}rm 107}\,$ Josiah Quincy quoted in Pease (1924) The Arnold Mansion, n/p

¹⁰⁸ John Quincy Adams was also a member of the American Antiquarian Society

suggest that the ostentatious living displayed within the Rotch family may relate to a rift in the Quaker community of New Bedford. This was caused by the evangelical 'New Light' movement which "stressed theological doctrine, the infallibility of scripture, and the centrality of Christ's mission," whereas traditional Quakers (the Old Lights) followed the 'inner light' of religious experience.¹⁰⁹ This theological clash caused significant discord amongst the Society of Friends, causing the defection of many members of the New Bedford community including members of the Rotch-Rodman family.¹¹⁰ Benjamin Rotch himself had already resigned from the Society in 1813 over the Friends refusal to pay tithes to the Anglican church, therefore breaking the law.¹¹¹ This move away from strict Quakerism enabled the wider family to break from the strict intercommunity (and interfamilial) discipline of previous years. In 1819 Benjamin, albeit with a significant amount of convincing, allowed his son Ben to attend university and study Law, two practices barred to Quakers.¹¹²

Benjamin Rotch's genteel life in Milford Haven came to an abrupt end when he went bankrupt in 1814. He had stockpiled oil in London during the French/ English War of 1812 until he felt it had reached its peak value when he instructed his agent to sell. However, his agent ignored his instructions thinking the price would rise further and when the war ended abruptly, the price plummeted, sending Rotch into bankruptcy. This necessitated the selling of Castle Hall and all but one of his whaling vessels. Castle Hall was run by bailiffs whilst the family lived there under severely reduced circumstances until it was sold in 1819. At this point the family moved to more modest accommodation in Bath, during which period Eliza became extremely ill and was cared for by Mrs Enderby in London. After recovering Eliza went to stay with the Enderbys in London for an extended period, occasionally joined by her mother.¹¹³ After settling with his creditors, Benjamin Rotch visited New Bedford in both 1820 and 1821 (the same period his relative James Arnold was creating his extensive gardens) with what has been described as "small menagerie" of animals. These included several flying and fox squirrels,

 ¹⁰⁹ Arato & Eleey (1998) Safely Moored at Last, Note 105, p.66. See also Crabtree, S. (2015) Holy Nation: The Transatlantic Quaker Ministry in an Age of Revolution. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

¹¹⁰ Arato & Eleey (1998) Safely Moored at Last, note 105, p.66

¹¹¹ Teakle (2004) The Works of Mary Birkett, Vol 1, p.115 and Griffith (1990) A History of Quakers in Pembrokeshire, p.24

¹¹² See Turnbull, R. (2014) *Quaker Capitalism, Lessons for today*. Oxford: Centre for Enterprise, Markets and Ethics, pp.15-18 for restriction on Quakers in civic and professional life.

¹¹³ Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, pp.120-122

and two Llama from Peru.¹¹⁴ Where these animals were destined for has not been ascertained. Yet the incident does speak to the breadth of Rotch's collecting practices and his possible role in procuring specimens for others. This begs the question what happened to the Rotch family collection of curios during this difficult time of transition. As the family relocated to Bath, might some of it have been donated to a society in the city? There is no evidence of this: the Bath Literary and Scientific Institution was not founded until 1824-1825 by which time the Rotches had once more re-located to Clifton, a fashionable suburb of Bristol.¹¹⁵

5.4 Civic culture and the Bristol Museum

As we have seen, in the opening decade of the nineteenth century the Rotch family occupied a significant position within the newly-formed town of Milford Haven, contributing significantly to its cultural and scientific life. This is evidenced on several levels, including the amateur experiments of Ben Rotch, the Observatory proposed by Greville and the Rotches' extravagant landscaped garden. The surrounding region contained a number of other large properties where there was evidence of horticultural collecting and scientific interest,¹¹⁶ suggesting the Rotches' collecting sat comfortably within this provincial expression of natural philosophy. By the time Benjamin Rotch had relocated to Bristol in the wake of the collapse of the business, his son Ben was carving out a new career as a patent lawyer and as an inventor. Indeed, his invention of the Patent Lever Fid (a small bar or pin used to fix a topmast in place) resolved many of the families' financial problems.¹¹⁷ The success allowed Ben Rotch to purchase a house - 'Lowlands', near Harrow - where according to family biographer John Bullard he lived with his parents and sibling Maria until 1831 when the family moved once again to Regents Park in London.¹¹⁸ However, as Benjamin Rotch is listed in the Bristol Directories in 1824 and 1826 as "Gent, 6 Upper Berkeley Place", it seems that he, perhaps

¹¹⁴ McDevitt (1986) *The House of Rotch*, p.531

¹¹⁵ For an in-depth review of scientific and literary societies in Bath see Wallis, P. (2008) *Bath and the Rise of Science*. Bath: Millstream Books

¹¹⁶ See: Finn and Smith (eds) (2018) *The East India Company at Home*. See also: Davies (2019) *The Changing Fortunes of a British Aristocratic Family*

¹¹⁷ A model of Rotche's [sic] Patent lever fid was donated to Bristol Institution by Benj. Rotch Esq in 1827: Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry. No 393, January 4th 1827. For an explanation of such devices see: Harland, J., Knox-Johnston, R. and Walker, D. (2011) 'Notes: Patent Topgallant and Topmast Fids', *The Mariner's Mirror*, 97(3), pp. 218–232

¹¹⁸ Bullard (1947) *The Rotches*, pp.120-122. Lowlands now forms part of Harrow College

along with other members of the family, were moving between the two abodes.¹¹⁹ Thus whilst his father was increasingly involved in the civic culture of Bristol, becoming an Associate member of the Bristol Literary and Philosophical Society in 1825,¹²⁰ Ben was becoming engaged within metropolitan networks in London. In 1820 he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, and was awarded the Silver Medal of the Society the following year.¹²¹ In 1823 he became a founding member of the London Mechanics' Institute, and attended the inaugural meeting of the British Association in 1831.¹²²

The Rotches' migration from Wales to Bristol, via Bath, resulted in a new phase in the life of the family collection of artefacts, which found their way into a local museum collection. Multiple donations from the family collection were made to the museum of the Bristol Institution for the Advancement of Science and Art over a period of seven years from 1824, when the museum was opened.¹²³ This period represents a formative period of the Institution's development under the curatorship of Johann Samuel Müller from 1823-1830 and the early years of the curatorship of Samuel Stutchbury from 1831-1850. Müller was a Prussian from Danzig, who emigrated to England in 1801, henceforth adopting the Anglicised name Miller.¹²⁴ His wide-ranging interests included geology, botany and conchology. Geology in particular was emerging in this period as serious field of study in Bristol, the landscapes of the Southwest offering a wide range of opportunities for geological inquiry. The contents of the Bristol Institution's collection were thus heavily weighted toward geological, mineralogical, and paleontological specimens. By comparison, the role played by material

¹¹⁹ I am grateful to Lisa Graves for providing me with this information. Lisa Graves, pers comm, October 2018

¹²⁰ Proposed, Thursday 6th January 1825. Minute book of The Philosophical and Literary Society, attached to the Bristol Institution, BRO: 32079/142

¹²¹ Harrison, J. (1982) 'General Notes', Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, 130(5314), p.670

¹²² Harrison (1982) General Notes, p.670

¹²³ The Bristol Institution for the Advancement of Science and Art was one of several learned organisations established in Bristol during the nineteenth century, eventually merging to form the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG) in 1904. These included the Bristol Library Society (founded from a meeting in the Bush Tavern in 1772) and the Bristol Literary and Philosophical Society (c.1808), with which it was said to be 'annexed', with the shared museum appearing to act as a bridge between the two institutions. The foundation stone was laid for the BIASLA in 1820. See: Barker, W.R. (1906) *The Bristol Museum and Art gallery: the Development of the Institution during a Hundred and Thirty-Four Years, 1772-1906*. Bristol: W. Arrowsmith

¹²⁴ In common with the Rotches' swift departure from France, he was forced to leave Danzig after it was overrun by the French. See Crane, M.D. (2004) Miller [formerly Müller], Johann Samuel [John Samuel] (1779–1830), naturalist and museum curator. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

culture, specifically that of the Pacific, within the museum seems to have been relatively limited.

However, Müller's successor as curator, Samuel Stutchbury, had a notable interest in the Pacific, having worked as a zoologist and surgeon on a pearl-fishing expedition between 1825 and 1827 (possibly the first undertaken as a purely commercial venture).¹²⁵ During this voyage Stutchbury undertook geological research in New Zealand and identified and collected minerals, shells and marine organisms on various Pacific islands, including Tahiti. This venture provided him with a lifelong fascination with the Pacific regions prompting theoretical speculations that attracted the attention of eminent men of science such as Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin.¹²⁶ Yet Stutchbury had come from humble beginnings; he was the son of a joiner turned dealer in natural history specimens from London.¹²⁷ Upon becoming curator of the Bristol museum in 1831 he returned to his youthful practice of meeting arriving ships at the dockside to procure specimens from the crew.¹²⁸ He shared this method of acquiring specimens with his childhood friend, the naturalist William Swainson, also the son of a natural history dealer (and customs agent), John Swainson (introduced in Chapter 2). Like Swainson, Stutchbury published an instructional guide on how to collect and preserve natural history specimens,¹²⁹ with the Bristol Institution providing sea captains with dredges and boxes for the collection and storage of specimens.¹³⁰

Stutchbury's personal collection of shells and material culture acquired during his Pacific travels had been auctioned off on his return to England in 1827. Few artefacts remain whose whereabouts are known: a standing stone figure now in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, and a carved figure known as the 'Stutchbury Bird' in BMAG (attributed to Stutchbury but unconfirmed by documentation), both are from Ra'ivavae in the Austral Islands.¹³¹ However,

¹²⁵ See, Branagan, D. F. (1993) 'Samuel Stutchbury: a natural history voyage to the Pacific, 1825–27 and its consequences', Archives of Natural History, 20(1), pp. 69–91

¹²⁶ Branagan (1993) Samuel Stutchbury. See also, Crane, M. (1983). Samuel Stutchbury (1798-1859), Naturalist and Geologist. Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London, 37(2), pp.189-200

¹²⁷ Crane (1983) Samuel Stutchbury (1798-1859)

¹²⁸ Branagan (1993) 'Samuel Stutchbury, p.80, p.83

 ¹²⁹ Stutchbury, S. (1832) Brief Directions for Preserving & Bringing Home Objects of Natural History. Bristol:
 Gutch and Martin

¹³⁰ Neve (1984) Natural Philosophy, p.344

¹³¹ Giles, S. (2008) 'Maritime Collections at Bristol's City Museum and Art Gallery', Journal of Museum Ethnography, (20), p.102

the donations book of the BIASAS reveal he also presented the Bristol Institution with a specimen of tapa cloth and two samples of arrowroot and sugar cane acquired at Tahiti, in November 1831.¹³² During the course of his curatorship of the museum he donated a number of natural history specimens, many of Pacific origin. His work for the Institution appears to have begun prior to his formal appointment as curator, following Müller's death in the same year. The lack of ethnographic artefacts surviving in the museum from the early years of the collection may reflect the predominance of its concerns with natural history during this period. Thus, Benjamin Rotch's donations of Pacific artefacts appear as exceptions within a collection overwhelmingly focussed on natural history. Of the 958 separate donations to the museum recorded for the period 1822 – 1831 (inclusive), less than ten percent can be deemed ethnographic.¹³³ Furthermore, a subsequent archival document (undated but said to have been drawn up the mid-nineteenth century) entitled 'List of weapons, fishing implements etc. from Tahiti and other Pacific Islands', lists only fourteen artefacts, the majority linked to the Rotch collection.¹³⁴

This chapter has provided a context for one of the UK's most significant museum collections of Pacific artefacts associated with a South Sea whaling family, the Rotches of Milford Haven and Bristol. It has highlighted both the cosmopolitan networks of this branch of the Rotch family – in New Bedford and Dunkirk, as well as England and Wales – and the part the Rotches played in local civic life, situating their Pacific collections in a broader context of material culture, taste and consumption. Like the Enderbys, the fortunes of the Rotch whaling enterprise fluctuated dramatically, reminding us of the vicissitudes of the trade, and resulting in this case in a series of domestic upheavals. It has been suggested that these moves precipitated a new phase in the life of what ultimately became the Bristol Museum's Pacific collection, acquired during the tenure of two enterprising but little-known provincial museum curators and surviving, it seems, against all the odds.

¹³² Donations and Deposits to the Bristol Institution 1822-1839. Entry. No 944, 3rd November 1831

¹³³ Although the museum did not officially open to the public until 1824, it was acquiring objects before this date. Information extracted from database: DB Vol 1 .1822-1913, shared by Lisa Graves, July 2021

 ^{&#}x27;List of weapons, fishing implements etc. from Tahiti and other Pacific Islands', nd [mid 19th century]
 Bristol Archives: 32079/227. I am grateful to doctoral researcher Polly Bence for a transcription of this list.
 Polly Bence, pers comm, February 2021

The extant Rotch material in Bristol is clearly a fragment of a larger collection of natural history specimens and cultural artefacts, much of it now lost or at least unprovenanced. In combining analysis of surviving objects with archival evidence concerning the wider collecting and scientific interests of the Rotches, we have made the case for a broader understanding of the culture of collecting amongst prominent whaleship owning families.

Chapter 6: The whaleship as a space of collecting: captains, surgeons and crew

The focus of this Chapter is upon the whaleship as a conduit for knowledge creation through acts of collecting information and objects. It outlines the evidence for various kinds of collecting activity by different strata of the crew and considers the extent to which these activities were shared across the ranks, what kinds of objects were collected and for what purposes. This is achieved by considering the differing modes of collecting practiced: the visible collecting of the captains, the scientific collecting of the surgeons and the much less visible collecting of ordinary crew members. The geography of the whaleship itself necessarily shaped these activities. Physical restrictions on where a whaleman could store his trade goods, specimens or any instruments (such as microscopes) in the minimal personal space allocated to each individual according to ship's hierarchy directly affected what he could collect, and the type of knowledge he could generate. Typically, the captain had the largest cabin, while the mates had their own cramped cabins, as did the surgeon, whose space although small was still big enough for a bookshelf and writing desk. In contrast, the below deck whaleman had only his sea chest down in the fo'castle, capable of accommodating smaller collectables such as scrimshaw, shells, fishhooks and small items of weaponry, to name a few. In this chapter I suggest that the creation of natural knowledge through the collection of natural and artificial curiosities on board whaling vessels represented a major logistical challenge in which politics and ownership of space were crucial. However, the practice of journal keeping by all spheres of the crew to a certain extent negated this through the use of illustrations as proxy specimens and descriptions standing as witness to experience. Documenting observations in the form of images and text was a practice that conferred authority while not requiring a large amount of space, further than a sailor's chest to write upon, so was available to all (literate) members of the crew.

Section 6.1 addresses collecting amongst captains, a group strongly represented within extant whaler collections, addressing the question of why, and indeed how, the largest artefacts and specimens are associated with them. In particular, it considers the transport of Valentine Starbuck's personal collection of Hawaiian material culture on the ship that brought the King

and Queen of Hawaii to Britain in 1824, and the distribution of this collection to a number of museums by his descendant Evangeline Priscilla Starbuck a century later.

In Section 6.2, the focus is on surgeons on whaling vessels and their interests in collecting and documenting aspects of the natural history and ethnography of Pacific regions. It considers the context and implications of their engagement in scientific fieldwork and the production of closely observed images of natural history specimens. As outlined in Chapter 1, Surgeons were a highly distinctive group on board whaling vessels, and their experience is comparable in many if not all respects with those employed on Royal Navy ships: they were more likely to have access to specialist instruments and frequently kept detailed journals, providing valuable evidence regarding wider collecting practices amongst the crew. This section considers how the space they occupied within the ship facilitated their collecting and discusses the considerable logistical challenges posed by the transportation of specimens and artefacts on whaling voyages.

Finally, section 6.3 deals with the collecting activities of the majority of the crew, the foremast hands. Focussing on two little-known unpublished sources, the journals of ordinary seaman Henry Ransome and apprentice Henry Foster, this section considers subaltern experiences of exploring and collecting the worlds they were encountering. The collecting activities of ordinary sailors were necessarily restricted to what they could fit in their sea chests, which would also have housed articles used for barter, such as iron hoop, tobacco and small pieces of cloth. This section further identifies the ways and means that collected goods were exchanged between crew men both on their own vessels and those on other vessels, through the tradition of the 'gam'- the meeting of whaleships at sea.

6.1 Captains as collectors

Whaleship captains remain a largely elusive group of collectors, despite the fact that many of the artefacts and specimens found within museums are said to have been collected by them, either directly or on behalf of their employers. In order to understand their role as collectors we are reliant mainly on their published narratives, on the objects themselves and on the writings of other crew members. Captains rarely wrote their own journals or kept logbooks, though there are exceptions, one being the private journal of Samuel Swain, captain of the whaleship *Vigilant* during the 1830s. Swain authored both a personal narrative and the ship's log, both of which have been closely examined by whaling historian and former archivist, Dale Chatwin. More common than manuscript materials are captains' published narratives, often focussing on dramatic aspects of life on board a whaling vessel. These shed light on experiences of shipwreck and survival but contain little mention of the more mundane aspects of collecting. One example would be the colonial whaling master Peter Bays who, after the wreck of the whaleship *Minerva* in 1829, spent some months living with the missionaries on Tonga.¹ On his departure in January 1830 onboard the *Elizabeth* he wrote that

after receiving a few dollars from each of my missionary friends, a good quantity of tapa, some mats, Tonga combs, baskets and shells etc etc. I took friendly leave... I had arrived in Tonga literally naked. I now had as much as myself and two men could carry across a pole.¹

The collections created by captains can themselves provide valuable evidence, though it is often the larger and more spectacular objects that survive in museums. These include the whalebone jaw collected by captain William Hardie of the *Woodlark* now in the National Museum of Scotland and another on display in the Great North Museum: Hancock collected by captain William Lisle of the *Samuel Enderby* (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2). These huge specimens take up substantial space on display or in storage facilities, just as they did on board whaling vessels. It is highly likely captains Hardie and Lisle took a lead from their Arctic counterparts who regularly brought whale jaw bones back to Britain lashed to the masts of whaleships. This can be seen in the detail image from the William John Huggins' painting *The Northern Whale Fishery 1835* (Figure 6.3), in which at least three pairs of jawbones can be seen stowed against the masts of the whaleship *Harmony*.² Not only was this answer to the problem of transportation a practical one, as whalebone leaked oil (potentially for many years), it was also totemic - it was a visible sign of a successful voyage. In 1820 the captain of

¹ Bays, P. (1831) A Narrative of the Wreck of the Minerva: Whaler of Port Jackson, New South Wales, on Nicholson's Shoal, 24°S. 179°W. Cambridge: B. Bridges, p.138. I am grateful to Rhys Richards for bringing this example to my attention, pers comm, July 2021. The *Elizabeth* was same vessel that Henry Ransome (discussed in section 6.3) embarked upon the following year under the same captain that rescued Bays in 1830.

² Chatwin, D. (2020) 'Written in Bone', Nantucket Historical Review, 70(2), p.18

the *Harmony* returned with nine pairs of jawbones as his personal property, one can only suspect he had buyers for these.³



Figure 6.1 A mandible of a sperm whale with 41 teeth in situ, plus two cut away. Collected by Captain William Lisle of the *Samuel Enderby*, on display at the Great North Museum, Hancock. Accession number NEWHM: S1101: Image: Kelvin Wilson/Hancock Museum

³ Chatwin (2020) Written in Bone, p.18 Whalebone archways were a common site across Britain, but particularly in the vicinity of whaling towns such as Whitby. These were predominantly made from the jaws of baleen whales returned by the Northern Fleet, not sperm whale jaws. See Redman, N. (2004) Whales' Bones of the British Isles. Teddington: Redman & Redman.



Figure 6.2 Sperm whale jaw scrimshawed with image of BSWF vessel *Woodlark*. Collected by Captain William Hardie. National Museums of Scotland NMS: Accession number Z.1844.15



Figure 6.3. Detail from *The Northern Whale Fishery 1835*, William John Huggins (1781-1845). Oil on canvas, NHA: Accession number, 2020.1.1

Between December 1840 and February 1841, the whaleship *Gipsy* whaled extensively in the seas surrounding the Bougainville Islands, off the coast of Papua New Guinea in the Western Pacific. The vessel then headed north to the Japan Grounds and on to the Hawaiian Islands before returning again in 1842. During these visits a brisk trade was carried out between the crew of the *Gipsy*, and the inhabitants of Bouka (Buka) Island in exchange for iron hoop.⁴ According to Wilson the customary articles for barter at this locale included bows and arrows, and clubs and spears "all extremely well made [and] neatly and ingeniously formed, these they freely dispose of to ships for iron hoop or clasp knives."⁵ Also available for sale were examples of indigenous craft which Wilson described at some length, contrasting the ornate and impressive appearance of the larger war canoes with the sparser, smaller 'everyday' versions available for sale (see Figures 6.4 and 6.5). Wilson explained that "the ordinary canoes hold about six persons and are destitute of ornaments being so narrow and shallow

⁴ Forster, H. (ed.) and Wilson, J. (1991) *The Cruise of the 'Gipsy': the Journal of John Wilson, Surgeon on a Whaling Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843*. United States: Ye Galleon Press, 1st February 1841, p.151 Bouka is now known as Buka, part of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, part of Papua New Guinea.

⁵ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 18th December 1840, p.136

they're soon upset," adding that "they bring them off for sale in exchange for an axe or adze."⁶ He reports that the captain of the *Gipsy*, John Gibson, bought one such canoe (albeit a larger 12-man version) in exchange for an axe on the vessel's departure from Buka in February 1841. Wilson's description makes clear its size:

It is very light: it is formed of narrow planks of a soft white wood, sewn together, and the seams plastered over with a dark cement, apparently the product of some tree. It will carry 10 or 12 natives: it is very soon capsized in the water and requires a native to use [it].⁷

Wilson's assessment of the canoe suggests that members of the crew tried the vessel out, and in doing so gained some respect for Indigenous skill. Furthermore, his description of the craft as narrow, shallow and soon upset indicates that it was not acquired for navigation, perhaps as a tender for the *Gipsy*, but as a curiosity or souvenir for captain Gibson. It was also a highly visible act of collection that presumably involved other members of the crew to assist in bringing the canoe onboard and stowing it.

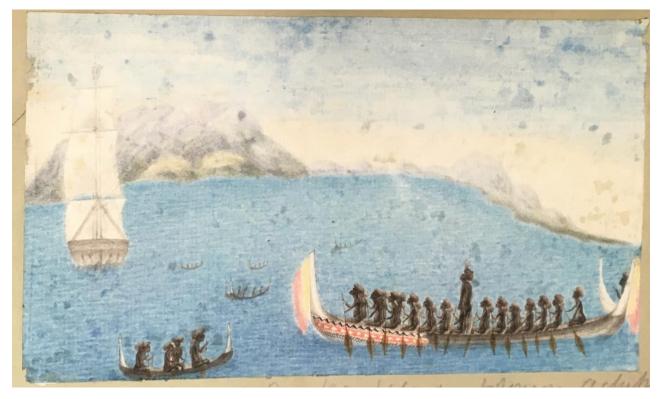


Figure 6.4 Illustration by surgeon John Wilson. Natives of Bouka (Buka) Island, Solomon Islands approaching the whaleship *Gipsy*, 1841. Image courtesy RGS-IBG

⁶ Forster and Wilson (1991) The cruise of the 'Gipsy', 18th December 1840, p.137

⁷ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 1st February 1841, p.151

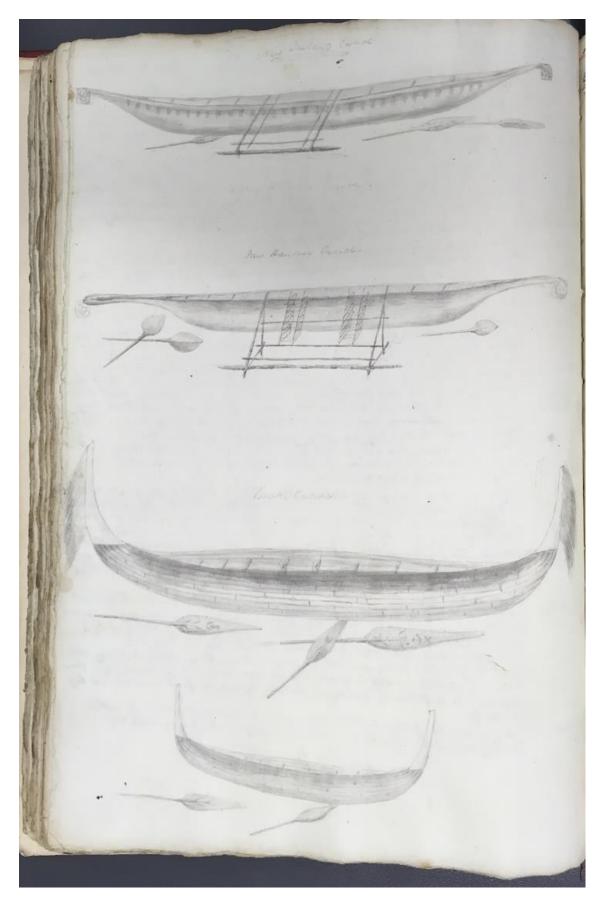


Figure 6.5 Illustration by surgeon John Wilson of Solomon Islands canoes, Buka Bay, 1841. Image courtesy RGS-IBG

While there is no direct evidence that the captain of the *Gipsy* collected other artefacts, it seems unlikely that the collection of this substantial canoe was his first and only foray into collecting. Indeed, later in the voyage we know that he was gifted "a young alligator about four or five feet long" by a local monarch, King Pedro at Sutarano in Timor.⁸ Unfortunately, the surgeon makes no mention of where these items were stored within the vessel though he did note that the surgeon of the *Diana* had been killed by an 'alligator' (albeit onshore) and one suspects that the captain surreptitiously disposed of the animal.⁹ Of the canoe there is also no further trace either in the journal or on its arrival in Britain. However, unless Gibson owned a substantial house, it was likely that it was intended for the whale ship owner or another sponsor and/or may have been subsequently donated to a museum.¹⁰

The key point here is that only the captain had the authority to bring such oversized specimens aboard, and the access to space in which to store them. This is not to suggest that this space could not be provided to other members of the crew, only that this was at captain's prerogative, and the stowage of oil was his highest priority. As surgeon Richard Smith Owen noted in regard to the lower hold of the *Warrens* in 1837, "it is very roomy down there."¹¹ However, when this comment is considered against the stowage plan of the lower hold of the whaleship *Reliance*, drawn by surgeon Richard Francis Burton, it can be ascertained that by the end of a voyage it was anything but so (see Figure 6.6).

⁸ Forster and Wilson (1991) The cruise of the 'Gipsy', 26th October 1842, p.334. Wilson was mistaken in his species identification. The reptile would have been a crocodile, not an alligator as these are restricted to the Americas, apart from one species in a limited habitat in China.

⁹ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 26th October 1842, p.334

¹⁰ It is worth noting that the *Gipsy* was part owned by shipping agent John Boulcott, a known collector of South Seas curiosities. However, these were auctioned off in 1840. See Chapter 3

¹¹ Journal of the whaleship Warrens kept by Dr Robert Smith Owen. NBWM: LOG no. 0098, Wed 25th October 1837

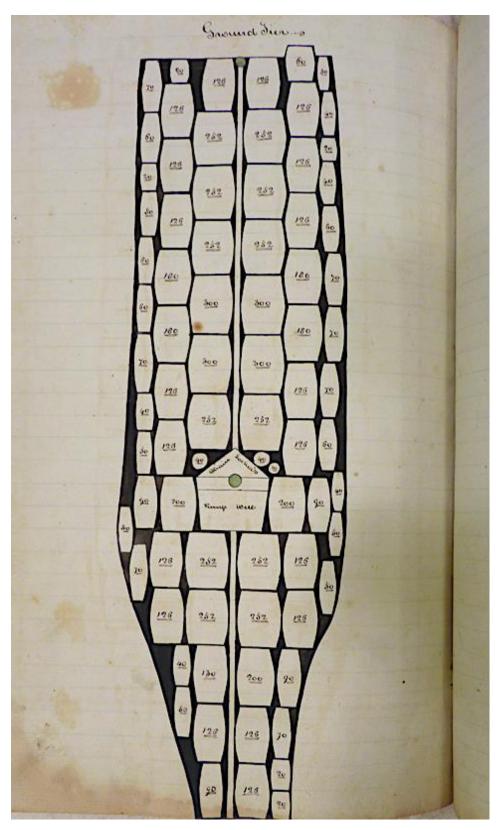


Figure 6.6 Surgeon Richard Francis Burton's drawing of the stowage of oil barrels in the ground tier (lower hold) of the whaleship *Reliance*. Log of the whaleship *Reliance (1832-35)* kept by Richard Francis Burton, Surgeon, SLNSW: PRG113/5/3

The collection and storage of large items acquired for other purposes would have required serious negotiation given the mercantile priorities of the captain and the owners. There was also a risk that it could undermine the delicate balance of power between the captain and crew, given that keeping whalebone jaws and teeth intact (to maintain a complete specimen) would deprive the crew of a valuable trade and recreational resource (discussed in Chapter 7). Indeed, the ownership of such resources was a matter of some importance as shown by the behaviour of the cooper of the whaleship *Fanny* who cut off the jaw of a 'black fish' (pilot whale, genus *Globicephala*), to keep for himself. However, when the captain told him it had been promised to his Marquesan crewmates, the cooper apparently threw it overboard in a rage.¹² The necessity for careful negotiation between captain and crew in relation to bringing such large objects on board ship may help to explain why the complete jaw donated to the University of Edinburgh Museum by captain Hardie in 1844 (Figure 6.2) is so extensively scrimshawed. Perhaps by letting the crew, or crewman (and one assumes it was the crew) engrave the jaw, Hardie was attempting to appease these individuals for the loss of such large and valuable specimens of teeth.

While collecting by captains was not restricted to large artefacts, it is these artefacts that are the most prominent within museums and their stores: most of the smaller artefacts and specimens we know to have been acquired by captains have been impossible to trace. Based on the evidence in journals, representative examples include the pearls presented to captain Palmer of the *Alert* by the chiefs of Hummock Island (now called Balut) in the Mindanao region of the Southern Philippines, "one of them being as large as a large size pea," and the "great quantities of beautiful shells" collected by captain William Addis Bond of the *Coronet* in 1837.¹³ Such small items would have been easy to store and transport, and may well have been passed on to family members through gift or inheritance, and over the ensuing generations many have been lost and provenance information has become confused. For example, as well as being the conductor of the Kyanizing experiment carried out on the *Samuel Enderby* (discussed in Chapter 4), captain William Lisle is also known to have been a collector of shells which he distributed amongst family members. In 2015, researcher Kelvin

¹² Log of the whaleship *Fanny*, kept by J. K. Davidson, 1822-1824 NHA: LOG 228, Sunday 16th November 1823

¹³ Journal of the whaleship *Warrens*, 10th February 1838; Journal of the *Coronet*, Eldred Fysh, surgeon, NHA: LOG 55, 24th December 1837

Wilson met a descendant of Captain Lisle's sister who had thrown away a piece of coral not knowing its links to her ancestor and found that another relative was using one of Lisle's substantial shells as a door stop (Figure 6.7).¹⁴



Figure 6.7 The late Bill Sampson of Newbiggin by the Sea, a descendant of William Lisle's sister Fanny. The two virtually colourless shells are, on the left a *Cassis cornuta* from the Pacific, and on the right, *Cassis madagascariensis* from the Caribbean. Image by permission of Kelvin Wilson

Provenance information was often distorted in the process of inheritance: for example, the war club handed down within the family of captain Welham Clarke of the whaleship *Spy* was reputed to be Peruvian, though it is in fact Tongan. In this case, it is possible that Clarke traded for it with another collector on the coast of South America, hence the confusion nearly two hundred years later.¹⁵ Further examples of this process include the 'Fijian' clove boxes donated by the great grandson of captain William Tolley Brookes to the National Maritime Museum in 1978 which are in fact from Indonesia. The unusual aspect of the Tolley Brookes collection (discussed in Chapter 3 above) is that the donation included two journals covering three of the captain's whaling voyages, and a painting of the whaleship *Active*. It is one of the few examples of an extant museum collection which is accompanied by extant archival sources. Yet even here, the archival evidence is slim: in fact, they document only one potential collecting event which occurred at the Kingsmill Group (Kiribati Islands) on 10th February 1830 when the i-Kiribati Islanders approached the *Recovery* to trade and "bartered for trifles of

¹⁴ Kelvin Wilson, pers comm, June 2018

¹⁵ Richard Clarke (Welham Clarke descendant) pers comm, September 2020

their own manufacture."¹⁶ Even without supporting documentation, Tolley Brooke's collection speaks to the global geographies of whaling voyages, represented by artefacts from both the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, in addition to examples of scrimshaw and utilitarian whaling paraphernalia such as whalebone fids and marlin spikes (see Figure 6.8 for the oil painting of the *Active* from Tolley Brookes' collection). In addition, the journal of the *Recovery* recounts the discovery of Bennett's Island, named by Tolley Brookes after the vessel's owner in March 1829.



Figure 6.8 *"Two views of the 'Active' off Dover,"* oil painting formerly belonging to the captain of the *Active,* William Tolley Brookes. Artist Unknown, 19th century. Painting ID: BHC2342. National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

The log of the *Matilda* (also captained by Tolley Brookes) lists a selection of goods purchased between 1828 and 1836 by the captain, presumably for trade purposes, at Mr Tillman's establishment in Batugade, Timor.¹⁷ These include a birdcage, three combs, a quantity of nails, thirty-three thimbles, soap and ink. Mr Tillman is described within the log of the *Gipsy* as being "agent to Mr Bennett's ships" and his establishment is also mentioned in the logs of

¹⁶ Log of the *Recovery*, Captain Tolley Brookes, 10th February 1830. NMMG: Microfilm JOD/ 61

¹⁷ Log of the *Matilda*, Captain Tolley Brookes, NMMG: Microfilm JOD/ 61 [rear page] The long date range is explained by the fact that both log of the *Recovery* and the *Matilda* are in the same journal

the *Warrens, Gipsy, Japan* and the *Recovery*.¹⁸ As such Tillman's would appear to be a popular venue for whalemen and sailors: he was, according to John Wilson, "the wealthiest person there and residing in a spacious mansion."¹⁹ Surgeon James Brown describes it as "the only entertainment at Coupang [..] a place where you may play a game of billiards."²⁰ Here whalemen were able to stock up on trade articles such as thimbles, nails and handkerchiefs and utilitarian goods such as needles, thread, soap and ink, and collect any mail sent from England.²¹ Indeed, it was common practice that captains equipped themselves with a store of trade goods with which to undertake private barter abroad.²² Thus before leaving Ternate in 1846, captain Richard Pattenden Lawrence, aboard the whaling ship *Rochester*, wrote to his wife: "I have disposed of the best part of my trade and have taken about £200."²³ This had been a long-standing practice since the early days of the whaling trade. George Enderby (brother of Charles) wrote a letter in 1874 outlining aspects of the family's now defunct whaling concern. He wrote that in regard to captain's private trading practices,

The enormous trade which has sprung up in these islands [New Zealand] was commenced on a small scale by the whaling captains who generally were men highly paid and had little opportunity of spending their money on shore during the few months in several years which they spent at home, they therefore against the consent of the owners invested their surplus money in such articles of trade as were likely to find a sale at the different islands, originally consisting of beads and cutlery, then articles of clothing, and eventually of fire arms, ammunition.²⁴

Samuel Swain (who had previously commanded Enderby ships) had some two hundred firearms on board on the *Vigilant* specifically for trading.²⁵ In addition, he appears to have been trading for the benefit of his wife as in March 1832, whilst at Kitrana (in East Timor), he gave Captain Wilson of the *Amelia Wilson* fifty musket locks to sell at two dollars each and

¹⁸ The company is Daniel Bennett & Co; the agent's name is sometimes spelt Tillsman Forster and Wilson (1991) The cruise of the 'Gipsy', 11th-12th October 1842, pp.324-325

¹⁹ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 12th October 1842, p.325

²⁰ Journal of the whaleship *Japan*, 18th March 1836

²¹ Journal of the whaleship *Warrens*, 27th November 1838

²² Dale Chatwin, pers comm, April 2022

²³ Copies of transcripts of letters written by Richard P. Lawrence, master of the whalers *Rochester* and *The Brothers*, to his wife, 1840-1851. NMMG: MSS/79/092 [Letter No.4, p.3, 11th February 1846]

²⁴ I am grateful to Kelvin Wilson for bringing this letter to my attention. Enderby, G., (1874) Dictated letter addressed to his great nephews and nieces, SPRI, University of Cambridge: George Enderby Correspondence, GB 15: MS 574/1; MJ

²⁵ Dale Chatwin, pers comm, April 2022

arranged for the profits to be paid direct to her in London.²⁶ The next day the *Vigilant* called at Batugade, where Swain traded further in arms and ammunition.²⁷ Ten years later, in the same locale, Captain Gibson of the *Gipsy* "sold about 40 muskets at 10 rupees or \$4 each" while the surgeon purchased two lowries and a cockatoo (noting the species decline and attributing this to so many being purchased by sailors).²⁸

There is also some, albeit limited, evidence that some captains took a variety of non-whaling items on board whaling vessels. A letter in the National Maritime Museum archives written by captain Richard Pattenden Lawrence reveal he was transporting both an electrifying machine and a magic lantern.²⁹ On December 19th 1845 he wrote:

Yesterday got my electrifying machine out for the first time found it in good order and electrified nearly the whole of the ships company one of the crew, a foreigner, was subject to pains in his head. The doctor persuaded him to be electrified. He had earrings in his ears. I hooked the chain in one of the rings charged the jar and told him to touch the ball. He made a start and burst out laughing as everyone else was laughing at him. He said it made his head ring like an old tin kettle. We could not persuade him to try the other ear. Several of them was very much scared, Jim Crow, in particular, he sang out lustily and put his finger in his mouth for he thought it was burnt seeing the fire coming from the conductor to his finger and receiving the shock at the same time. Many of the crew said he turned white. One Portuguese from Bravo went away muttering him to himself 'Englishman, all the same as devil.'³⁰

The electrifying machine was eventually delivered to a Mr Devenbodie, a resident of Ternate. Pattenden Lawrence stated that "the natives are quite astonished with it, the Magic Lantern likewise."³¹

It is interesting that George Enderby highlighted the practice of private trade by captains as being "against the consent of the owners." The latter had a strong interest in ensuring that the focus of the voyage was upon whaling not trading and did into want valuable hold space

²⁶ Chatwin, D. (1989) The Vigilant Journal. A British whaling ship voyage in Indonesian waters and the Pacific 1831-1833 In two parts. BA Thesis. Australian National University, p.12 and p.83

²⁷ Chatwin (1989) *The Vigilant Journal*, p.12

²⁸ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 7th October 1842, p.323

²⁹ Electrifying machines were used to treat a wide range of health conditions, in addition the nature of electricity lent itself to a particular type of performative spectacle which was increasing popular in Britain from the early 1800s onwards. See Morus, I.R. (2010) 'Worlds of Wonder: Sensation and the Victorian Scientific Performance', *Isis*, 101(4), pp. 806–816

³⁰ Richard P. Lawrence to his wife Emma, Letter No.4, p.2, 19th December 1845

³¹ Richard P. Lawrence to his wife Emma, Letter No.4, p.3, 30th January 1846

wasted in the storage of artefacts and specimens unless they were for their own collections. However, in practice, owners had little control over many aspects of the voyage once the vessel had left port. Captain Valentine Starbuck of the whaleship *L'Aigle* (Figure 6.9) was sued and eventually dismissed, by the vessels' owners for abandoning the whaling venture in order to bring the King and Queen of Hawaii to Britain in 1824.³² There were also rumours regarding monetary irregularities in regard to chests of money onboard the *L'Aigle*.³³ King Kamehameha II (Liholiho) and his wife, Kamamalu, were on board intending to meet King George. In the event, they died of measles shortly after arrival in Britain having little resistance to the European disease.

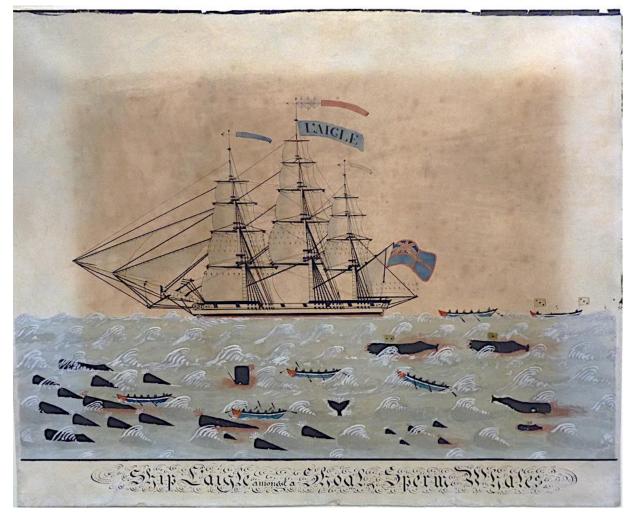


Figure 6.9 'The ship L'Aigle of London Amongst A Shoal of Sperm Whales', c.1817-1830. Unsigned, undated. Watercolour on paper, NBWM: Accession number 2001.100.4342

³² Shulman, S.T., Shulman, D. and Sims, H.R. (2009) 'The Tragic 1824 Journey of the Hawaiian King and Queen to London, History of Measles in Hawaii', *The Paediatric Infectious Disease Journal*, 28(8), p.728

³³ Shulman, Shulman and Sims (2009) The Tragic 1824 Journey, p.729

The case of the *L'Aigle* is clearly exceptional as the Royal party travelled with a significant amount of material artefacts, consisting mainly of multiple examples of Royal featherwork, an art form known as *na hulu ali'i*. Cloaks and short capes known as *'ahu'ula* made from *Hulu o na manu*, or bird feathers, were reserved for high-status individuals, and were symbols of Hawaiian Royalty.³⁴ Hundreds of thousands of feathers were needed for a single large cloak which were made from endemic Hawaiian species of Honeycreeper and one genus of honeyeater caught by specialist feather gatherers.³⁵ In line with Polynesian traditions of gift exchange many of these cloaks were distributed as gifts, thus explaining the presence of a tippet (small cape) in the British Museum collection that was originally given to one of the officers onboard the *L'Aigle*. Adrienne Kaeppler argues that Kamehameha was selective about which cloaks he gave away not bringing the high-status examples inherited from his father but preferring to distribute expendable pieces "perhaps new and/or without historic mana that needed to be retained."³⁶

³⁴ Caldeira, L. *et al.* (ed.) (2015) *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Ali'i*. San Francisco, CA: Honolulu: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; in collaboration with the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum: University of Hawai'i Press, p.24

³⁵ Hellmich, C. (2015) 'Royal Hawaiian Featherwork', Art in View, 78, p.73

³⁶ Kaeppler, A.L. (1970) 'Feather Cloaks, Ship Captains, and Lords', *Bishop Museum Occasional Papers*, 24(6), pp.91-114



Figure 6.10 'ahu'ula cape, British Museum: Accession no. Oc+.5769

Examples of the featherwork collections of King Kamehameha are to be found in the British Museum, the National Museum of Scotland, and Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (as listed in Appendix 1).³⁷ While the artefacts brought by Kamehameha and his wider retinue were not collected by whalemen directly, their transport on the *L'Aigle* further illustrates the role of whaleships as conduits for the transportation of artefacts that subsequently ended up in collections in Germany, Scotland, England and Brazil (as well as Hawaii itself), projecting "their mana and that of Hawai'i into distant nations."³⁸ The ship's captain was instrumental in this process, acting as a kind of political envoy in transporting the

³⁷ Kaeppler, A.L. (2010) 'Sanctity and Danger: Divine and Chiefly Featherwork of Old Hawai'i', in W. de Rooij (ed.) Intolerance. 1 / Willem de Rooij. Düsseldorf: Feymedia. See also, Caldeira et al (2015) Royal Hawaiian Featherwork

³⁸ Caldeira et al (2015) *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork*, p.24

King and Queen to England and continuing the tradition of exhibiting the exotic other in British polite society.³⁹

The British Museum database indicates that a small collection of artefacts formerly belonging to Valentine Starbuck now resides in the British Museum stores, having been sold by Starbuck's granddaughter, Evangeline Priscilla Starbuck, to collector Harry Beasley in 1927.⁴⁰ On two separate occasions that year Beasley visited Miss Starbuck and purchased items which had been kept within the family for over a hundred years.⁴¹ This suggested that there was a larger number of artefacts for sale and Beasley was choosing his wares carefully. Indeed, this turned out to be true, as artefacts once belonging to Miss Starbuck have been identified by Kaeppler in the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu and in the course of this project in the National Museums, Liverpool.⁴² Starbuck's personal collection appears to be exclusively Polynesian in nature, although not all of the items Miss Starbuck sold to Beasley have been located. The British Museum holdings consisting of fishhooks from Hawaii and New Zealand, a belt possibly from New Zealand and a twist of Hawaiian olona fibre (Touchardia latifolia), the cordage used in the construction of high-status feather capes known as 'ahu'ula. Beasley purchased two samples of this fibre: one is in the British Museum, the other has been located during the research for this thesis in the Nation Museum, Liverpool's World Cultures Museum, along with two Samoan combs collected by Starbuck. Beasley also purchased from Miss Starbuck an example of a Maori mat pin or neck ornament (known as an Aurei), described as "cut from a whale's tooth and well worn" that was collected by her grandfather. The presence of such items confirms that Starbuck's interest in Polynesian material culture was not limited

 ³⁹ As discussed within Qureshi, S. (2011) *Peoples on parade: exhibitions, empire, and anthropology in nineteenth century Britain.* Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, and more specifically in Thrush, C.P. (2016) *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the heart of empire.* New Haven: Yale University Press pp. 139-168

⁴⁰ Evangeline Priscilla Starbuck 1852-1946. There is debate as to the exact genealogy, the Beasley Acquisition Ledger states great granddaughter, Kaeppler suggests daughter, and my research suggest granddaughter.

⁴¹ On 15.7.1927 Eva P Starbuck of 8 Temple Square, Aylesbury, sold to Harry Beasley six items belonging to her great grandfather, Valentine Starbuck (Beasley numbers 2014-2019). A further eight items were purchased by Beasley on 7.12.1927 (Beasley numbers 2045-2052). Harry Geoffrey Beasley Acquisition Ledger, 1927 British Museum, Centre for Anthropology

⁴² Kaeppler, A.L (1978) "'L'Aigle" and HMS "Blonde", The Use of History in the Study of Ethnography', *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 12, pp. 29–44. I am grateful to Dr Alice Christophe for bringing to my attention the Starbuck cloak in the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum. Dr Alice Christophe pers comm, October 2020

to Hawaiian examples. As the *L'Aigle* did not touch at New Zealand under his captaincy, he either bartered for them on a different voyage or traded with other collectors.⁴³

The labels associated with three fishhooks in the British Museum, two Hawaiian and one from New Zealand, provide further evidence concerning their provenance (Figures 6.11 & 6.12). These labels, which originate from the Beasley collection, indicate that the artefacts were collected 'prior to 1793' but offer no further explanation for this intriguingly early date. Indeed, Starbuck was born on 22 May 1791 on the American Island of Nantucket so if they were collected prior to 1793 it was not by him. Whaleships began to visit the Hawaiian ports of Honolulu and Lahaina from about 1819 shortly before the arrival of the first missionaries. Prior to this date there were a host of other vessels, American, British, French and Russian, that visited Hawaii after Cook but before 1793, any one of which could have collected the fishhooks which subsequently ended up in Starbuck's collection.⁴⁴

 ⁴³ Richards, R. (2015) *Tracking Travelling Taonga: A Narrative Review of how Maori Items got to London from* 1798, to Salem in 1802, 1807 and 1812 and Elsewhere up to 1840. Wellington: Paremata Press, p.157

⁴⁴ Judd, B. et al. (1974) Voyages to Hawaii before 1860: A Record Based on Historical Narratives in the Libraries of the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society and the Hawaiian Historical Society, extended to March 1860. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii for Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, pp.1-45



(Top)

Figure 6.11 Examples of fishhooks in the collection of Capt. Valentine Starbuck, the British Museum, London. L-R: Oc.1944.2.63, Oc.1944.2.72, Oc.1944.2.191.

(Bottom) Figure 6.12 Detail of label for Oc.1944.2.63 Newspaper evidence suggests that there were other artefacts brought home by Starbuck whose whereabouts are currently unknown. For example, the *Sun* reported that on Tuesday 18 May 1824 Valentine Starbuck brought with him from Hawaii "one of the Idols formerly worshipped by the Islanders – It is of full stature, curiously carved, but not a very exquisite workmanship, and is intended by Captain S. as a present for the British Museum."⁴⁵ In another newspaper the figure is described as "as large as life."⁴⁶ Fifteen years later, a large, wooden temple image figure of Ki'i (said to be a representation of the deity Ku-ka'ili-moku, the island snatcher),⁴⁷ was donated to the British Museum by a Mr W Howard (Figure 6.13). While no link has yet been found between Starbuck and Howard, this object may also have been acquired by Starbuck. Although Ki'i was not the only Hawaiian statue donated to the British Museum in this period, it is the only one that can be described as being of 'full stature'.

⁴⁵ The Sun, Tuesday 18 May 1824. I am grateful to Dale Chatwin for bringing this to my attention, and to Dr. Alice Christophe for our discussion of regarding the Hawaiian collections of Captain Starbuck.

⁴⁶ *Morning Advertiser*, 19th May 1824

⁴⁷ See Thomas, N. (1995) Oceanic Art Thames & Hudson Ltd, London, p. 162, D'Alleva, A. (1998) Art of the Pacific. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p. 99. Hooper, S. (2006) Pacific Encounters, Art & Divinity in Polynesia 1760-1860, Norwich: BMP, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, p.20



Figure 6.13 Temple image figure Ki'i, (Oc1839,0426.8) on display at the Royal Academy of Arts, Oceania Exhibition in 2018

6.2 Surgeons as collectors

During the period under study, British and French whaling vessels typically carried a surgeon onboard, whereas American whaleships, as a rule did not, relying instead on a medicine chest accompanied by a pamphlet listing the contents and suggested treatments.⁴⁸ While it has long been assumed that having a doctor on British whaling vessels was a legal requirement, the employment of medical men on Arctic whaleships in the eighteenth century, as Martin Evans argues, may have reflected a desire to claim bounties introduced to provide financial incentives for Arctic whaling.⁴⁹ Honore Forster suggests that the 1733 Act was the first to officially require the presence of a surgeon aboard a British whaleship (if bounties were to be collected).⁵⁰ However, Evans suggests that their presence onboard seems to have been general practice prior to this date and in "recognition of an established practice", they were duly incorporated into the 1733 Act.⁵¹ Furthermore, such were the poor returns for Arctic whaling in 1733 that no owner would forgo the 20 shillings per ton for the sake of not hiring a surgeon, so by the time the Southern Fishery came into being in 1775, surgeons were an established presence aboard whaleships.⁵² Conversely, none of the Acts of Parliament relating to the British Southern Whale Fishery required having a surgeon onboard as a statutory requirement for claiming bounties (now called premiums) and the Acts regarding the Arctic Fishery were not applicable to the BSWF.⁵³ Therefore their presence aboard BSWF vessels seems to have been a sensible precaution for a dangerous trade, not a legal obligation, or as Evans suggests, it is possible that HM Customs officials who oversaw the enforcement of the regulations applied them to all whaleships, not just those in the Arctic Fishery.⁵⁴

 ⁴⁸ Hohman, E.P. (1928) *The American Whaleman: A Study of Life and Labor in the Whaling Industry*. New York, London & Toronto: Longmans, Green & Co, p.137. For the life of a French whaleship surgeon see, Thiercelin, L. (1995) *Travels in Oceania: Memoirs of a Whaling Ship's Doctor, 1866*. Translated by C. Mortelier. Dunedin, N.Z: University of Otago Press. For medicine chests and pamphlets see Gordon, E.C. (1993) 'Sailors' Physicians: Medical Guides for Merchant Ships and Whalers, 1774–1864', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 48(2), pp. 139-156

⁴⁹ Evans, M.H. (2005) 'Statutory Requirements Regarding Surgeons on British Whale-Ships', *The Mariner's Mirror*, 91(1), pp. 7-12

⁵⁰ Forster, H. (1988) 'British whaling surgeons in the South Seas, 1823–1843', *The Mariner's Mirror*, 74(4), p.404

⁵¹ Evans (2005) Statutory Requirements, p.9

⁵² Evans (2005) Statutory Requirements, pp.8-10

⁵³ Evans (2005) Statutory Requirements, pp.11-12

⁵⁴ Evans (2005) Statutory Requirements, p.9

Within surviving surgeons' shipboard journals there is little mention of the health of the crew. Unlike their counterparts in the Royal Navy, surgeons on board whaling ships were not required to keep, and ultimately submit, journals containing records of crew health. Their journals were thus their own personal records. Honore Forster suggests that those whaling surgeons who intended to publish presumed their middle-class readership would not be interested in the ailments of the common sailor: as Stanger wrote onboard the Sarah and *Elizabeth,* even though he had several men on his sick list, "their diseases are not of great importance."⁵⁵ To this one could add that journals that purport to be written for family and friends (such as those of Robert Owen Smith) may have omitted medical details due to the delicate sensibilities of their female readers. Many whaling vessels carried medical guidance in the form of manuals for the use of captains as well as surgeons. Such guides have been described as "concise and remarkably comprehensive" suggesting treatments for "fevers [...] pulmonary conditions, intestinal disorders, drunkenness, delirium tremens, rheumatism, epilepsy, apoplexy, lockjaw, smallpox, scurvy."⁵⁶ In April 1840 surgeon John Wilson of the Gipsy was called to visit Captain Bligh on the whaling barque Rover. Captain Bligh "was in a dilemma about the medicine chest. He begged I would examine it and ascertain what were [sic] missing and to furnish the doses and the uses of what remained that he might prescribe himself, and benefit are sick, in the absence of any surgeon."⁵⁷ The pamphlet that Captain Bligh was lacking and required Wilson to create, meant he could cross reference common symptoms with the guide, then administer remedies from the medicine chest with no prior medical knowledge.⁵⁸ Additionally, such guides offered advice on specific shipboard hazards such as drowning (inflating the lungs or rectum with tobacco smoke) and suggestions for burying a sailor showing symptoms of scurvy in the ground up to his neck.⁵⁹ Guides covered both basic surgical procedures, such as sewing up wounds, pulling teeth and bloodletting, to more advanced surgery procedures such as amputation, bone setting and tracheostomies.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Forster (1988) British whaling surgeons, p.408. Journal of the Surgeon, George Eaton Stanger on the whaleship Sarah and Elizabeth. GA: D543 /12. Saturday 21st January 1837

⁵⁶ Gordon (1993) Sailors' Physicians, p.147

⁵⁷ The previous doctor had "ran away while at Coupang in company with the boatsteerer and two boys [...] I was informed the young man used to get drunk and conduct himself in an unworthy manner." Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy*, kept by John Wilson, Surgeon. RGS-IBG Collections: ar JWI/1/15031842. 16th April 1840

⁵⁸ Hohman (1928) *The American Whaleman*, p.137

⁵⁹ Gordon (1993) Sailors' Physicians, p.149

⁶⁰ Gordon (1993) Sailors' Physicians, p.152

The opportunities for newly-qualified medical men in the early nineteenth century were limited, and openings for those looking to pursue scientific investigation within a salaried role, rarer still. The Royal Navy offered some opportunities for scientific endeavour in increasingly specialised roles such as surveyor or naturalist accompanying Admiralty voyages.⁶¹ Naval officers were trained in navigation and trigonometry while a basic knowledge of natural history, with particular focus on medicinal plants, was a required skill for a trainee naval surgeon.⁶² However, major surveying expeditions on which a surgeon-naturalist might have specific scientific responsibilities were scarce. Indeed, between 1815 and 1840 the Admiralty dispatched only six surveying voyages to the Pacific regions making these sought-after commissions.⁶³ It was more common therefore for naval surgeons with interests in natural history or ethnography to pursue these alongside their standard duties.⁶⁴ Moreover, as the Navy underwent severe post war demobilisation in the years following the Napoleonic Wars, the number of available medical posts were also reduced. This led to a glut of unemployed surgeons looking for work, a problem not resolved until the 1850s: as surgeon John Wilson's son stated, his father went to sea in the late 1820s "when doctors were not wanted."⁶⁵ Many lacked the means to set themselves up in private practice or pay for their final examinations.⁶⁶ One of the few opportunities available to them to save some money, see the world, practice medicine and undertake their natural history interests and was that of a whaling surgeon.⁶⁷ Such a path was followed by Frederick Debell Bennett (1806-1859) who became whaling surgeon on the *Tuscan* after working as assistant surgeon on the hospital ship HMS *Grampus* moored off Greenwich. His aims as he recalled them in his *Narrative* were to

investigate the anatomy and habits of Southern Whales, and the mode of conducting the Sperm Whale Fishery, (a subject then untouched by the literature of any country), and to make as many observations on the state of the Polynesian, or other lands we

⁶¹ See Miller, D.P. (1986) 'The Revival of the Physical Sciences in Britain, 1815-1840', *Osiris*, 2, pp. 107–134.

 ⁶² Millar, S.L. (2018) Science at Sea: Voyages of Exploration and the Making of Marine Knowledge, 1837-1843.
 PhD Thesis. University of Edinburgh, p.98

⁶³ The Royal Navy maintaining a greater interest in the Arctic exploration spurred on by issues of terrestrial magnetism and the commercial opportunities offered by the Northwest Passage. See Millar (2018) *Science at sea*, pp.69-70

⁶⁴ For an example of one such assistant surgeon see, Driver, F. (2020) 'Material memories of travel: the albums of a Victorian naval surgeon', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 69, pp. 32–54. See also Lloyd, C. and Coulter, J.L.S. (1963) *Medicine and the Navy: 1200-1900. Vol 4. 1815-1900*. Edinburgh: Livingstone

⁶⁵ Forster (1988) British whaling surgeons, p.405

⁶⁶ Watters, D.A.K. and Koestenbauer, A. (2013) *Stitches in Time: Two Centuries of Surgery in Papua New Guinea*. Australia: Xlibris Corporation, p.25

⁶⁷ See Druett, J. (2013) Rough Medicine: Surgeons at Sea in the Age of Sail. Florence: Routledge

might visit, and to collect as many facts and examples in Natural History, as opportunities might offer.⁶⁸

Whereas the Arctic Fishery offered seasonal employment, the Southern Fishery offered three to four years of sustained employment, allowing them to build a modest amount of savings. Although their lay was relatively small (less than that of the artisan crew such as the carpenter) these surgeons were able to set themselves up in medical practice soon after they returned, or in a few rare cases, publish a narrative of their travels.⁶⁹

Between 1815 and 1840 the British Southern Whale Fishery dispatched at least 998 vessels, of which 591 are known to have sailed within the Pacific Ocean (data is unavailable for the remaining 407 voyages).⁷⁰ Of these 591 voyages, available data tells us that 165 approached from the East rounding Cape Horn and 198 approached from the West rounding the Cape of Good Hope, meaning those voyages also passed through the Indian Ocean offering further opportunities for diverse collecting and data gathering. The majority of these whaling voyages carried a doctor, though their names are known for only a small proportion of voyages. Some surgeons who took to the life at sea were re-hired for subsequent voyages (John Wilson cites the example of a British whaling surgeon, resident in Hawaii, who was a veteran of five whaling voyages). However, from what can be gleaned from the scant records, for the majority of whaleship surgeons one voyage, perhaps two, was enough (see Appendix 5, Surgeons in the BSWF, 1794-1853).⁷¹

All of the surgeons discussed in this chapter sailed to the Pacific in the two decades after 1823 and left a written record of their travels.⁷² Three of them - John Coulter, Frederick Debell Bennett and Thomas Beale - published their journals during the nineteenth century.⁷³ Beale

 ⁶⁸ Bennett, F.D. (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe from the Year 1833 to 1836, [...] Vol 1.
 London: Richard Bentley, p.V

⁶⁹ Forster (1988) British whaling surgeons, p.405. Watters and Koestenbauer (2013) Stitches in time, p.29

⁷⁰ I am grateful to Dale Chatwin for extracting this information from the BSWF dataset. Chatwin suggests a further 50 voyages may have entered the Pacific but due to lack of clarity in the records this cannot be definitively ascertained. Dale Chatwin, pers comm April 2022

⁷¹ Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy,* kept by John Wilson, Surgeon. October 1841

⁷² See Druett (2013) *Rough Medicine* This is one of the few publications which deals specifically with the profession of whaling surgeons in the south seas.

⁷³ Coulter, J. (1845) Adventures in the Pacific with observations on the natural productions, manners and customs of the natives of the various islands together with remarks on missionaries, British and other residents etc etc. Dublin: William Curry, Jun & Company. Beale, T. (1839) A Few Observations on the Natural History of the Sperm Whale: with an Account of the Rise and Progress of the Fishery, etc.]. London: John Van Voorst. Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe (2 Vols)

and Bennett's were received with significant critical acclaim, providing significant inspiration for Melville's *Moby Dick*. According to Melville

There are only two books in being which at all pretend to put the living sperm whale before you, and at the same time, in the remotest degree succeed in the attempt [...] those books are Beale's and Bennett's; both in their time surgeons to English South-Sea whale-ships, and both exact and reliable men.⁷⁴

Melville's description of Beale and Bennett as "exact and reliable men" indicates some of the perceived virtues required of those who made natural knowledge at sea in the nineteenth century. Of the extant surgeons' journals listed in Figure 6.14 those of John Lyell, Eldred Fysh, Richard Smith Owen, James Brown and George Eaton Stanger, are all unpublished (although a brief extract from Lyell's journal was presented to the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, of which his grandson was a member, in 1938).⁷⁵ With the exception of George Eaton Stanger and Richard F. Burton, the journals of these surgeons have provided the basis for standard histories such as Joan Druett's (2013) *Rough Medicine: Surgeons at Sea in an Age of Sail*. William Dalton's journals from the *Phoenix* and *Harriet* were edited by Neil Gunson in 1990 and John Wilson's *Gipsy* journal was edited for publication by Honore Forster in 1991, though the published version lacks many of the beautiful illustrations contained in the original, held by the Royal Geographical Society.⁷⁶ Richard Francis Burton's journal of the voyage of the *Reliance* was unpublished at the time it was consulted the State Library of South Australia for this thesis in 2019, but has since been made available online.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Melville, H. (2016) [1851] *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*. London: Macmillan Collector's Library, p.117

⁷⁵ Richie, J. (1938) 'The Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's Surgeon', *Transactions & Proceedings of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science*, 9, pp. 230–236. Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, 2 Vols. Archive No.463 (Volume 1, 17th October 1829 to 14th1830 December. Volume 2, 2nd January 1831 to 31st March 1832). Journal of the *Coronet*, Eldred Fysh, surgeon, NHA: LOG 55 (30th May 1837 - 30th April 1839). Journal of the whaleship *Warrens* kept by Dr Robert Smith Owen. NBWM: LOG no. 0098 (5th April 1837 -12th February 1840). Log of the whaleship *Japan* kept by Dr James Brown, under Capt. William E. Hill. NBWM: LOG no. ODHS 0809 (December 1834 - August 1837). Journal of the Surgeon, George Eaton Stanger on the whaleship *Sarah and Elizabeth*. GA: D543 /12 (23rd September 1836 - 1838). Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy*, kept by John Wilson, Surgeon. RGS-IBG Collections, reference ar JWI/1/15031842 (23rd October 1839 - 19th March 1843)

⁷⁶ Gunson, N. (ed.) and Dalton, W. (1990) *The Dalton Journal: Two Whaling Voyages to the South Seas, 1823-1829.* Canberra: National Library of Australia. Forster, H. (ed.) and Wilson, J. (1991) *The Cruise of the 'Gipsy': the Journal of John Wilson, Surgeon on a Whaling Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843.* United States: Ye Galleon Press. There is another whaling surgeon's journal in existence in Littlehampton Museum, that of Edward Harris of the *George Home* (See Appendix 2) however, this was unavailable for consultation due to Covid restrictions.

⁷⁷ Journal of a voyage from London to the Indian Ocean, made by the Barque *Reliance (1832-35)* kept by Richard Francis Burton, Surgeon, SLSA: PRG113/5/37 Available at https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/2497

Surgeon	Vessel	Dates	Published date	Medical Qualifications on departure
William Dalton	Phoenix	1823-1825	Gunson, 1990	LSA, 1822
	Harriet	1826-1829		
John Lyell	Ranger	1829-1832	Unpublished	Licentiate of
				RCSEd 1829 ⁷⁸
Thomas Beale	Kent,	1830-1832	Beale, 1839	No formal
	Sarah and Elizabeth	1832-1833		credentials. ⁷⁹
Richard Francis Burton	Reliance	1832-1835	Online, 2021	LSA 1838 ⁸⁰
John Coulter	Stratford	1832-1836	Coulter, 1845	MRCS 1827
F.D.Bennett	Tuscan	1833-1836	Bennett, 1840	LSA 1828
				MRCS 1829
George Eaton Stanger	Sarah and Elizabeth	1836-1837	Unpublished	LSA unknown,
				MRCS 1840 ⁸¹
Eldred Fysh	Coronet	1837-1839	Unpublished	MRCS 1837 ⁸²
Robert Smith Owen	Warrens	1837-1840	Unpublished	LSA C.1829
John Wilson	Gipsy	1839-1843	Forster, 1991	LSA 1839
				MRCS 1844
James Brown	Japan	1832-1836	Unpublished	LSA 1825

Figure 6.14 Table of extant journals of whaling surgeons in the BSWF. Information collated from Druet (2013) *Rough Medicine,* and Forster (1988) British whaling surgeons

Surgeons were recruited for whaling voyages via coffee houses, at provincial fairs (such as the Cuckoo Fair in Sussex where Captain Underwood recruited his surgeon) or in the case of the Arctic Fishery, notes were pinned on the gates of the University of Edinburgh.⁸³ They required only a Licence of the Society of Apothecaries (LSA) or membership of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS), or the Scottish equivalent (RCSEd) and referred to themselves interchangeably as doctors or surgeons.⁸⁴ The LSA was a requirement for general practice and the Apothecaries' Act of 1815 required the applicant for to be of good moral standing, over

⁷⁸ Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, https://archiveandlibrary.rcsed.ac.uk/surgeon/3761360-john-lyell (accessed April 2022)

⁷⁹ However, Forster states that Beale had studied at a medical school in London between 1827 and 1829 then worked as a 'medical assistant' at the school and at a hospital. Forster (1988) British whaling surgeons, p.406

⁸⁰ Dr Julie Papworth, pers comm. February 2021

⁸¹ Anon (1840) *Guy's Hospital Reports*. London: Samuel Highley, p.398

⁸² Churchill, J. (1847) *The London and Provincial Medical Directory*. London: John Churchill

⁸³ Druett, J. (2013) Rough Medicine, p.5. Laing, J. (1825) A Voyage to Spitzbergen; Containing an Account of that Country, of the Zoology of the North; of the Shetland Islands; and of the Whale Fishery. With an Appendix, Containing an Historical Account of the Dutch, English and American Whale Fisheries ... Edinburgh: For the author

⁸⁴ The term physician was reserved for a university-trained gentleman concerned with 'pure' medicine: Forster (1988) 'British whaling surgeons, p.407

twenty-one years of age and to have completed a five-year apprenticeship to an apothecary. Additionally, they had to have attended a course on specific medical topics, been examined, and undertaken six months residency at a hospital.⁸⁵ The qualification for membership of the Royal College of Surgeons was only marginally more stringent, and as can be seen from Table 6.1, most of the whaleship doctors discussed were newly qualified and therefore lacked significant medical, and certainly surgical, experience; a fact admitted by George Eaton Stanger in his journal.⁸⁶ However, there were exceptions: Frederick Debell Bennett, who had worked as an assistant surgeon in the Royal Navy, held both the LSA and MRCA.⁸⁷

While a basic knowledge of natural history was part of the training of naval surgeons, no such skills were required of a whaling surgeon. In fact, the requirements of the role were unclear, even to the men themselves. Whaleship surgeons were often involved in the day-to-day work on board the whaling vessel (sometimes to their surprise after embarkation), undertaking tasks such as manning the masts to keep a lookout, keeping the logbook, keeping watch over the vessel when the crew were engaged in the hunt.⁸⁸ Whaleship captains may well have viewed an able-bodied man onboard who did not pull his weight, especially where he was paid proportional to the value of the catch, as a threat to the social order of the ship. By allocating him tasks often carried out by junior crew the captain was signalling to the wider crew that everyone was under his control, even the surgeon. Certainly, the meagre size of the surgeon's lay can be seen as a reflection of their status onboard: as Honore Forster notes, John Wilson's lay on the Gipsy was at 1/140 was barely more than the foremast hands at 1/160.⁸⁹ In several cases the presence of the surgeon, and his collecting practices, were tolerated rather than embraced by the captain. However, this would appear to be very much down to the temperament of the captain. James Brown, surgeon on the Japan (see Figure 6.15) had a terrible relationship with his irascible and sometimes violent captain. Thomas Beale transferred from the Kent to the Sarah and Elizabeth mid-ocean to escape the captain, who was a "mean and contemptable tyrant" who had "estranged from him every soul in the

⁸⁵ Forster (1988) 'British whaling, p.407

⁸⁶ Journal of the Surgeon, George Eaton Stanger, Saturday 21st January 1837

⁸⁷ Bennett was not, as the title page of his 1840 *Narrative* states, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, but he was a member. The category of Fellow did not exist until 1843. Ruth llott, RCS Archives Assistant, pers comm, May 2022

⁸⁸ See Druett (2013) Rough Medicine

⁸⁹ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, p.xvi

ship."⁹⁰ Conversely, Bennett acknowledged his deep obligation to Captain Stavers and the officers of the *Tuscan* "for their extreme kindness [...] and indispensable aid in furthering my enquiries [collecting]."⁹¹



Figure 6.15 Scrimshawed sperm whale tooth depicting the whaleship *Japan* upon which surgeon James Brown served. Creator unknown. NMMG: Accession number AAA0026

The experiences surgeons had of working with whaling captains would seem to be a matter of personality and luck. According to John Wilson,

The Surgeon on Board a whaler (may profit by the experience), providing he sails with Captain and officers who have some knowledge of Natural History, or who are not so entirely absorbed with the object of gain, as to allow some little indulgence the one who may contribute (by their indulgence) to enlarge the sphere of our knowledge and contribute to the utilities of life [...] opportunities are present to a Voyager in one of these [whale] ships, to amass many rare or unknown specimens, and to contribute [to] the description of people and places not known.⁹²

Whereas British naval voyages carried strict instructions for captain, surgeon and crew which included the requirement to hand-over all journals, logs and materials relating to the voyages on their return, and a moratorium on forming personal collections, no such restrictions were

⁹⁰ Beale (1839) *A Few Observations,* eBook location: 4196

⁹¹ Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, Vol.1, p.viii

⁹² Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, p.382

placed upon whaleship crews including surgeons.⁹³ For example, in the course of the voyage of the Tuscan, surgeon Bennett collected a total of 743 dried specimens of plants, 233 preparations of animals, "most of which are rare, and many of them unique." The majority of the botanical specimens were deposited with the eminent botanists A. B. Lambert, vicepresident of the Linnean Society,⁹⁴ and to "Professor Don" presumably David Don (1799-1841), professor of botany at King's College, London, and Librarian to the Linnean Society.⁹⁵ His zoological specimens were deposited in the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in London.⁹⁶ The only artefacts of material culture which Bennett appeared to have collected during the voyage were two adzes from Pitcairn Island given to him by a descendant of an *Bounty* mutineer.⁹⁷ He makes no mention of these objects or where they were deposited. Conversely, Thomas Beale collected such a substantial haul of objects that on transferring to the Sarah and Elizabeth "the whaleboat that I was in so completely filled with curiosities and shells that the oars could not be used, so that the men were obliged to make use of paddles instead."98 By Beale's own admission each whaleboat was twenty-seven feet long and four in breadth (an example can be seen in Figure 6.16a).⁹⁹ Even making allowances for the whaling gear stowed inside (Figure 6.16b) Beale appears to have collected an enormous amount of artefacts which raises the question of where he stowed them, and to what extend did the space allocated to whaling surgeons facilitate, and direct, their collecting endeavours.

⁹³ See Simpson, D. (2018) Agency, Encounter and Ethnographic Collecting: The Royal Navy in Australia, c.1772-1855. PhD Thesis. Royal Holloway, University of London

⁹⁴ There is no record of Frederick Debell Bennett ever being a Fellow or member of the Society despite his donations. Luke Thorne, Assistant Archivist LSA, pers comm, May 2022

⁹⁵ Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, Vol 1, p.viii, Professor Don could also refer to David's brother, George Don Jnr (1798-1856). See Stearn, W.T. (2018) 'Don, David (1799–1841), botanist'

⁹⁶ Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, Vol 1, p.viii, See also List of Preparations in Spirit presented to the College of Surgeons by Frederick Debell Bennett Esq. MRCS etc. December 1836. RCS Museums and Archives: MS0025/1/2/2/5

⁹⁷ Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, Vol 1, p.57-58

⁹⁸ Beale (1839) A Few Observations, eBook location: 4209-4211

⁹⁹ Beale (1839) *A Few Observations,* eBook location: 1981





Figure 6.16a & 6.16b Reconstruction of a whaleboat and whaleboat interior., Butler's Point Whaling Museum, Hihi, New Zealand. Image taken June 2019.

On a vessel in which much so time was spent looking outward - for whales, for islands, for other vessels, for the weather - it is no surprise that little energy should have been expended on describing the interior of the vessel. Relatively little information about the actual layout of the surgeon's quarters is given in surviving journals. John Coulter on the *Stratford* described them thus: "the cabins are very comfortable. There is one large messroom with the officer's state rooms off it; then the after cabin with its state room for the captain. [...] altogether they are very agreeable ships."¹⁰⁰ Eldred Fysh on the *Coronet* might have disagreed when he was driven out of his bunk by the bugs and cockroaches.¹⁰¹ George Eaton Stanger went so far as to enlarge his berth so that "it is now of respectable dimensions and superior to that of any of the officers."¹⁰² However, he offers no specific details, although whilst rounding the Cape he decided to swap his cot (a small solid bed) for a hammock presumably because of the motion of the vessel. As he wrote,

I have been employed all this afternoon in swinging a hammock, instead of a cot. I had just finished it and was getting into it to try how it would suit, when something gave way, and down came the hammock and myself. I caught hold of my bookcase in falling and pulled down all the books. It was altogether the most [disastrous?] scene to see.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Coulter (1845) Adventures in the Pacific, p.79

¹⁰¹ Dr Eldred Fysh, surgeon, Journal of the *Coronet*, Friday 29th December 1837

¹⁰² Journal of the Surgeon, George Eaton Stanger, Wednesday 26th October 1836

¹⁰³ Journal of the Surgeon, George Eaton Stanger, Saturday 11th March 1837



Figure 6.17 An example of the surgeon's or a mate's cabin recreated onboard the *Edwin Fox*, the world's second oldest surviving merchant sailing ship. The ship is dry-docked at The Edwin Fox Maritime Centre in Picton, New Zealand. Image: author, 2019.

From this limited information we can ascertain that there was room for the small cot, a bookshelf, and presumably a small sink and writing desk as can be seen in Figure 6.17, a recreation of a surgeon or mate's cabin onboard the *Edwin Fox*, a former merchant vessel and convict transporter now undergoing restoration in New Zealand. There would certainly not have been enough space here to store the whaleboat load of 'curiosities and shells' collected by Thomas Beale, or the four stray canoes taken onboard the whaleship *Warrens* by Robert Owen. These were unlikely to fit down the cramped stairway into one of the holds. In the case of the canoes, they were most likely stored on deck or lashed to the masts as were the specimens of whalebone (see section 6.1) a storage decision that would have required the captain's consent. Owen described one of the canoes as "gaily ornamented on her stern and woodwork with carved work" and suggested it was "supposed to be worth 40 or 50 dollars."¹⁰⁴ The wording here suggests that matters of value were discussed amongst the crew

¹⁰⁴ Robert Smith Owen, Journal of the Warrens. 5th January 1838. According to the calculation tool of the Economic History Association, the (average) value in 2020 of \$50-\$100 from 1838 is £1100.00 to £2210.00. https://eh.net/howmuchisthat/ (accessed April 2022)

and that there was an awareness of the marketability of such an artefact. Beale's goods were most likely crated in one of the holds, again with the captain's consent. Indeed, it is hard to imagine where collected items could be stored when vessels were so laden with goods that the log-keeper of the *Cyrus* "found the decks very much lumbered and crowded with casks of every kind and almost every commodity onboard."¹⁰⁵ On the return journey the crew were forced to throw fresh water overboard to free up the casks for whale oil, leaving "a very small place below for crew to live (or rather subsist) in" and the *Cyrus* "almost too deep loaded to be safe in passing Cape Horn."¹⁰⁶

Whaleship surgeons commonly complained of mould, damp and insects onboard, three of the most serious risks to artefact conservation particularly for organic materials such as bird skins. In addition, the practice of 'wetting' the hold would have created a warm, moist atmosphere making it further difficult to store anything organic. Wetting the hold was carried out to make the barrels swell and therefore stay watertight as they were prone to shrink in hot weather and leak oil. The excess water was then pumped out of the bilges. Even storing organic specimens in a sea chest, away from the holds full of oil, could prove something of a challenge. The twenty Bird of Paradise skins collected by a crewman onboard the whaleship Lusitania in 1829 were thus "rendered wholly useless" when inspected in his sea chest due to an infestation of ants.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, attempts to transport live specimens often did not fare much better than preserved ones. Live birds died from poor diet and onboard conditions. When surgeon John Wilson's lowries (small, brightly coloured parrots) died he wrote "it is seldom they live so far as England, either the food or the cold weather, or both combined, destroy them, the change being too great as they are very lively, sensitive birds."¹⁰⁸ It is unclear what happened to the gaudy parrot he collected at Buka Island in the Northern Solomons, or the monkey Robert Smith Owen collected on the Island of Celebes in 1839, or the crocodile gifted to Captain Gibson in 1842.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Log of the whaleship *Cyrus* kept by Capt. Paul West, NHA: LOG 0708, Sunday 5th January 1812

¹⁰⁶ Log of the whaleship *Cyrus*, 4th - 16th February 1812

¹⁰⁷ The Lusitania Journal, 1826-1829, NLA: MS3454, ID57429. 28th April 1829 I am grateful to Mark Howard for bringing this example to my notice and supplying a partial transcription. Mark Howard, pers comm, April 2019

¹⁰⁸ Surgeon John Wilson, Journal of the *Gipsy*. 27th January 1843

¹⁰⁹ Letter, Robert Smith Owen to Edward Smith Owen, 3rd March 1839. Transcript at the back of the journal of the *Warrens*. For the captain's crocodile see section 6.1

The environmental challenges of storage onboard a whaling vessel explain why natural history specimens, such as bird skins and botanical specimens, were so much at risk, whereas more robust items - including those made of materials such as bone, shell or wood - would stand a stronger chance of surviving the voyage. This may be why these artefacts are better evidenced in museum collections, despite representing a small proportion of the objects that may have been collected by the surgeons. It also perhaps offers an explanation as to why illustrations found within their journals are predominantly of natural history specimens rather than material culture. The overwhelming difficulties in transporting such specimens home necessitated their accurate description and/or illustration, these standing proxy for the real thing, whereas it would appear for some surgeons (such as John Lyell) material culture required no such rigorous interrogation. Despite collecting a wide array of artefacts during the voyage of the *Ranger*, the sole depiction of collected material culture in Lyell's journal is a small hand axe (see Figure 6.18). He does, however, include two pages of illustrations of whaling paraphernalia at the beginning of his journal. The inclusion of the axe amongst the natural history specimens in the same this image would appear, by its supplementary labelling OO, to be a later insertion (for reasons unknown). Furthermore, one might wonder why he drew this particular artefact (apparently a shark tooth bound onto wooden handle) rather than more unfamiliar artefacts, such as the "curious looking articles the uses of which were unknown" offered for sale at Pleasant Island (Narau in Micronesia). The latter included a carved figure "made of wood about the size of an infant but destitute of legs" and "an uncouth wooden image with the mouth covers, or opercula of shells for eyes."¹¹⁰ Perhaps the fact that they were so fundamentally 'other', being both curious and unknown, put them beyond the reach of Lyell's powers of both description and depiction. Such powers were firmly bound within the parameters of his western natural history and medical training; he was thus comfortable drawing and listing the tools required for the practice of whaling (in many ways similar to the tools for surgery, all but in scale) but the depiction of other Indigenous artefacts may have been beyond him.

¹¹⁰ It is unclear from Lyell's text whether this refers to two separate wooden figures or one. They were purchased on the same occasion at Nauru: Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, Vol 2. 2nd - 7th January 1831

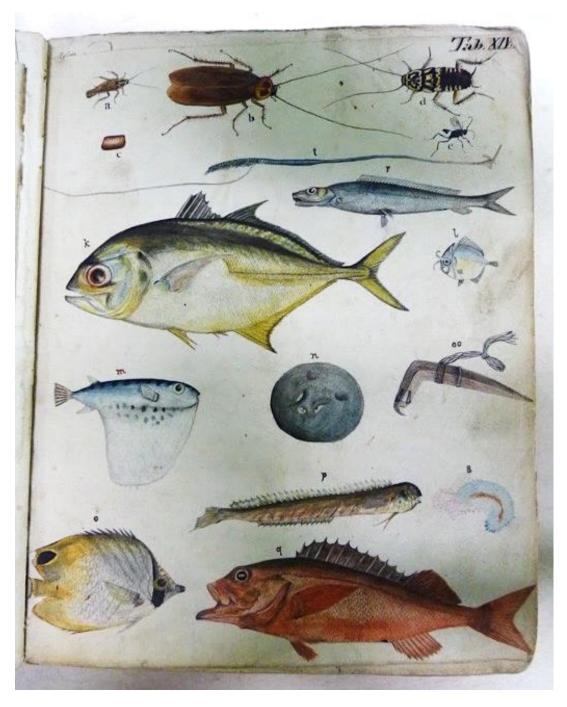


Figure 6.18 Table XIV, a page from surgeon John Lyell's journal. Amongst the many natural history specimens illustrated by Lyell the small hand axe shown here (annotated OO) is the sole representation of material culture. Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, (Vol. 2). CPK: Archive No.463

As evidenced by the beautiful illustrations in the journals of John Lyell, John Wilson, and Richard Francis Burton, whaling surgeons brought with them the basic tools to record their observations, including pens, pencils, rulers and watercolours. Surgeon Robert Smith Owen lamented not bringing a supply of watercolours onboard after returning from a botanising excursion in Kupang thus suggesting that these were personal items and not something that was readily available amongst the wider crew. Additionally, there is evidence (from inserted pages) that surgeons drew or embellished their illustrations, possibly at a later date, creating not just observational record but also an act of memorialisation. In the case of Lyell's journal, I suggest this was done with a view to publication due to a number of stylistic adaptations. These include his practice of labelling illustrations as "tables" or "figures", directing the reader to explanations within the wider text; the production of multiple images of natural history specimens from different angles, situated on a blank background; and the depiction of specimens of animalia and material culture next to each other, on a single page, irrespective of their original scale. Thus, in Figure 6.19 a sperm whale is illustrated within the same frame as a specimen of krill.¹¹¹

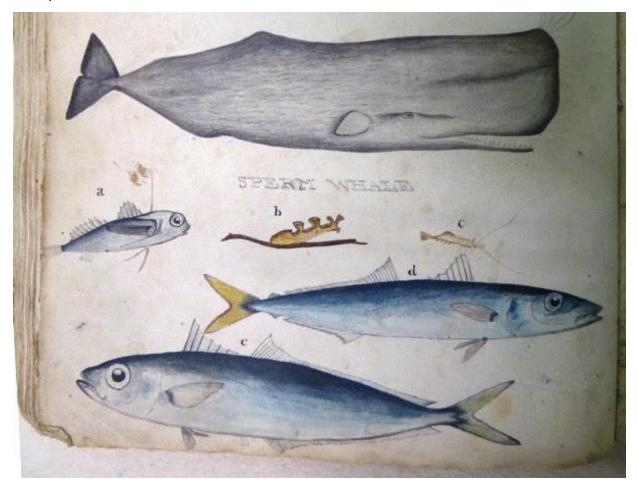


Figure 6.19 Detail of page from surgeon John Lyell's journal depicting various sea creatures including a sperm whale and an example of krill (annotated 'c'). Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, (Vol. 2). CPK: Archive No.463

¹¹¹ See Thomas, N. (1997) In Oceania: Visions, Artifacts, Histories. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Particularly, Chapter 4. Objects of knowledge, oceanic artefacts in European engravings, pp. 93-132

Furthermore, as shown in Figure 6.19, Lyell depicts insects, sea creatures, and material culture on the same page, devoid of environmental context. This is reminiscent of the format of composite illustrations within published natural history and travel narratives of Lyell's own era and of the proceeding generation of explorers (back to Cook) whose publications were so influential in shaping how natural historical knowledge was presented to the public.¹¹²

In addition to the basic tools of written and visual documentation, surgeons would also have had access to the ship's store of marine instruments.¹¹³ These consisted of the standard range of items found on all sailing vessels such as the chronometer, compass, sextant, barometer, thermometer, and sounding device, with which to safely navigate the ship and record environmental variables. Thus John Lyell regularly took sea temperatures aboard the *Ranger*, noting when off the Azorean Islands that "the temperature of the sea indicates deep water."¹¹⁴ He continued to take regular sea temperature readings as the voyage progressed. Furthermore, surgeon James Brown is revealed as the keeper of the quadrant during an argument with the captain, who on demoting him, demanded the return of books and said instrument.¹¹⁵

There is little direct evidence for the routine use of more specialist scientific instruments, such as microscopes, on board whaleships (though as yet no inventory of a whaling surgeon's belongings has been found). However, it is clear from Lyell's drawings that he must have had access to such instrumentation, or at the very least a hand lens, in order to make such detailed images of the marine organisms that he collected. Thus within his journal, one of his drawings is annotated ('Fig IX') stating that it was "magnified" (Figure 6.20). Meanwhile Bennett's precise description of marine organisms would suggest he too had access to a microscope. As such instruments were not required for the safe navigation of the vessel or for the surgeon's routine duties, there is no reason why they would have been part of the ship's basic instrumentation. Where there is evidence of their use, as in these drawings, I suggest they were part of the personal belongings of the surgeons brought onboard for the express

¹¹² See Smith, B. (1985) *European Vision and the South Pacific*. New Haven: Yale University Press

¹¹³ Journal of the whaleship Warrens kept by Dr Robert Smith Owen. See also Thomas (1997) In Oceania

¹¹⁴ Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, Ranger, Vol 1. 29th October 1929

¹¹⁵ Log of the whaleship Japan kept by Dr James Brown, 26th October 1836

purpose of observing the natural world and enabling them to create what were effectively mini-laboratories in some corner of the whaleship.

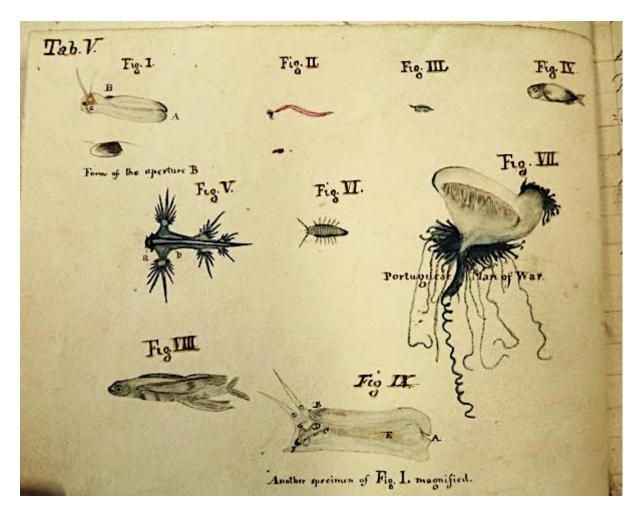


Figure 6.20 Table 5, a page from surgeon John Lyell's journal showing some of the marine organisms he illustrated, at least one of which he identifies as 'magnified' (Fig IX). Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, (Vol. 2). CPK: Archive No.463

There were other components of the shipboard infrastructure that could be repurposed for surgeons' collecting activities, including boats, fishing nets and lines. The standard tools of the surgeon's trade, such as scalpels and bone saws, could also be re-purposed for use in the autopsies of larger marine animals. Bennett's comments upon the difficulties in preserving fish specimens aboard the *Tuscan* suggest that he had brought on board, and experimented with, preparation fluids and equipment:

It is impossible to preserve specimens of this fish in any kind of spirit; for, when thus prepared, they in variably become opaque, swell to an unnatural size, and ultimately burst and fall into a flaccid state. I succeeded in bringing several examples to England, in a very complete state of preservation, by putting them into a saturated solution of

sea salt, alum, and nitre a solution which answers well, also, for the preservation of pellucid and delicate molluscs.¹¹⁶

The preparation of zoological specimens typically required adequate space and light. When George Eaton Stanger stuffed two albatrosses (birds with a wingspan of 10-15 feet according to John Coulter) it is highly unlikely he attempted this endeavour in his small cabin. He may have used the space outside his cabin that Coulter referred to as the mate's or officer's messroom which would have had a table, and crucially, a skylight. Or his preparation work may have taken place on deck and thus been an activity visible to all members of the crew. Certainly, we know that Bennett's anatomical examination of a foetal sperm whale while on board the *Tuscan* in 1835 took place on deck as the specimen was fourteen feet long, being, as Bennett surmised, within hours of birth.¹¹⁷ He credits Captain Stavers' kindness for allowing the autopsy, whereas John Wilson, onboard the *Gipsy* six years later in 1841, was only allowed a rough and hasty examination of a whale calf, "the examinations made in such a hurried manner owing to the impatience and ignorance of those around my information is necessarily imperfectly and stinted which I regret. The knowledge we have being very defective."¹¹⁸ Wilson's comments confirm that this was a public spectacle and that scientific observations carried out by whaling surgeons were mediated not just by the available space, but through the attitudes and actions of others, both those in authority (the captain) and those crew members attempting to carry out their job of trying out.

In a very different example of scientific observation of a deceased mammal, whaleman Henry Ransome of the *Elizabeth* reported in his journal that when a whaleman drank himself to death in March 1833 in Kororareka (modern-day Russell, New Zealand) the body was conveyed aboard his vessel, the *Pocklington* and subjected to an autopsy.

This morning all the captains and the surgeons of the different vessels lying in the Bay assembled aboard the *Pocklington* when the body of the sailor was dissected by the surgeons who gave it as their opinion that he had died entirely from the effects of the great quantity of spirits he had taken.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe, Vol 2, p.269

¹¹⁷ Bennett (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, Vol 2, p.167

¹¹⁸ Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy,* kept by John Wilson, Surgeon, 18th December 1841

¹¹⁹ Log of the whaleship *Elizabeth* (1831-34) kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor. SLNSW: A1418. Microfilm CY 111, 18th - 19th March 1833

It is possible that the surgeons were taking advantage of the newly passed Anatomy Act of 1832 to carry out this apparently unique occurrence (unique because whalemen succumbed to drink on a regular basis and autopsies were rare events).¹²⁰ However, the requisite 48 hours since death had not passed and there had been no opportunity for anyone to 'claim' the body, other than the captain of the *Pocklington*. Furthermore, there is no indication of what his fellow whalemen felt about the autopsy, a practice formerly reserved only for criminals. Although the autopsy itself had a restricted viewing of captains and surgeons, most likely carried out on the officers' or captain's messroom table where there was sufficient light and space for the assembled audience, there was no attempt to hide this activity from the wider crew, indeed it was marked with some ceremony. The vessels in the bay "hoisted their colours at half-mast" presumably as a mark of respect at this unusual occurrence and the body was conveyed to shore for burial accompanied by the sound of the tolling of the ship's bells. As far as has been ascertained the practice of autopsy appears in no other sources relating to British whaling, therefore this example offers evidence of a different type of scientific inquiry aboard whaling vessels, one strictly mediated by captains and surgeons.

In the course of a whaling voyage, surgeons also swapped artefacts and specimens with those on board and with local inhabitants, traders and naval officers. Surgeon John Wilson was either particularly active in this practice of exchange, or just better at recording it than other surgeons, as it is his journal that provides the bulk of examples. In September 1840 at Rota in the Ladrone Islands (Marianna Islands, Guam) Wilson was given some "sling stones used by the aborigines in their wars" and a sample of gum that "gradually hardens by exposure to the atmosphere it until it attained the majority of flint."¹²¹ The donor was a Scotsman named John Anderson who had been resident at Rota for over twenty years. According to Wilson "it is reported he was [a] Lieutenant in the English Navy, was guilty of a breach of trust, and fled here."¹²² It is unclear whether Wilson offered any artefacts in exchange for the goods he received. Furthermore, in November 1841 at Honolulu Wilson was given specimens of vitrified lapiliform glass from the Kilauera volcano by Mr Taylor, surgeon on the whaleship *Fawn*. The specimen "which is rare and obtained with difficulty," had been acquired by Mr

¹²⁰ The Anatomy Act 1832 (2 & 3 Will. IV c. 75)

¹²¹ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 13th September 1840, p.112

¹²² Forster and Wilson (1991) The cruise of the 'Gipsy', 13th September 1840, p.112

Taylor a few days previously whilst on an excursion to the crater of the volcano accompanied by two Hawaiian guides.¹²³ Presumably it was them who provided the information that "the natives call it Pella's hair, from a goddess whose evil attributes condemned her to that fiery abode," referring to Pele, the Hawaiian Goddess of volcanoes.¹²⁴

Wilson also acquired specimens and artefacts from naval surgeons, as in the case of an aboriginal skull and some weaponry gifted by surgeon Mr Whipple of HMS Chameleon in October 1842 at Kupang.¹²⁵ Wilson noted in his journal that also on board the ship were two Australian natives dressed in duck frock and trousers acting as servants for Commander Hunter, the captain of the *Chameleon*, which was en route from Port Essington to Surabaya in Java.¹²⁶ Frederick James Whipple had arrived in Australia in 1838 where he joined HMS Alligator and proceeded to the northern settlement of Port Essington to work as assistant surgeon. In 1843, a few months after the meeting at Kupang documented by Wilson, Whipple joined Captain Francis Price Blackwood (1809–1854) as part of the surveying voyage of HMS Fly (1842-1846) and spent two years surveying the Torres Straits and the south coast of Papua New Guinea. During this time, he is known to have acquired (at least) four skulls from a Long house in New Guinea. Two of these he gifted to Blackwood who deposited them with the Royal College of Surgeons.¹²⁷ In addition, Whipple is thought to be the donation source for several artefacts now in the British Museum.¹²⁸ His gifts of an aboriginal skull and weapons to Wilson, which preceded this better-known phase of collecting on board HMS Fly, serves to highlight the intersection between the collecting practices of Royal Navy and whaling surgeons as well as drawing attention to the potential loss of provenance information that accompanied these transactions.

¹²³ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 13th November 1841, p.222

¹²⁴ The hair to which Wilson referred is former by stands of liquid lava solidifying on contact with the air. See Forster's note, No. 274. Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 13th November 1841, p.222

¹²⁵ Forster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, 14th October 1842, p.327

¹²⁶ Forster and Wilson (1991) The cruise of the 'Gipsy', 14th October 1842, p.327. From information gleaned from The Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle this would appear to have been a round trip voyage from Port Essington (perhaps a supply voyage) to Cape Town. HMS Chamelion returned to Port Essington in January 1843. See Anon (1853) The Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle: A Journal of Papers on Subjects Connected with Maritime Affairs. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Company, p.120

¹²⁷ Jukes, J. B., (1847) Narrative of the Surveying Voyage of H.M.S. Fly, commanded by Captain F. P. Blackwood, R.N. In Torres Strait, New Guinea, and other Islands of the Eastern Archipelago, during the Years 1842-1846: together with an Excursion into the Interior of the Eastern Part of Java. London: T. & W. Boone, p.356

¹²⁸ https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/AUTH234060 (Accessed May 2022)

Further examples of knowledge and gift exchange took place between whaleship surgeons and colonial vessels. These included the visit of surgeon James Brown from the whaleship *Japan* to meet the sole survivors of the wreck of the *Charles Eaton* aboard the *Isabella* in Kupang harbour in August, 1836.¹²⁹ The *Isabella* (Captain Lewis) had been fitted out by the colonial government of Sydney to search the Torres Straits for the crew of the *George Eaton*, lost two years previously on a passage from Sydney to Bombay.¹³⁰ Captain Lewis succeeded in finding the sole survivors, two boys aged eighteen and four years old who were traded for metal implements.¹³¹ The *Isabella* also carried a substantial number of artefacts including masks, carvings, items of dress and weapons that were donated to the Australian Museum in Sydney the following year, thus forming the earliest institutional collection of Torres Strait Islander art in the world.¹³² Also onboard were forty-five skulls (seventeen of which were from the massacred crew and passengers of the *Charles Eaton*). They had been found at Aureed Island attached to an elaborate tortoiseshell headdress (see Figure 6.21). Captain Lewis offered this description in the ensuing voyage narrative published in 1837, a year after he had met James Brown in Kupang:

The skulls were systematically arranged around a large figure, the central piece of which was a tortoiseshell smeared in red. The figure was between four and five feet long by about two feet and a half. A semi-circle projection stood out from the forehead of the figure also made from tortoise shell fancifully cut and ornamented with feathers.¹³³

¹²⁹ Log of the whaleship Japan kept by Dr James Brown, 28th August 1836

¹³⁰ Log of the whaleship Japan kept by Dr James Brown, 24th August 1836

¹³¹ See McInnes, A., (1981). The wreck of the "Charles Eaton". *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 11 (4) 21-50

¹³² The Australian Museum's secretary and curator was George Bennett, the brother of whaling surgeon F. D. Bennett. See Lahn, J. (2013). The 1836 Lewis Collection and the Torres Strait Turtle-Shell Mask of Kulka: From Loss to Re-engagement, *Journal of Pacific History*, *48*(4), 386–408

¹³³ Lewis quoted in McInnes (1981). The wreck of the "Charles Eaton", p.41. The official voyage narrative was written by Philip Parker King but was pre-empted by one published in 1836 by a junior officer onboard. See King, P.P. (RN) (1837) A Voyage to Torres Strait in Search of the Survivors of the Ship Charles Eaton, wrecked 1834, in his Majesty's Colonial Schooner Isabella, C. M. Lewis, Commander; arranged from the journal and logbook of the Commander. Inc. vocabulary of the language of the Murray and Darnley Islanders. Sydney: E.H. Statham. See also, Brockett W.E., (1836) Narrative of a Voyage from Sydney to Torres' Straits: in Search of the Survivors of the Charles Eaton, in His Majesty's colonial schooner Isabella, C.M. Lewis, commander, Sydney: Henry Bull



Figure 6.21 The tortoiseshell mask found at Aureed, adorned with human skulls drawn by W. E. Brockett, a junior officer on the *Isabella*. Image source: William Edward Brockett's, (1836) *Narrative of a Voyage from Sydney to Torres' Straits*

Although Brown does not mention any further details in his journal, he was one of the few people to meet the survivors, and potentially see the skull mask in its entirety before the skulls (separated from the mask) were interred in Sydney three months later. The artefact itself was given to the Australian Museum and was thought to have been destroyed in a fire in 1882. However, it has been suggested initially by Donald Fraser and further supported by the research of Julie Lahn, that the mask was transferred to the Nationalmuseet (National Museum) in Denmark as part of a formal institutional exchange a few years prior to the fire.¹³⁴ It is thought to be the only extant cultural object known to be associated with Aureed Island, and a unique expression of Torres Strait Islander art.¹³⁵

6.3 Foremast hands as collectors

'Foremast hands' were the ordinary seamen, or able-bodied seamen and apprentices who messed in the fo'castle, the cramped forward part of the vessel, separate from the more senior members of the crew.¹³⁶ A review of first-hand sources reveals this to be a space of mixed ethnicities and levels of seafaring experience: for example, the crew list of the *Foxhound* (discussed in Chapter 7) lists at least one Peruvian, one New Zealander and one man from New South Wales.¹³⁷ The *Lusitania* carried five Marquesans when it departed from London, to be returned home during the course of the voyage (as stipulated by law), and the *L'Aigle* under captain Valentine Starbuck repatriated two Hawaiians from London in 1822 (before returning with the King and Queen of Hawaii two years later).¹³⁸ Foremast hands (of diverse ethnicities) made up the bulk of the workforce on a whaleship and yet they are the group historians know the least about. Relevant sources consist of a handful of memoirs published by below deck whalemen on British ships in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some of which achieved a significant level of popular readership when published. For example, Frank Bullen's (1895) *The Cruise of the 'Cachalot' Round the World After Sperm Whales* documents the experiences of a British man onboard an American whaleship. Other

¹³⁶ On larger vessels the apprentices were sometime separate from fo'castle, living in a small half deck nearby.

¹³⁴ See Fraser, D., (1978) Torres Straits Sculpture: a study in Oceanic primitive art New York, and Lahn, J., (2013) The 1836 Lewis Collection and the Torres Strait Turtle-Shell Mask of Kulka: From Loss to Reengagement. *The Journal of Pacific History*, 48(4), pp.386-408

¹³⁵ Lahn (2013) The 1836 Lewis Collection, p.23

¹³⁷ New South Wales Muster list, the presence of a New Zealander is taken from Bennett, F.D., 1840. *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage Round the Globe, From the Year 1833 to 1836,* London p.272

¹³⁸ Log of the *Lusitania*, 20th January 1827

published narratives include James Choyce's, *The Log of Jack Tar*,¹³⁹ and the memoirs of John Nicols.¹⁴⁰ Choyce served on eight British whalers, starting as an apprentice seaman in the 1790s rising to captain in the 1820s. Nicols moved from the Navy to the merchant service, whaling in both the Arctic and Southern fisheries and on the female convict transport ship *Lady Julianna* in 1789. Less well known are examples such as the narratives of whaleman Thomas W. Smith or Charles Sparshatt, whose mid-nineteenth century memoirs focus on the more daring and dangerous aspects of a whaling journey as evidenced by their titles which allude to shipwreck, disaster, privation and suffering, presumably to appeal to as wide a market as possible.

Such sources offer insights into the damp and cramped conditions of the fo'castle, they outline the geography of the whaling vessel, the international make-up of the crew, their attitudes toward authority, and aspects of health, from a unique perspective. However, they are edited and published with a view to commercial success, often leaving little space for comment upon more specialist topics including collecting, ethnography or natural history. However, there are exceptions: Choyce wrote of the practice of smoking human heads in Timor and of collecting gold dust. He also noted seismic events such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Furthermore, Choyce pondered that the species of land turtle he had seen on the Galapagos Islands were in some way different from turtles elsewhere, many years before Darwin made such assertions.¹⁴¹ Robert Jarman's *Journal of the Voyage in the South seas, in the "Japan", employed in the Sperm Whale Fishery* (1838) contains accounts of both Australian aboriginals and Pacific Islanders.¹⁴² As the son of a Suffolk printer Jarman had a distinct advantage when it came to getting his journal published. Examples that have entered

¹³⁹ What I believe to be Choyce's original manuscript from 1825 has been traced by this project. It is in the National Library of New Zealand, Wellington: A Narrative of some adventures, voyages & travels in various parts of the world by a British Mariner written by himself 1825', MS-0501. The manuscript was transferred from TNA in 1937 and does not differ significantly from the published version: Choyce, J. (1891) *The log of a Jack Tar*. Maidstone: George Mann. The ethnographic details and the examples of collecting matched up in both sources, but much of the maritime content had been edited out, possibly because it was considered repetitious or of limited interest to an 1891 audience. However, a researcher may find the original manuscript in Choyce's own words a source of some interest and there is scope for further work here.

¹⁴⁰ Nichol, J. (1822) *The Life and Adventures of John Nichol, Mariner (in his own words)*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood

¹⁴¹ Choyce (1891) *The log*

 ¹⁴² Jarman, R. (1838) A Journal of the Voyage in the South seas, in the "Japan", employed in the Sperm Whale Fishery, under the command of Capt. John May. Beccles: London: Longman and Co.

scholarly circles that touch upon the life of a British whaleman, but not as a central vein to the narrative, include William Mariner's first-hand account of living on the Tongan Islands before the arrival of the missionaries (Mariner sailed from London in 1805 aboard the whaler and privateer *Port au Prince*) and a journal kept by crewman Edward Robarts of the whaleship *Euphrates.* Robarts left the ship at the Marquesses where he lived for a number of years. His journal exists in the National Library of Scotland and was edited and published by historian Greg Dening in 1974.¹⁴³ As both Mariner and Robarts' narratives document a period of time after leaving the employment of their respective whaling vessels and residing ashore, they are of limited use to historians looking for evidence of collecting practices aboard whaleships. However, they offer unique portrayals of Tongan and Marquesan life rich with cultural and social description.

From the scant sources that survive, it can be deduced that the young men who joined whaleships as foremasts hands did so for a range of reasons. In the case of James Choyce, who was a sixteen-year old son of a farmer who signed on as an apprentice, these included a wish to see the world, "as being naturally of a roving disposition" he chose to "try my fortune in foreign climes."144 In some cases, such as that of Thomas Reed Stavers, who went to sea aged ten and published a brief journal in later life (discussed in Chapter 7), they were learning the ropes of the family trade. However, this cross-generational pattern was far less common amongst British whaling recruits compared with that of the American East Coast whaling fraternity.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, there were more prosaic reasons for joining the crew of a whaler, such as desperation for employment, or simply escape. While some were employed on a single whale ship voyage, many were career whalemen who had made this their life's occupation, never rising above the station of a foremast hand. Foremast hands were generally, though by no means exclusively, drawn from the lower social classes. However, amongst their numbers were also young men from the merchant classes described within Elmo Paul Hohman's study of an American whaleship as "adventurous youths [...] alert and intelligent individuals, spoilt sons, and roving adventurers". Most information about crewmen

¹⁴³ Dening, G. (1974) *The Marquesan Journal of Edward Robarts 1797-1824*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii. Original manuscript; National Library of Scotland: Adv. MS.17.1.18

¹⁴⁴ Choyce (1891) *The log*, p.3

¹⁴⁵ See Hohman, E.P. (1928) *The American Whaleman*, (specifically chapter V, Forecastle and Cabin, p.48)

is gleaned from cursory mentions in the logs and journals of their superiors, and often only when they have committed some form of misdemeanour. As such these are narrated mainly through the lens of rank and class, meaning that what they say about the quotidian experiences of ordinary crew members is refracted and often distorted. Primary source material written by the below deck whaleman on BSWF vessels is extremely rare. Research for this thesis revealed only two unpublished accounts, both of which appear to fall into the category of "adventurous youths" within Hohman's typology. Henry Ransome was a 21-year-old East Anglian man who signed on as ordinary seaman in 1831 on the whaling ship *Elizabeth*, and Henry Foster, a fourteen-year-old from Deal in Kent, who was an apprentice aboard the *Sussex* in 1840.¹⁴⁶ Both were first-time sailors who went to sea with their family's blessing. Ransome's journal is in the State Library of New South Wales and Foster's journal, written in the 1860s but recollecting his time aboard the *Sussex* twenty years before, is held in the Rayner Special Collections Library at Dartmouth College, USA.¹⁴⁷ Brief extracts of the latter were published in a biographical pamphlet in 1877. ¹⁴⁸

Genealogical research, corroborated by evidence within his journal, strongly suggests that Henry Ransome was the son of a successful industrialist from Ipswich in Suffolk. The Ransome family are still widely known within East Anglia due to their success in designing and patenting agricultural implements during the late eighteenth century. By the mid 1800s Ransome and Sons employed over 1500 men, so it seems likely that Henry was relatively well educated. Foster went to sea following in the footsteps of his older brother and, like Ransome, he was also well educated. He attended a Nautical School established in Deal by gentlemen, "principally captains in the Royal Navy", under the patronage of the local parish clergyman.¹⁴⁹ Here Foster excelled in mathematics and navigation, but he also had an appreciation of prevalent scientific concerns of the era. On meeting the captain of the *Sussex* for the first time Foster confidently identified himself as "a bit of a physiognomist [...] I think I never saw a finer

¹⁴⁶ Log of the whaleship *Elizabeth* (1831-34) kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor. SLNSW: A1418, Microfilm CY 111

¹⁴⁷ Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster. RSCL: CODEX D03 385

¹⁴⁸ The journal is being transcribed in its entirety by this author. For the extracts, Newman, G. (1877) *Memoir of James Anderson by George Newman and Recollections of a South Sea Whaler (H Foster)*. Gravesend: Smither brothers

¹⁴⁹ Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster, p. 4

countenance in my life than that of Captain Hammer."¹⁵⁰ Therefore the education of both men was above and beyond that of basic literacy and numeracy, indeed, Foster worked out the observations for Captain Hammer and Ransome took to teaching an islander to read and write in Tonga. Additionally, from Ransome's journal it is clear he was familiar with the writings of the poet Byron and Cook voyage literature.

Both these whalemen collected material culture and natural history specimens, although Ransome's collecting ranged far more widely than Foster's. However, there is no trace of their collections today, other than within their journals. As such, their collections fall into the "non-extant object" category (see Chapter 3). Between them they collected shells, corals, fishhooks, and, in the case of Ransome, items of weaponry, mats and spears. In addition, Ransome attempted to procure a Tiki at the Bay of Islands in 1831, noting that "they set a great value upon them and are very unwilling to part with them."¹⁵¹ Despite his best efforts he failed. Both individuals collected natural history specimens, specifically corals and shells, and Ransome, in particular, expressed a great interest in the wildlife he saw. Meanwhile, Foster narrated a singular event after a typhoon off the coast of Japan. The crew caught and hauled onboard a "trunk" (leatherback) turtle which he described as being over seventeenfoot long (see Figure 6.22 for Foster's illustration):

We lowered and harpooned him and hoisted him on board, he weighed nearly two tonnes. What appeared to be the shell of the animal was nothing but a thick horny blubber and produced more than a barrel of oil. He measured over 17 feet from nose to tail, the flesh was scarcely edible.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster, n/p, Chapter 3

¹⁵¹ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth (1831-34)* kept by Henry Ransome, 28th August 1831

¹⁵² Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster, n/p, Chapter 3

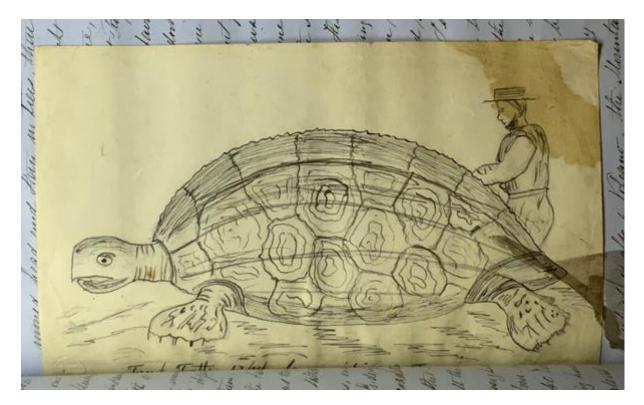


Figure 6.22 A drawing inserted into the journal of Henry Foster of a seventeen-foot-long leatherback turtle caught off the coast of Japan in 1840 by the crew of the *Sussex*. Image from the manuscript: Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster

If one considers the largest leatherback ever recorded was only nine feet long then this would indeed have been a truly remarkable occurrence.¹⁵³ Foster himself states in his journal that he had never seen one bigger than three foot and that was in the British Museum.¹⁵⁴ The dimensions of this catch as described by Foster clearly raise doubts about his credibility as an accurate observer and reporter of natural knowledge. Nonetheless, he went to great pains to stress his Christian convictions throughout his journal, and one senses that exaggeration was not in his nature. Furthermore, over thirty years later Foster was still repeating his story. He was the author of an article entitled 'Turtle of Gigantic Size' which was published in the Leisure Hour, a popular magazine published by the Religious Tract Society, in March 1876.¹⁵⁵ While there was a surgeon onboard the Sussex, Foster makes no mention of any attempt to dissect or preserve the specimen. Even if the crew of the *Sussex* had wanted to do so, one

¹⁵³ This specimen is on display at National Museum Cardiff, it was washed ashore on Harlech beach, <u>Gwynedd</u>, in September 1988. https://museum.wales/articles/1009/The-largest-turtle-in-the-world/ (Accessed December 2021)

¹⁵⁴ Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster, n/p, Chapter 3

 ¹⁵⁵ See Haig, W. (1876) The Leisure Hour: An Illustrated Magazine for Home Reading. March edition. London:
 W. Stevens, p.156

suspects the logistics of storing a two-tonne turtle (alive or dead) would have been insurmountable. Furthermore, announcement of the 'discovery' would likely have been deferred to either the surgeon or the captain as the pre-eminent men aboard the vessel, just as it did in the examples of the whalebone jaws that were later donated to museums. These were hunted, caught, brought on board, and processed by the crew, not by the men who ultimately donated them. Thus, the role played by the crews of whaleships in the collection of oversized natural history specimens is largely erased from the provenance of such objects.

There were many factors that affected whalemen's ability to engage in collecting. These included access to the basic opportunities to trade or collect; access to money or another suitable exchange commodity; and space to store specimens and curiosities. Added to this were other factors which limited or enabled collecting activity, such as language barriers and the extent of the captain's control over trading relations. Permission to allow the crews of passing canoes on board a whaling ship depended on the captain, and often it was denied for fear of theft or being overpowered. The latter was a very real possibility, as John Wilson wrote at Buka Bay in 1842,

numerous canoes put off from the land paddling towards us, and in no long time the ship was surrounded with them. I counted near 30 and among them two large War canoes holding 40 men [...] it was far from agreeable to be thus surrounded by hostile savages whose intentions, whether friendly or not we had no means of knowing [...] prudence however, will teach everyone, ever to be guarded against the remotest chance of treachery.¹⁵⁶

Nonetheless, there is substantial archival evidence for trade taking place between crew members on the deck of the whaleship and those of visiting canoes, with or without either party boarding the other. Although these material exchanges were for predominantly small, portable objects and foodstuffs, this was not always the case. Captain Gibson's twelve-man canoe was purchased during an such a vessel-to-vessel trade scenario (see section 6.1). In such cases the Islanders brought with them what they were prepared to exchange, therefore they were in control of what material culture was leaving their locale and what they were prepared to let foreign visitors see. Additionally, there were periods during a whaling voyage when vessels were in port, for activities like ship maintenance, or simply periods of rest and

 ¹⁵⁶ Foster, H. (ed.) and Wilson, J. (1991) The Cruise of the 'Gipsy': the Journal of John Wilson, Surgeon on a Whaling Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843. United States: Ye Galleon Press. pp. 265 - 267

recuperation for the crew. During these periods crew were either staying onshore within the local community, or they were given restricted shore-leave but remained sleeping onboard. John Wilson wrote that "the crew were provided with handkerchiefs instead of money which are taken by the natives as payment for board and lodging."¹⁵⁷ During one such period of shore-leave in Tonga, Henry Ransome took the opportunity to trade with the locals: the "Starboard watch ashore, and it being a fine day went for a long ramble in the plantations and traded with the natives at their houses for what shells and clubs I could procure."¹⁵⁸ Such repeat visits built a level of familiarity, sometimes including a basic understanding of local language. Furthermore, they bred an appreciation of merchandise available at specific locations, and potentially the opportunity for targeted collection. For example, surgeon Lyell noted that the shells available at Cushie in Timor (now known as Okusi/Ocussi in East Timor were much superior to those at nearby Batogady (Batu Gadeh/Batugade).¹⁵⁹ Both were popular whaleship revictualling points.

Patterns of acquisition, as determined from journal sources, show that Ternate and Batogady in Timor, the Moluccas Islands (Spice islands), and the New Guinea Islands were common places to purchase live birds. As Henry Foster wrote, "lory [lorikeets] and paradise birds are as numerous as the bees in an English garden."¹⁶⁰ Surgeon Robert Smith Owen confirmed that "Ternate is famous for its Birds of Paradise and Lowries, the former may be had for as high as 5 rupees and the later for 1 or 2."¹⁶¹ Also available were bird skins and feathers, Foster noted that the crew collected many lowries but "paradise birds were never taken alive."¹⁶² Arrows and spears were for sale from the western Pacific Islands, shark's tooth weaponry from the Kiribati Islands, and clubs and weaponry from Samoa and Tonga. Furthermore, opportunistic collecting for items such as shells could be carried out at any available landfall, and this was an enthusiastic pastime amongst all sections of the crew. For example, during the course of his voyage onboard the *Elizabeth* Henry Ransome mentions collecting shells on at least five

¹⁵⁷ Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, 10th September 1840

 ¹⁵⁸ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth (1831-34)* kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 17th December 1831
 ¹⁵⁹ Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger* 14th March 1830. A list of islands visited by

whaleships in Indonesia and their modern names can be found in Foster and Wilson (1991) *The cruise of the 'Gipsy'*, Appendix 1, p.385

¹⁶⁰ Lorys were more commonly referred to as lowries in whalemen's journals. (1877) Memoir of James Anderson by George Newman and Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, p.67

¹⁶¹ Journal of the whaleship *Warrens* kept by Dr Robert Smith Owen, 14th August 1838

¹⁶² Newman (1877) *Memoir of James Anderson*, p.67

separate occasions and in his journal, Henry Foster noted clamshells on Gely (Geby/Gebe) in the Spice Islands of Indonesia, that were "enormous [...] weighing from one to two hundred weight each."¹⁶³

There is little evidence that shell collecting was a systematic activity for either Ransome or Foster, for example to fill a gap in a collection, though without a list of specific species collected it is impossible to say conclusively. However, within his shell collecting guide,¹⁶⁴ merchant sailor turned conchologist John Mawe (1766–1829) describes being approached by two boys at his shop in the Strand who wished to sell him shells collected on the coast of New Holland in the course of a whaling voyage.¹⁶⁵ They were "the finest lot of a peculiar species" ever brought to this country" and Mawe duly paid them their asking price.¹⁶⁶ In addition, he "thought it not only right but political to present them with a Guinea each to stimulate them to look out for shells on another voyage." His comments indicate it is entirely feasible that literate foremast hands such as Ransome and Foster, guided by instructions like Mawe's Shell Collector's Pilot or by advice from fellow crew members, were looking for specific varieties, either for their own collection or more likely, for financial gain. Furthermore, the language in which Mawe's guide is written appeals directly to the layman sailor-collector: he specifically entreats the captains and crew of whaleships "to pay every attention, and to gather up whatever is strewn on the beach" and even offered to pay the customs house expenses.¹⁶⁷ Shells such as the paper nautilus (a particularly sought-after variety) were to be placed "keel down," surrounded by sawdust, or sand from the beach and stowed away in a barrel or chest.¹⁶⁸ Whilst whaling on the Japan grounds Henry Foster saw "thousands" of such paper nautilus, "several of which I caught with an old hat lashed to a long pole."¹⁶⁹ According to Mawe's instructions, Foster would have then submerged them in boiling water, carefully extracted the contents before packing the shells gently into a strong receptacle, most likely

¹⁶³ Newman (1877) Memoir of James Anderson, p.63

¹⁶⁴ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of Mawe and his collection guides.

¹⁶⁵ Mawe, J. (1825) The Voyager's Companion, or Shell Collector's Pilot: with Instructions and Directions where to find the Finest Shells: also for Preserving the Skins of Animals: and the best methods of Catching and Preserving Insects. London: W. M'Dowell

¹⁶⁶ Mawe (1825) The Voyager's Companion, pp.15-16

¹⁶⁷ Mawe (1825) *The Voyager's Companion*, p.14

¹⁶⁸ Mawe (1825) *The Voyager's Companion*, p.4

¹⁶⁹ Newman (1877) *Memoir of James Anderson,* p.63

his sea-chest.¹⁷⁰ Requirements for the storage of shells were thus simple, cheap and accessible to a foremast hand, and according to Mawe, they had the opportunity to "make a few pounds by them every voyage."¹⁷¹

If opportunity was a key factor in the business of collecting, currency for exchange was another. Whilst cruising off the coast of Papua New Guinea John Wilson noted that "Gold and silver to these natives are of no value and would stand no chance with a rusty piece of iron hoop!" adding "A fishhook would be more prized than a costly diamond!"¹⁷² Wilson's comments indicate that precious metals or coins were not particularly useful in exchange scenarios. Indeed, at the Kingsmill Islands [Kiribati] the crew of the Elizabeth traded with visiting canoes and "purchased all their spears and mats for a few fishhooks" an artefact, easily fashioned and widely available onboard a vessel.¹⁷³ Common items used for trading throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans were iron hoop or any metal artefact, guns and ammunition, fishhooks, textiles, beads, and tobacco; additionally red feathers and whales' teeth had particular value within the Pacific. With the exception of the guns and ammunition, all of these items were accessible to below deck whaleman. Vessels were usually well-stocked with iron hoop for bracing the oil barrels, and when these rusted they could be repurposed for trade. Invariably trade was conducted for pieces of iron identified as "old" or "rusty." In the Spice Islands of Indonesia Henry Foster purchased specimens of coral and two gallons of nutmeg in exchange for an old file.¹⁷⁴ Whereas, at the Caroline Islands in the western Pacific Ocean, the crew of the Tuscan purchased "a few shells, some of their dresses, and other curiosities, for pieces of old iron hoop, which they were very anxious to obtain."¹⁷⁵

Tobacco could be purchased on board whaling vessels (deducted from one's earnings) and as discussed in Chapter 7, whale's teeth were abundant. Furthermore, the crew of the *Warrens* skinned a sea serpent which they found to be full of eggs. Declining to eat these themselves

¹⁷⁰ Mawe (1825) The Voyager's Companion, pp.1-2

¹⁷¹ Mawe was specifically referring to the collecting of shells by the ship's boys and the cook: Mawe (1825) *The Voyager's Companion*, p.16

¹⁷² Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy*, kept by John Wilson, Surgeon, 12th October 1840

¹⁷³ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth (1831-34)* kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor. 4^{th/5th} June 1832

¹⁷⁴ Newman (1877) *Memoir of James Anderson*, p.68

 ¹⁷⁵ Beale, T. (1839) A Few Observations on the Natural History of the Sperm Whale: with an account of the rise and progress of the fishery, etc.]. London: London: John Van Voorst, eBook location: 3538

they took them onshore at Batogady, Timor to see if they could be exchanged for shells.¹⁷⁶ The crew of the *Gipsy* were provided with handkerchiefs and knives for purchasing food and drink in Sutarano in Timor (Citrana/Kitrana), but there was nothing to stop them purchasing curios instead.¹⁷⁷ Whereas, the crew of the *Elizabeth* used blue beads as trading currency in the Samoan Islands purchasing hogs, fowls, mats, tapa, baskets and fruit.¹⁷⁸ Henry Ransome suggested that he brought beads with him on board the *Elizabeth* for the express purpose of trading.¹⁷⁹ In May 1832 At Rotumah (Rotuma, one of the Fijian Islands) he wrote "I discovered that one of my chests had been broken open and 50 rows of beads taken out which was all the trade I had."¹⁸⁰ This loss did not stop him from further collecting as within days he was trading for spears and mats in exchange for iron hoop, fish hooks and whales teeth at the Gilbert Islands).¹⁸¹

In theory, the use of everyday articles as trading currency made collecting a universal practise on board whaleships, enabling the foremast hand to participate on the same terms as his supervisors. However, the space to store collected goods was a further limiting factor especially for ordinary crew members. Ransome was unusual in his statement that he had *one* of his chests broken into, as whalemen usually only had one sea chest which was stored down in the fo'castle. The fo'castle was accessed by companionway steps situated towards the bow of the vessel that provided access to the fore hold, a half deck squeezed between the upper and lower decks. From here a narrow passageway between stacks of barrels led to the fo'castle. This forward part of the ship was often below the waterline during high seas and as a result was constantly wet:

[It] Blows half a gale of wind with a terrible head sea so that the ship makes bad weather of it., burying her bowsprit and deluging everything forward with immense seas: the forecastle where the sailors [live], Lord help us! is worse than a pigsty and not half the

¹⁷⁶ Journal of the whaleship *Warrens* kept by Dr Robert Smith Owen, September 1838

¹⁷⁷ Foster and Wilson (1991) The Cruise of the 'Gipsy', p.51

¹⁷⁸ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth (1831-34)* kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 7th November 1832

¹⁷⁹ Adding weight to the supposition that he was part of a wealthy family; in that he could afford the outlay. Even if beads were not particularly expensive, fifty strings of them may have been beyond many whalemen prior to embarkation.

¹⁸⁰ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth (1831-34)* kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 10 May 1832

¹⁸¹ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth (1831-34)* kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 6th June 1832

births [sic] are inhabitable the water pouring into the seams and the bends which are open, too open, for want of caulking, not having been caulked the [whole] voyage!¹⁸²

This area of the vessel was dark, cramped, and ill ventilated having no windows, only the companionway hatch and small prisms set into the upper deck for light.¹⁸³ It was also home to vermin, cockroaches and other pests. The two ferrets brought aboard the *Sussex* to keep the rats down were dispatched into the fo'castle and never seen again.¹⁸⁴ It presumably also housed the live birds so favoured by the crew, and their waste would have added to the general miasma. In terms of artefact storage, a whaling ship provided the worst possible conditions for the preservation of organic materials. While the whaleman's sea chest offered a significant amount of protection for more robust artefacts, it was not sufficient to ensure the survival of specimens such as the Bird of Paradise skins stored on the *Lusitania* (see section 6.2). This would perhaps explain why, with the exception of spears, which could presumably slide into some unobtrusive corner or on top of the barrels in one of the holds, Ransome and Foster would appear to have collected only what they could fit into their sea chests.

The portable nature of such collected goods made them ideal for exchange amongst crew members. This occurred through multiple processes including the auctioning of a dead crewmate's belongings including any private stores of curios. It was also possible for captains and mates to bid for belongings should they wish to, thus aiding the movement of artefacts from the fo'castle to the cabins. The money raised (in theory) went to the dead man's family. This practice normally occurred after the sea burial had taken place, or in the following days. However, there was a delay of ten months until an auction took place on board the whaleship *Coquette* after the murder of ten crew at the Marquesas Islands in 1821.¹⁸⁵ In this case, the captain was only spurred into action to organise the auction because their belongings had begun to turn mouldy, giving an indication of the conditions below deck on board the

¹⁸² Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy*, kept by John Wilson, Surgeon, 17th February 1843. Caulking refers to the practice of plugging the gaps between ship planking with oakum and sealing with a seam of pitch to make them watertight.

¹⁸³ Hohman (1928) The American Whaleman, p.80

¹⁸⁴ Recollections of a South Sea Whaler, by apprentice whaleman, Henry Foster, n/p, Chapter 3

¹⁸⁵ Log of the whaleship *Coquette*, kept by James H. Wild, NHA: LOG 54, 14th August 1821

vessel.¹⁸⁶ It also points to the shock and distress of the crew at losing so many of their crewmates in such a terrible manner that they could not bring themselves to disturb their belongings for so long. In addition to the practice of auctioning off the belongings of the deceased, whalemen exchanged collected goods for utilitarian articles. On gamming,¹⁸⁷ with the whaleship Cyrus over several days in February 1829 the journal keeper aboard the *Lusitania* (identified by researcher Mark Howard as an ordinary or able seaman named King) wrote that "among the number of the crew I met with a young man of the name of Hartell [...] From him I received a little supply of soap and thread, giving in exchange a few shells and some articles of vertu [grass material?] belonging to the ladies of New Ireland."¹⁸⁸ Thus, material culture acted as currency between crewmates in place of coinage. Although the tradition of the gam was an established whaling practice, predominantly to share knowledge regarding fruitful whaling grounds and exchange letters for, or from, home, it was not a practice that excluded other maritime communities. Admiralty and merchant vessels also hove too¹⁸⁹ and gammed with whaling vessels, thus offering opportunities for the exchange of collected artefacts and specimens, along with information and other commodities. In an interesting example of fo'castle exchange between trading vessels and whalers, Richard Henry Dana Jnr. onboard the trading vessel Alert recollected gamming with an American whaleship in 1838. Dana and his shipmates

promised to get liberty to come on board in the evening for some curiosities [...] we obtained leave, took a boat, and went aboard and spent an hour or two. They gave us pieces of whalebone, and the teeth and other parts of curious sea animals, and we exchanged books with them,- a practice very common among ships in foreign ports, by which you get rid of the books you have read and re-read, and a supply of new ones in their stead.¹⁹⁰

There were also other types of exchange, including those of a non-commercial nature. The proximity of living in such close quarters facilitated the practice of cross-cultural exchange between crewmates. Foremast hands of all ethnicities could gain a smattering of other

¹⁸⁶ Log of the whaleship *Coquette*, kept by James H. Wild, 16th June 1822

¹⁸⁷ A meeting of two or more vessels at sea, known in whaling circles as a 'gam'. It was customary for the captain of one vessel to visit the other, and the surgeon and first mate to visit their contemporaries onboard the corresponding ship(s). If time allowed and the vessels stayed in company, the foremast hands might mingle, rowing over to the other vessels to socialise and trade in gossip and belongings.

¹⁸⁸ The *Lusitania* Journal, 1826-1829, 2nd - 4th February 1829

¹⁸⁹ The practice of bringing a vessel to a stop by configuring the sails in such a way that they oppose each other, thus cancelling out the forward momentum of the vessel. It will continue to drift with the current.

¹⁹⁰ Dana, R.H. (1840) Two Years Before the Mast: A Personal Narrative. New York: Harper and Brothers, p.246

languages and an appreciation of foreign customs, such as tattooing for example, by viewing the physical bodies of their crewmates. Henry Ransome described a display of dancing performed by the different nationalities onboard the *Elizabeth*. This was initiated by the captain for the amusement of Tongan chiefs visiting from shore. However, what appears to be an innocuous display of song and dance was actually a display of power and control, for the crew were not in a position to refuse their captain.

After work was finished the Captain had all the crew on the quarterdeck and the New Zealanders and Tahitians went through their war and native dance to the great amusement of the chiefs and all present who requested some of their people to show us the Vavoo [Tongan] dance, after which some Portuguese danced a fandango and the amusement of the evening concluded by some of the English sailors joining in a country dance each of them giving us a song.¹⁹¹

Ransome recounted several other examples of dances held aboard the *Elizabeth* during her cruise. These included several by visiting Māori in the Bay of Islands in 1831 when "30 or 40 of them [were] onboard [...], the chief merit appeared to be in stamping as heartily as they could so that the very boards appeared to tremble under them."¹⁹² Indeed, such was Ransome's familiarity with different Pacific communities, or certainly those encountered during his whaling voyage, he was able to discern a Marquesan dancing amongst the Tongans during a dance display on shore in 1832.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth* (1831-34) kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 5th March 1832

¹⁹² Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth* (1831-34) kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 15th September 1831

¹⁹³ Journal of the whaleship *Elizabeth* (1831-34) kept by Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor, 27th November 1832

Chapter 7:

From ship to shore: the *Foxhound* tooth and spaces of exchange

7.1 The Foxhound tooth: a material history

In a display case at the Museum of London, Docklands, there is a carved whale's tooth in an ornate silver mount. The display is a prominent part of a small exhibition dedicated to the British Southern Whale Fishery, the only such exhibition on this subject anywhere in the UK. The tooth is carved on one side with an image of a ship thought to be the whaleship *Foxhound*, and on the other with an inscription. The inscription reads 'Taken from the jaw of a Sperm Whale captured by the bow boat of the Ship *Foxhound* / Presented by Alexander Munro to Sophia Knight / Sept 30th 1837' (see Figure 7.1). The tooth was purchased in May 2018 by the Museum of London, Docklands, for £2600 at a sale held by auctioneers, Charles Miller Ltd. It had been consigned to the sale by an unknown trader who, in turn had bought it in 2015 from the Chichester auction house, Stride and Son.¹ Despite investigations no archival trace of the tooth's whereabouts for the 178 years preceding this date have been found. The original consignor to the Stride and Son auction died in 2015 and there are no relatives to share any further information.²



Figure 7.1 *Foxhound* scrimshaw, front and rear view. MOLD: Accession number: 2018.25. Image © Charles Miller Ltd.

¹ Lot 1660, 20th November 2015. Stride and Son, Chichester, Sussex. https://www.charlesmillerltd.com/auction/lot/155--AN-HISTORICALLY-INTERESTING-silvermounted/?lot=1467&sd=1 (Accessed June 2022) Sara Sturgess, Charles Miller Ltd, pers comm, April 2019

² Stride and Son, pers comm, October 2019

The *Foxhound* tooth is one of very few known artefacts that allow a definitive link to be made between a named foremast hand, a particular whaling vessel and a collected artefact. As an object, therefore the tooth is of more than usual interest. Its biography may help to shed light on that of its one-time owner, the foremast hand, Alexander Munro. The object also allows a window into the world of a whaleman and the localities of significance through which he moved in the early nineteenth century. The aim of this chapter is to trace the artefact's journey, that of a potentially disposable whaling by-product moving through collection, creation, gifting, the commodity market and ultimately to its display. In focussing on the different stages of the object's biography, the chapter highlights how a natural object is transformed into material culture, demonstrating the value of whale's teeth in exchange relations amongst whalers and in the wider market for teeth amongst Pacific communities. It also highlights the localities and social networks through which the object moved during its life; the fo'castle, the dockside, the parlour, the auction house and the museum. In doing so the tooth's agency (as defined by Alfred Gell) is considered.³ Arjun Appadurai's writings on the politics of value suggest that "economic exchange creates value. Value is embodied in commodities that are exchanged, [therefore] commodities, like persons have social lives."4 He further suggests that by following the trajectory of objects "we can interpret the human trajectories and calculations that enliven things."⁵ By following the biography of the Foxhound tooth I aim to highlight the tooth's changing status and value in various guises: the memorial, sentimental, economic, and the domestic.

Judging from the evidence in its inscription, the *Foxhound* tooth appears to have been gifted by Alexander Munro to Sophia Knight on 30th September 1837. The relationship between the two is not clear and no archival evidence of a formal relationship, such as marriage, has been found: indeed, while it is tempting to imagine that the object had become a token of affection, Knight may have been a sibling or friend rather than a betrothed. Whatever the relationship, the gift clearly had significant sentimental value as a memento of Munro's whaling days and financial value with the addition of the silver mount. Between the moment of its collection

³ Gell, A. (1998) Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory. Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press

⁴ Appadurai, A. (ed.) (1986) *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.3

⁵ Appadurai (1998) The Social Life of Things, p.5

during the voyage of the *Foxhound* between 1817 and 1819 and Munro's gifting to Sophia Knight in 1837, it is reasonable to suppose that the tooth remained in his possession. During that time the artefact underwent significant changes both in terms of its use, meaning and value. The exact chronology of these changes is unclear. For example, was the image of the *Foxhound* engraved whilst onboard the ship, or nearly twenty years later when Munro gave the tooth to Sophia Knight? There are certain physical markers that aid this narrative: the hallmark dating the silver to 1837, the date of exchange on the inscription, the date of the *Foxhound*'s voyage and the museum accession number. These act as markers indicating key moments in the object's biography, dating its transition through the stages of specimen, curiosity, and commodity to becoming a displayed artefact.

The *Foxhound* tooth has a number of unusual features, not least the documentary nature of the inscriptions upon it. The majority of scrimshaw (loosely defined as carved or decorated mammalian skeletal material)⁶ found in museum collections is anonymous and it is unusual (although not unheard of) to have a ship's name or date upon it. To find a piece that gives a link between a named whaling vessel and a named individual is rarer still. This increases its value both within the commercial market and in the museum sector, as research can authenticate its provenance and therefore increase its historical value.⁷ The rising interest in scrimshaw and its increased commercial value has led in recent decades to the production of 'fakeshaw', a machine-made imitation scrimshaw made from polymer plastic which first appeared in Britain in the 1970s. According to scrimshaw expert Stuart M. Frank, such artefacts "spread through Europe and America like a swarm of locusts", stating in his publication *Fakeshaw*, that "most of the names, dates, and inscriptions shamelessly emblazoned on such pieces are patently false. Typically, they are either fanciful and spurious in their entirety [...] or they are historically and pictorially implausible."⁸ Frank draws a

⁶ Materials used included: whale's teeth, whalebone and baleen, narwhal and walrus tusks, and the bones of smaller cetaceans such as dolphin or pilot whale. Carved or decorated elephant tusk is not conventionally treated as scrimshaw.

⁷ For this reason, scrimshaw historian Dr Janet West suggests all named and dated scrimshaw should be treated with suspicion. Scrimshaw artefacts can be authenticated by a number of means including a microscanning technique pioneered by West, or by a heated pin prick test whereon resin melts releasing a distinctive scent, whereas whale ivory does not. West, J. and Credland, A.G. (eds) (1995) *Scrimshaw: The Art of the Whaler*. Hull: Hull City Museums & Art Galleries, p.81

⁸ Frank, S.M. and Kendall Whaling Museum (2001) *Fakeshaw: A Checklist of Plastic 'Scrimshaw' (machine-manufactured polymer scrimshaw fakes)*. Sharon, Mass., USA: Kendall Whaling Museum, p.2-3

distinction between those fakes created to deceive, and those that are museum replicas, reflected in two very different markets.

There is no doubting the authenticity of the *Foxhound* tooth or the identity of its onetime owner or maker. Alexander Munro and the entire crew of the *Foxhound* appear in two separate New South Wales Muster lists, one in November 1817 and the other in August 1818. The New South Wales Muster lists were systematic surveys of the population held periodically between 1795 and 1828 when the New South Wales census began.⁹ Thus, we know that Munro was certainly on board the *Foxhound* when it left England in 1817, when it arrived in New South Wales the same year, and when it returned there after an eight-month whaling expedition in the Pacific. The provenance of the artefact is further established by an unusual (for British scrimshaw) setting in a silver mount. The mount bears the hallmarks for the year 1837, and that of the silversmith Benjamin Smith III (1793-1850). Smith was a fashionable London silversmith considered to be one of the best London goldsmiths of the Regency era and whose work can now be found in major collections.¹⁰

The collection of whale's teeth had been going on since the earliest days of the Euro-American whale fisheries. The British Library holds a document detailing the capture of the British whaleship *Tom* by the Spanish in 1805 and the loss of her cargo: "450 barrels of sperm oil and 1050 barrels of elephant oil, a number of seal skins, 12 prime otter skins, one barrel of large whales teeth of good ivory weighing from two to three hundredweight, the whole got on the west side of Cape Horn."¹¹ American whalers sold whale's teeth to Chinese merchants who in turn sold them at the Pacific Islands where they were in huge demand, particularly amongst the Fijian Islands but also, as highlighted in Chapter 5, at the Marquesas and Hawaiian Islands.¹² This highly profitable trade triangle was fed by this seemingly inexhaustible by-product of the whaling industry. The teeth known locally as *tabua* were

⁹ See, https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/collections-and-research/guides-and-indexes/censusmusters-guide (Accessed June 2020)

¹⁰ Grimwade, A. (1990) London Goldsmiths 1697-1837: Their Marks and Lives from the Original Registers at Goldsmiths' Hall and Other Sources. Boston: Faber and Faber. For an example of Smith's work see: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O78015/cream-jug-smith-benjamin-iii/ (Accessed June 2022)

¹¹ https://whalinghistory.org/bv/voyages/ [search voyage, BV0870.00] (Accessed July 2022)

¹² Prior to the appearance of European whalemen in the Pacific it is thought that the majority of whale's teeth in Fiji were traded from neighbouring Tonga, sperm whale stranding's being rare occurrences in the Fijian Islands. See; Van Der Grijp, P. (2007) 'Tabua Business: Re-circulation of Whales Teeth and Bone Valuables in the Central Pacific', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 116(3), pp. 341–356

exchanged for commodities, initially sandalwood, then bêche-de-mer and tortoiseshell which fetched a high price on the Chinese market. *Tabua* were (and remain) a hugely potent form of mobile material currency in Fijian culture imbued with enormous cultural significance. They take the form of a polished whale's tooth hung horizontally on a braided coconut fibre cord attached to both ends of the tooth. According to Fijian specialist, Robert Ewins the cord is not used to suspend the artefact around the neck but to signify the connection between giver and receiver.¹³ Anthropologist Asesela Ravuvu describes *tabua* as "supreme among all traditional valuables. It is the highest symbol of respect, deference, loyalty, goodwill, acceptance, recognition and even submission, which an individual or a group may offer to another."¹⁴ They were presented to chiefs and used as exchange gifts in ceremonial events such as chiefly investitures, marriage alliances, or funerals. Tabua were also used to make restitution, to give thanks, or to ask for assistance. In their very nature these were mobile objects, constantly circulating and cementing social relationships through their exchange. Western traders realized that in order to access the valuable commodities that these islands had to offer they had to engage in the ritualized presentation of *tabua* to the resident chief; not as a form of payment but to cement trading relations.¹⁵ However, as Fiji's extensive reef system kept the migratory routes of the sperm whale largely away from the islands, whaling vessels rarely stopped at Fiji itself, preferring to stop at the island of Rotuma, to the north west for provisions. It was at Rotuma and Tahiti that the pathways of whalemen intersected with the Chinese trade markets and teeth started their journey as an exchange commodity before entering Fijian ceremonial life as powerful and sacred artefacts.¹⁶

Decorative carving on *tabua* was not a practice carried out amongst the Fijians who valued certain aesthetic properties such as "size, smoothness, polish, a deep orange colour, and freedom from blemish."¹⁷ Of particular interest in this context are those that are scrimshawed with iconography recognisable as Euro-American in origin, for example the whaling vessels

¹³ Ewins, R. (2013) 'Two important whale-tooth ivory objects from Fiji, hidden under the sobriquet of "scrimshaw" in the W.L. Crowther Library Collection, Hobart', *Kanunnah*, 6, pp. 94–107

¹⁴ Ewins and Ravuvu quoted in Tomlinson, M. (2012) 'Passports to Eternity: Whales' Teeth and Transcendence in Fijian Methodism', in L. Manderson, W. Smith, and M. Tomlinson (eds) *Flows of Faith: Religious Reach and Community in Asia and the Pacific*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, pp. 215–231

¹⁵ Thomas, N. (1991) Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, p.113

¹⁶ Thomas (1991) *Entangled Objects*, pp.110 - 124

¹⁷ Tomlinson (2012) Passports to Eternity, p.222

carved on *tabua* belonging to whaling captain Valentine Starbuck (Figures 7.2a-c). As such, these scrimshawed *tabua* are hybrid material objects, the product of cross-cultural interaction. Steven Hooper suggests that in response to the presence of missionaries and the introduction of literacy, some Fijians incised their *tabua* with letters, as can be seen on Captain Starbuck's *tabua* (Figure 7.2c). Hooper suggests that as much as ten percent of nineteenth-century *tabua* are inscribed with individual names or locations, proposing that this was possibly done to memorialise events such as marriages when *tabua* were exchanged. He states that such script "probably derives from early printed documents in Fijian, especially the bible and prayer book, associated with the power of the word - divine power [...] writing, because it was developed by the missionaries, was seen as a medium of power, with divine efficacy."¹⁸ Who actually carved the letters on Starbuck's *tabua* is unknown. The string of capitalised roman lettering would appear to be executed in a much less accomplished hand than that of the whaling scene, suggesting that a number of actors, possibly Indigenous and Euro-American, may have been involved in the artefact's creation.



Figure 7.2a *Tabua*, scrimshawed with a whaling scene and lettering, collected by whaling captain Valentine Starbuck. British Museum: Accession number Oc. 1941.7-14.42. Image: author

¹⁸ Professor Steven Hooper, pers comm, April 2018. See also Hooper, S. (2006). Pacific Encounters: Art & Divinity in Polynesia, 1760–1860. London: British Museum Press



Figure 7.2b Detail of whaling scene on tabua. Image: author



Figure 7.2c Detail of lettering on *tabua*. Image: author

Scrimshandering, the act of inscribing and decorating whales' teeth, was a popular pastime amongst whalemen, if only to alleviate the boredom of long voyages. While it is often assumed to be American in origin, Stuart M. Frank has argued that scrimshaw originated amongst British whalers.¹⁹ He suggests that they were less familiar with the value of whale's teeth to Pacific communities than their American counterparts, so retained more teeth for carving and decoration rather than trading them, proposing that this may explain why the earliest documented and attributable examples of scrimshaw are British in origin rather than American. The British examples he cites are the *Adam* tooth, dated 1817 (Figure 7.3) and two teeth attributed to British whaling captain J. S. King of the *Elizabeth*.²⁰



Figure 7.3. The Adam tooth. New Bedford Whaling Museum: Accession number: 2001.100.2314. Image: author

Given the cosmopolitan composition of whaling crews and the strong American presence within the British fishery, it is difficult to be sure about the ethnicity of the crew member who first put a knife to a whale's tooth. Whatever the origins of this practice amongst whalers, the trade in teeth that developed after the opening up of the Pacific whaling grounds in the late eighteenth century had largely saturated the market by the 1820s.²¹ The value of whale's teeth within the Pacific is considered to have been a well-kept secret amongst Americans until

¹⁹ Frank (2012) Ingenious contrivances, pp.12-13

²⁰ By 'documented and attributable', I refer to scrimshaw that is dated and references a particular vessel. The J.S King teeth are on display at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, (accession numbers: 2001.100.196 and 2001.100.132)

²¹ West and Credland (1995) Scrimshaw, p.46

the publication in 1816 of Captain David Porter's narrative of the USS Essex and the War of 1812. Porter inadvertently revealed the esteem with which whale's teeth were held within the Pacific islands, sparking a marked increase in value. This is reflected in the instructions given by Boston merchants Boardman and Pope to an American whaleship captain in 1815:

At the great Albermarle [Galapagos Islands]... we are informed that Whales Teeth may be found on the Beach, buried in the Sand, from Whales that die in the Bay, & are driven onshore. Or, if that source fails, you will no doubt be able to obtain them from the Whale Ships you will meet about here. It will be advisable to obtain a considerable quantity of these Teeth if you can, at price not very exorbitant, & this year will be most likely to do from the English ships, which would not be so likely to know their value to you as the Americans, for the latter since the publication of Porters Journal, may estimate them at an extravagant price. They will be serviceable to you, if in the course of the voyage, you visit any of the islands of the Pacific to procure Sandal Wood, and there will always be useful in procuring provisions there.

You have on-board a box of these teeth, the two largest marked No.1 are very valuable for the size, and being very solid-those marked No.2 are very valuable for being very solid and round and these the natives would hang around the neck for ornaments without cutting, but of the first they will make variety of ornaments - Those numbered 3 are of no great value except the purchase of provisions... Formerly the Whalemen consider them of little or no value, and perhaps by the time you visit the islands, the supply has been such that the Natives may esteem them less.²²

Notwithstanding the suggestion here that the British "would not be so likely to know their [the teeth's] value to you as the Americans", there is clear evidence that the value of teeth as a trade item was well-known by this period. As indicated above, the international recruitment of whaling crews may have enabled the rapid spread of this kind of trade knowledge, especially as the British were whaling in the same waters as the Americans. In addition, considering the close relationship between the missionary and whaling fraternities (outlined in Chapter 2) had the whalemen failed to appreciate the value of whale's teeth amongst the Pacific Islanders, it is hard to believe the missionaries would not have communicated the value of this commodity to them.²³ By the time Munro was at sea with the *Foxhound* in 1817

²² Quoted in Frank (2012) Ingenious contrivances, p.11

²³ Alexander Birnie, owner of the *Foxhound*, was himself a director of the London Missionary Society and gave free passage to missionaries heading out to the Pacific aboard his vessels: Ellis, W. (1844) *History of the London Missionary Society*. London: John Snow, p. 279

this lucrative Pacific market was saturated with whale's teeth and there was a surplus available to whalemen for their artistic endeavours.²⁴

7.2 The apprentice and the *Foxhound*

According to the New South Wales Muster Lists, twenty-one-year-old Alexander Munro was indentured as an apprentice aboard the whaleship *Foxhound* on the 21st of May 1817, bound from London to the whaling grounds of New South Wales and the Pacific.²⁵ As an apprentice he would have received food and board but no money from the lay system of dividing the profits from a whaling voyage. As Gordon Jackson states, those who suffered most on southern whaleships were the apprentices. In taking such a role a young man was speculating upon his future, since while an apprenticeship could potentially lead to a command, assuming they stayed the course, the harsh life of a whaleman might well kill him first.²⁶ Munro was the eldest of five apprentices onboard the *Foxhound* whose ages ranged from seventeen to twenty-one. It is unclear how Munro was employed prior to his indenture though evidence suggests that he may have spent a brief spell in the Wapping workhouse indicating that he was not wealthy and his opportunities were limited, which might explain him signing on as an apprentice at the relatively mature age of twenty-one.²⁷

Few first-hand sources documenting the life of an apprentice whalemen in the South Seas fishery exist. In addition to the journal of Henry Ransome (discussed in Chapter 6) there is the journal of Thomas Reed Stavers (1798-1867) who first went to sea with his father to the Greenland fisheries when he was about 10 years old. At the age of thirteen, in 1812, he was apprenticed on the South Seas whaler *Mary Ann* (which like the *Foxhound* was owned by

²⁴ That the trade in teeth carried on well after the 1820s, despite the depreciation in value is suggested by a comment made by whaling surgeon Dr Wilson in his journal. Whilst at anchor in Sûtarano, [Citrana or Kitrana] in Timor in 1842, Wilson wrote that "two proas have been here at anchor here the last few days: they are collecting sandalwood and beeswax; whale's teeth." Wilson's comment was made twenty years after the voyage of the *Foxhound* but illustrates that teeth were still an active part of the trade routes that facilitated the movement of goods around the Indian and Pacific: Forster, H. (ed.) and Wilson, J. (1991) *The Cruise of the 'Gipsy': the Journal of John Wilson, Surgeon on a Whaling Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1839-1843.* United States: Ye Galleon Press, p.335

²⁵ https://whalinghistory.org/bv/crew/ [search term: Alexander Munro] (Accessed June 2019)

²⁶ Jackson, G. (1978) The British Whaling Trade. London: A. and C. Black, pp.89-90

²⁷ An Alexander Munro was admitted to the lock ward of the St George's in the East parish workhouse, Wapping, on the 3rd of March 1817, and discharged on the 8th. Dr Danielle Thom, Curator of Making, Museum of London, pers comm, March 2019. See, *Workhouse Admission and Discharge Records*, 1764-1930; LMA: STBG/SG/159

Alexander Birnie). At this point in time, both his father and brothers were also serving within the BSWF; his father, William Stavers was captain of the Seringapatam and his brothers were mate and seaman respectively on the same vessel.²⁸ Thomas Stavers was made cabin boy on the Mary Ann and his tasks were menial ones such as plate washing, rowing the crew ashore and occasionally standing watch. Clearly this was not what he expected: "I thought my Father, being Master of a Ship, and myself, brought up at Boarding school, that I should be exempt from such menial service, but I found the difference."²⁹ After complaining that he wanted to be a sailor, not a pot washer he was eventually given a place in the captain's boat pulling the aft' oar.³⁰ However, this promotion did not take place until the vessel reached Palau in the Western Pacific, at least a year into the voyage. After returning to London, Stavers applied for another position on a whaleship, but he was told that at the age of fifteen he was "too young to go anything but as a Boy and [they] wanted me to be bound again."³¹ Instead, he took a position on a whaling vessel bound for the Arctic which had no such scruples. By apprenticing their son at the age of thirteen, the Stavers family had given him the opportunity to progress through the ranks to the point of being appointed captain of the *Tuscan* whilst still a relatively young man (at the age of about 26).³²

Such kinship networks of fathers, sons, brothers, and cousins were a recognisable feature of both the Southern and Northern fisheries. A better-known example is that of William Scoresby Jr who, as the son of an Arctic whaling captain, was apprenticed on his father's whaleship at the age of 10.³³ This meant that by the time he was eighteen he already had a sound knowledge of whaling in the Arctic regions, and an early appreciation of its potential benefits to science.³⁴ The experiences of Stavers and Scoresby both support Paul Gilje's assertion that young men from seafaring families appear to have been apprenticed in their early teens or even younger. Paul Gilje's work *Liberty on the Waterfront*, whilst focussing on the various meanings of the term liberty with regard to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

²⁸ Stavers T.R. (n/d) Journal of Thomas Reed Stavers (1798 to 1867) http://mysite.du.edu/~ttyler/ploughboy/trstaversjournal.htm (Accessed June 2022)

²⁹ Stavers (n/d) Journal, Chapter: Ship Mary Ann: first voyage to the south seas. n/p

³⁰ Stavers (n/d) Journal, Chapter: The Perseverance, William Stavers, master: boat-steerer. n/p

³¹ Stavers (n/d) *Journal,* Chapter: Davis Straits man, *Majestic*: seaman. n/p

³² Stavers (n/d) Journal, Chapter: The ship Tuscan: master, voyage of 1824

³³ Devlin, C.L. (2015) 'The Influence of Whaler William Scoresby, Jr. on the Arctic Observations of Sir James Lamont', Arctic, 68(3), pp. 317–330

³⁴ Bravo, M. (2006) 'Geographies of Exploration and Improvement: William Scoresby and Arctic whaling, 1782–1822', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 32(3), pp. 512–538

American sailors, also draws upon the experiences of whalemen. He states that the ages of maritime workers ranged from a cabin boy of 10 or 12 years of age to the captain who would most likely be in his 30s.³⁵ The average age of a whaleman was about 25, some men continuing at sea into their 40s before moving ashore for work as "being a mariner was a young man's game."³⁶ No evidence has been found to indicate that Munro was signing on as a returning apprentice (as Stavers had been encouraged to do), and by signing up at the age of twenty-one, I would suggest that he was not from a maritime family. If he were, he would surely have been apprenticed at a much younger age.

Attempts to trace Alexander Munro's early life through archival research have had limited success. The age declared on the New South Wales Muster List suggests he was born in 1797 and on this basis a 'long list' of possible Alexander Munros with traces in the archive has been reduced to a few potential individuals. Could he have been the Alexander Munro listed as a 'gentleman' of Hadlow St, Burton Crescent, who insured his goods in 1825 and again in 1829? Or the Alexander Munro who registered a printing press in High Holborn, Bloomsbury in 1845?³⁷ A more likely candidate, given his early stint in the workhouse, was the Alexander Munro charged along with this wife Elizabeth of stealing a bag of clothes belonging to his landlady in Whitechapel in 1833. (Perhaps this is the same man charged with stealing a silk handkerchief in St Giles-in-the-Fields nearly twenty years later in May 1852).³⁸ Most promising of all, assuming he remained in London, is evidence concerning one Alexander Munro, born in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1797, who ended his days in 1881 as a widowed sailmaker in Mile End Workhouse. This information not only places this Alexander Munro in the correct age bracket and in a plausible location, but also as linked to a maritime trade.³⁹ If this is indeed the correct Munro, there remains the mystery of how an ordinary whaler found sufficient resources to commission a significant amount of silver for the reworking of the Foxhound tooth. His precarious life in old age is more consistent with what we know of the later lives of seamen. Workhouse Admission and Discharge Records show this man had been

³⁵ Gilje, P.A. (2004) *Liberty on the Waterfront*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, p.27

³⁶ Gilje (2004) *Liberty*, p.27

³⁷ LMA Archives, MR/L/P/1845/015

³⁸ LMA Archives, MJ/SP/1852/05/017

³⁹ Ancestry.co.uk; London, England, Workhouse Admission and Discharge Records, 1764-1930 (Accessed January 2020)

in and out of the East End workhouses listed as 'destitute' in the last year of his life.⁴⁰ He was listed in the 1881 census as an inmate of Mile End Workhouse, and by June of that year he was dead.⁴¹

The ship on which Munro served, the *Foxhound* (originally named the *Basque*), was a 368tonne ship built in France in 1809.⁴² She was captured by the Royal Navy the same year and spent the next six years patrolling the English Channel. In 1815 she was laid up in Sheerness and an advert was put in the *London Gazette* offering her for sale.⁴³ The *Foxhound* was then purchased by the London-based whale ship owners Birnie & Co for £800 in 1816 and set out as a whaler the following year.⁴⁴ This voyage lasted just under two and a half years, a modest amount of time for a whaling voyage which could last up to four years. She departed London in June and arrived in Sydney in September of the same year. Her route towards Cape Horn would have taken the ship past the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands before following the currents towards the Brazilian coast. It is likely that the ship stopped to revictual at these locations which were regularly visited by whalers. As there are two New South Wales muster lists for the Foxhound (November 1817 and August 1818), we can safely assume that she must have stopped in Sydney at least twice.⁴⁵ Both offer a complete crew list with some variations in the spelling of names – a practice not uncommon at this time – and a comparison suggests that the *Foxhound* was carrying essentially the same crew. The fact that she had had no desertions between the dates of the two muster lists suggests that she was not an unhappy ship. A search of the Sydney newspaper archive reveals that the vessel actually stopped there three times. According to the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser she arrived in late October 1817 and departed a month later for the whaling grounds.⁴⁶ She then returned eight months later in August 1818, when the second crew list was created. She left a month later sailing on 22nd September 1818 to the whaling grounds off New Zealand returning for

⁴⁰ Ancestry.co.uk; London, England, Workhouse Admission and Discharge Records, 1764-1930 (Accessed January 2020)

⁴¹ Ancestry.co.uk; 1881 England Census; England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915 (Accessed January 2020)

⁴² 368 old tonnes, 341 new tonnes

⁴³ London Gazette, 11th November 1815, p. 2247

⁴⁴ https://whalinghistory.org/?s=BV034200 (Accessed September 2019)

⁴⁵ Dale Chatwin, pers comm, October 2019

⁴⁶ Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 29th November 1817

a third time in May 1819 with 240-250 tons of oil.⁴⁷ Clearly the crew enjoyed themselves in Sydney as Captain Watson put an advert in the newspaper advising that "The Public are cautioned against giving Credit to the Crew of the *Foxhound*, Captain Watson, as he will not pay any Debt they may contract."⁴⁸ The *Foxhound* returned to England in September 1819.⁴⁹

Apart from Munro's markings on the surface of the tooth itself, the only known visual representation of the *Foxhound* that survives is a photograph of a painting dating from 1830 which depicts the *Foxhound* with an American whaling vessel off Sumba in the Indian Ocean (Figure 7.4).⁵⁰



Figure 7.4 Photograph of the original painting, *Bengal Salem & Foxhound London*, circa 1830, attributed to George Ropes Salem, Mass. © unknown. Image courtesy of Dale Chatwin

 ⁴⁷ Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 8th August 1818, 26th September 1818 and, 19th June 1819

⁴⁸ Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 22nd May 1819

⁴⁹ BSWF Databases; https://whalinghistory.org/?s=BV034200 (Accessed September 2019)

⁵⁰ The whereabouts, and therefore details of the original painting is currently unknown. The above image was re-produced in the 1950 and 1962 editions of Francis Robotti's 'Whaling and Old Salem' and may or may not be copied from the original. There is a photograph card of the above image in the collection of the Peabody Museum at Salem however, it is currently unlocated. I am grateful to Dale Chatwin for bringing this image and details of the painting to my attention. Dale Chawin, pers comm, April 2022

The *Foxhound* was three-masted and according to both Munro's engraving and the painting she was square-rigged. The inscription on the *Foxhound* tooth states the whale was captured by the 'Bow' boat, the whaleboat situated toward the front of the vessel.⁵¹ We can deduce from this that she carried *at least* three whaleboats as in addition to a bow boat, the *Foxhound* would have carried starboard and larboard boats (right and left sides of the ship when facing forward), a waist boat, possibly a stern boat slung at the rear and at least one spare boat on deck. Also located on deck were the brick try works containing the huge trypots. These were fed with the strips of blubber boiled down to extract the oil, the blubber residue then being used to feed the flames below. As can be seen in Figure 7.5 a detail from *Panorama of a Whaling Voyage Around the World*, 1275 feet long, 8ft high rolling canvas painted by two whalemen in 1848 to illustrate the journey of a whaleship around the world, this produced a black acrid smoke that poured from the vessel deck.⁵²



Figure 7.5 Detail from *Panorama of a whaling Voyage 'round the world* by Benjamin Russell and Caleb Pierce Purrington (1848). On display at New Bedford Whaling Museum in 2018. Image: author

⁵¹ Each whale boat required six men to manoeuvre. With 18 men engaged in the whale hunt the ship would be manned by the remaining skeleton crew consisting of individuals such as of cook, cabin boy, steward, etc. Realistically, although she would have carried more than three whaleboats it is unlikely more than this number could be deployed at any one time.

⁵² Viewed from right to left, the *Panorama* (America's longest painting) mimics the direction of travel of a whaling vessel leaving New Bedford and heading into the Pacific Ocean via Cape Horn. It depicts the sights and scenes of a whaling voyage. See Russell, B., Purrington, C., and New Bedford Whaling Museum (2018) *A Spectacle in Motion: The Grand Panorama of a Whaling Voyage 'round the World*. New Bedford Whaling Museum. See also https://www.whalingmuseum.org/exhibition/original-spectacle-in-motion/

Alexander Munro would have been quartered with the other four apprentices. Being the eldest, he may have sought or garnered some respect from his younger crew mates. However, his position as the senior apprentice would not have earned him any extra room in the fo'castle. Down in this space the skeleton of the ship was revealed, the tarred beams and joists bending to meet at the prow of the vessel. With headroom of five feet or less, there would have barely been room to stand up. It was also a stifling and airless space: the only access to fresh air was from the fo'castle hatch that had to be shut in rough weather to avoid being deluged by rough waves. By 1817 there was already legislation concerning the ventilation in prison cells, but there were no such regulations for merchant ships until the end of the nineteenth century.⁵³ These quarters were also generally lacking in light: as Dr Wilson put it, the space was "so dark and remote the eye could not scan its limit through the foul thick atmosphere."⁵⁴ He goes on to describe going into the fo'castle to treat a whaleman and coming out with an eye infection due to the fetid atmosphere. For the green hands, those new to seafaring, it was a nauseous space. The motion of the vessel was felt most strongly at this, the most forward point in the ship, and the beams would drip constantly as the bow of the vessel ploughed through the waves. It was a breeding ground for mould and disease and pests. An anonymous journal-keeper on the whaleship Lusitania talks of visiting a dying shipmate in the fo'castle to find him "extended quite naked [,] for cloths he has none, on the bare deck of the forecastle, his head supported by a tattered old jacket and one of his countrymen sitting over him to keep away the vermin."55

Munro's life onboard the *Foxhound* would have been regulated by his watch responsibilities. The crew were split into watches running the ship on a timetable of four-hour watches, combined with two 'dog watches' (of two hours) per day. The five apprentices on board the *Foxhound* made up just under one fifth of the relatively small crew. Their tasks included manning the sails, maintaining the ship, cleaning, repairing and keeping watch for whales. In order to hunt whales effectively, to man the whale boats and chase, kill and then row the carcass back to the waiting ship, the men had to be ready at a moment's notice. But in reality,

⁵³ Couper, A.D. (2009) Sailors and Traders: A Maritime History of the Pacific Peoples. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, p.110

⁵⁴ Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy*, kept by John Wilson, Surgeon. RGS-IBG Collections: ar JWI/1/15031842, 12th February 1843

⁵⁵ The *Lusitania* Journal, 1826-1829, 28th April 1829. NLA: MS3454, ID57429, 8th February 1829

there were long stretches of time when no whales were present, and no whaling or processing took place at night. While it has been suggested therefore that whalers had a lot of leisure time, this is not entirely true: logbook evidence indicates that the extent of free time varied according to the individual captain. Some kept their crew working relentlessly, a harsh regime often justified by them in terms of the need to avoid the fighting that could occur when boredom set in. That the crew of the *Foxhound* were kept hard at work can be deduced from the fact that whereas she had a crew of 112 men when originally captured from the French, while her Admiralty muster rolls from 1815 indicate a crew of 106 (including 20 marines), as a whaleship she carried a crew of only 26.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, the crew would have received some off-watch time, particularly in the evenings which would be spent sleeping, gossiping, gaming, reading or dictating letters for home. There would be drinking, singing and dancing, especially on occasions such as Christmas, New Year or after the Crossing of the Line ceremony. Again, this was at the captain's discretion, some gave double rations and hove the ship to so the crew could enjoy themselves.⁵⁷ Others completely failed to mark these occasions at all, despite the risk of dissatisfaction amongst the crew and enmity toward their superiors.

From newspaper reports we can glean other snippets of information regarding the *Foxhound* and the activities of her crew. The *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* reveals that the vessel had transported a large consignment of alcohol for sale at J. Birnie Stores, in George Street, Sydney. This included best Jamaica rum, fine Cognac brandy, Hollands, porter, pale ale, sherry, port wine, and other items including iron, window glass and paint.⁵⁸ Captain James Birnie was the older brother of Alexander Birnie, the principal partner in the trading house of Birnie and Co and owner of the *Foxhound*. In 1803 they had established a wine and spirits firm together, in time branching out into general merchandise. James Birnie arrived in Sydney in 1806 establishing the first major trading agency with Great Britain making major contributions to the economic development of the colony by importing luxury goods. Rather than sending out an empty vessel, it was loaded with goods; this process described by Clayton as 'backloading' meant that all legs of a voyage were profitable. While this contravened East India Company restrictions, by listing their vessels as whaleships bound for 'the fisheries', the

⁵⁶ London Gazette; 25 November 1809, p.1888

⁵⁷ This was a process of setting the sails in such a way as to bring the vessel to a stop, drifting with the current rather than actively making way.

⁵⁸ Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 1st November 1817

Birnie brothers were able to sidestep these rules.⁵⁹ Alexander remained in London acting as manager and shipping agent, whilst James lived in Sydney until his death in 1844.⁶⁰ Having a brother residing in the heart of colonial Sydney, and co-owning a whaling vessels meant that Alexander was perfectly placed in London to receive first hand news of the colony. When she returned in 1819, the *Foxhound* brought news "containing information very important to the interests of this [Port Jackson] advancing territory." This information regarded the newly discovered country to the west of the Blue Mountains, "which presents to be [...] rich, fertile and luxuriant; abounding with fine runs of water, and all happy varieties of soil, hill, and valley, to render it is not only delightful to the view, but highly suitable to all the purposes of pasturage and agriculture." ⁶¹

On her second visit to Sydney in August 1818, the *Foxhound* caused something of a sensation. Having been speared by a swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) off New Caledonia three months earlier, the bill, or rostrum pierced right through the hull, protruding several inches into the hold:

No leak ensued, and the ship pursued her course; but, upon a short subsequent observation of her copper at the water's edge under the larboard bow being wripped [sic] from the side, the cause was examined into; —when, strange to relate, the horn of some monstrous fish was found in the ship's side, having gone through the copper, perforated the outer plank (of four inches thickness and the perforation of four inches of diameter), passed between the ribs, and pierced also through the lining (of two inches), and thus passing through six inches of oak plank, besides the length of at least eight or nine inches occasioned by the interception of the ribs, leaving also a part of the horn visible within side the ship- the enormous animal extricating itself by tearing from its horn, which, from its appearance, must have gone from its root. The horn still remains in the ship's side and was very kindly shewn to us by Captain Watson.⁶²

At Sydney the "impacted weapon excited much curiosity" and Captain Watson showed the anomaly to a local journalist who reported on it (see Appendix 6 for full transcript).⁶³ By showing visitors the interior of the ship with the rostrum poking through, Captain Watson

⁵⁹ Clayton, J.M. and Clayton, C.A. (2016) Shipowners Investing in the South Sea Whale Fishery from Britain: 1775-1815. Chania, Crete: Self Published, pp. 109-110

⁶⁰ James Birnie was declared insane in 1828 and lived the remained of his years in an asylum. See Holcomb, J. (2014) Early Merchant Families of Sydney: Speculation and Risk Management on the Fringes of Empire. Australia: Anthem Press, p.42

⁶¹ Hampshire Chronicle, 8th November 1819

⁶² Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 15th August 1818

⁶³ Bennett, F.D. (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe from the Year 1833 to 1836, Comprising Sketches of Polynesia, California, the Indian Archipelago, etc., with an Account of Southern Whales, the Sperm Whale Fishery, and the Natural History of the Climates Visited. (2 Vols). London: Richard Bentley, p.272

was creating an exhibition of the vessel itself. Such was the interest generated that the event was also recounted in the Hobart Town Gazette and Southern Reporter in October 1818.⁶⁴ The author of the piece stated he could find "no species mentioned to whose velocity or formation we can attribute this extraordinary occurrence" and the event was reported as a "singular phenomenon." In fact, the piercing of ship's hulls by swordfish was not new: a search of British newspaper archives reveals that separate occurrences were reported in the British press as early as 1807 and again in 1811.⁶⁵ It also became somewhat notorious within the whaling trade. Fifteen years later the whaling surgeon, Frederick Debell Bennett, wrote of the occurrence in his Narrative of a Whaling Voyage Round the Globe stating that Watson told him that on returning to London the swordfish bill and surrounding woodwork was cut out of the ship's side, mounted and presented to the owner, Mr Birnie.⁶⁶ It was also alluded to in the whaling journal of surgeon, John Lyell. In May 1830 Lyell wrote that he was aware of three events of whaleship being speared by swordfish, one completely piercing the hull and "they are now in the possession of the respectable owners of those vessels."⁶⁷ What became of Mr Birnie's early example of this behaviour is unknown. But in the context of this thesis, the piercing of a ship's hull by a swordfish and its subsequent voyage around the world can be seen as an accidental form of natural history collecting, the specimen becoming part of the ship rather than merely its cargo.

7.3 From specimen to curio

Sperm whales have about 36 to 50 teeth in their jaws used to aid in the capture of prey. The teeth are not used to chew, but to draw prey, predominantly squid and fish, down into the whales' stomach. Teeth are also thought to be used for defence purposes, mainly against other sperm whales.⁶⁸ Only the lower jaw of the sperm whale has teeth, each one fitting into

⁶⁴ Hobart Town Gazette and Southern Reporter, 24th October 1818

⁶⁵ The attacking of ships by swordfish was to become a commonly reported occurrence in British Newspapers. The *Penny Magazine* of the Society for the Distribution of Useful Knowledge published an article on the topic of swordfish in 1835, included within it was an image of a section of a ship's hull with swordfish rostrum embedded in it. Separate occurrences were reported in 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1847 and 1849. The Natural History Museums of Scotland, London and Chichester were all supplied with specimens of swordfish and/or rostrums accordingly.

⁶⁶ Bennett, F.D. (1840) Narrative of a Whaling Voyage round the Globe from the Year I833 to I836, Comprising Sketches of Polynesia, California, the Indian Archipelago, etc., with an Account of Southern Whales, the Sperm Whale Fishery, and the Natural History of the Climates Visited. (2 vol). London: Richard Bentley. p.272

⁶⁷ Diary of Dr John Lyell. Ship's surgeon on the whaler, *Ranger*, Vol 1. CPK: Archive No.463, 26th May 1830

⁶⁸ West & Credland, (1995) *Scrimshaw,* p. 10

a corresponding recess in the upper jaw. These teeth vary in size, from bud teeth barely protruding into the jaw to massive nine-inch specimens found in the mouths of large bull whales. In theory, each whale produced enough teeth for every member of the ship's crew to collect at least one from every catch (the *Foxhound* carried a crew of 26, somewhat fewer than the 28-38 men normally required to man a whaleship). However, the variation in size meant that only the largest bull whales produced the huge specimens so prized in the Pacific Islands, and as curiosities in Britain. Scrimshaw historian Janet West states that up to 40 whales might be killed on a voyage however, this seems an under-estimation.⁶⁹ The number revealed during research is far higher, for example the *Gipsy* caught 71 whales during her voyage, the *Reliance* 105 whales.⁷⁰ If they were to extract teeth from every whale caught these ships would have been awash with hundreds if not thousands of teeth. Therefore, it is likely that the men only extracted enough teeth for their own use and for trade within Pacific communities where the teeth were in demand given their role in ritual and cultural life.

After the head of a captured sperm whale had been detached from the body and winched onboard, a whaleman was sent inside the cavity (known as the junk) to bail out the valuable spermaceti. When bailed clean the head was dismembered and the skeletal remains would then be available to the crew for recreational carving or sale. When the activity of flensing and trying out was finished, the decks would have been cleared, the barrels stowed, the instruments re-sharpened in readiness for the next hunt and the decks scrubbed clean. It would be at this point that the tooth extraction itself would take place. Most coveted of the skeletal remains on offer to the whalemen were the large sections at the back of the whale's jaw known as the pan bones (referred to by whaleman Frank Bullen as jaw-pans.) These offered a larger and flatter canvas for the scrimshander than the smaller, curved surface area of a tooth (see Figures 7.6 & 7.7). Jawbone was also far less prone to warping and splitting and could be sawed into thin slices.⁷¹

⁶⁹ West & Credland, (1995) Scrimshaw, p. 16

⁷⁰ Forster and Wilson (1991) The Cruise of the 'Gipsy', p.372, Journal of a voyage from London to the Indian Ocean, made by the Barque Reliance (1832-35) kept by Richard Francis Burton, Surgeon, SLSA: PRG113/5/37. n/p [rear of journal]

⁷¹ West & Credland, (1995) Scrimshaw, p. 21

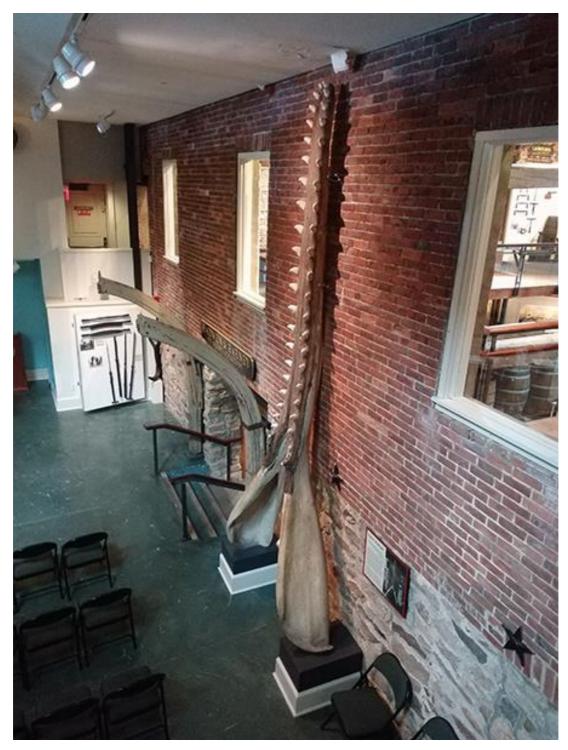


Figure 7.6 A very large male sperm whale jaw on display at Nantucket Whaling Museum in 2019. Accession number 2020.0026.001 Image: author. The pan bones are the large flat sections resting on blocks at the bottom of the image. This jaw is so large that when showman P.T. Barnum saw it in 1866, he wanted to buy it for his American Museum.



Figure 7.7 Engraved pan bone of British origin by unknown artist. Butler's Point Whaling Museum, Hihi, New Zealand: BP0692. Purchased in London in the 1980s by Mr Lindo Ferguson for his private museum. Image: author

The size of the complete panbone posed a problem of storage. I would suggest that this is why, in conjunction with their scarcity in comparison to teeth (two from every whale as opposed to 50 teeth), complete scrimshawed sperm whale panbones (such as that in Figure 7.7) are rarely found in collections. A notable exception is the jawbone scrimshawed with an image of the whaleship *Woodlark* discussed in Chapter 6 (see Figure 6.2). In spite of the scarcity of complete scrimshawed panbones, it is not unusual to find smaller sections cut from the jaw to create a flat surface for inscription. Two very high-quality examples attributed to Captain Gardiner of the whaleship *Pacific* are to be found in the Victoria Museum and the other in Tasmania Museum of Art (Figures 7.8 and 7.9). Panbones also provided the material for the making of utilitarian shipboard objects such as fids, blocks and belaying pins.⁷² This supports Bullen's comment that the jaw bones were "sawn off and placed at the disposal for anybody who wanted pieces of bone for "scrimshaw," or carved work."⁷³

Sperm whale teeth are made up of a central core of a hard material known as dentine, surrounded by a layer of cementum, a thin layer of bonelike material.⁷⁴ Inside, the teeth are

⁷² West & Credland, (1995) *Scrimshaw*, p. 21

⁷³ Bullen, F.T. (2012) [1895] The Cruise of the Cachalot Round the World After Sperm Whales. Library of Alexandria, p.44

⁷⁴ https://www.britannica.com/science/tooth-anatomy (Accessed November 2019)

usually hollow, with a dental cavity known as a pulp chamber.⁷⁵ In its rough, unpolished state, the *Foxhound* tooth would have had a variegated, yellow hue and an uneven ridged surface reminiscent of tree bark. Bullen described the teeth as being set "solidly into a hard, white gum, which had to be cut away all around them before they would come out."⁷⁶ As two-thirds of the length of each tooth was embedded within the jawbone, the extraction of the teeth was, as whaleman Francis Allyn Olmsted stated, "the practice of dentistry on a grand scale." Olmsted described the process of extraction in some detail:

The patient, i.e. the lower jaw, is bound down to ring bolts in the deck. The dentist, a boatsteerer, with several assistants, first makes a vigorous use of his gum lancet, to wit, a cutting spade wielded in both hands. A start is given to the teeth, while his assistants apply the instrument of extraction to one end of the row, consisting of a powerful purchase of two fold pulleys, and at the tune of "0! hurrah my hearties O!" the teeth snap from their sockets in quick succession. ⁷⁷

After the process of extraction, the tooth would have been stored on deck in a barrel of brine before moving through the next stage of its journey towards transformation. How long it sat steeped in brine is impossible to know, but at some point, Alexander Munro and his crewmates would have assessed the weight and shape of each tooth, prior to selecting those that were appropriate for decoration or those that were simply of an unusual shape or size. Smaller juvenile teeth could be chosen to create small artefacts such as dice, rings or cane handles, or made in tesserae for decorating creations such as sewing boxes.⁷⁸ Upon its extraction from the lower jaw of a sperm whale, the tooth began its existence as an independent specimen, separated from its parent body as a by-product of the activity of whale oil harvesting. Once he had selected his desired tooth, the whaler would have scraped away with his jack-knife the scraps of flesh and detritus clinging to it, so as not to add to the stench of the lower deck should rot set in. The tooth would then be secreted in the rough canvas pockets of his duck trousers before vanishing down into the fo'castle and being tossed into his sea chest for later inspection.

⁷⁵ West & Credland (1995) *Scrimshaw,* p.17

⁷⁶ Bullen (2012) [1895] *The Cruise of the Cachalot*, p.45

⁷⁷ Olmsted, F.A. (1841) *Incidents of a whaling voyage*. New York: D Appleton and Co. pp. 179-80

⁷⁸ West & Credland (1995) *Scrimshaw,* p.16



Figure 7.8 Pulling Teeth, illustration by Francis Allyn Olmsted in Incidents of a Whaling Voyage (1841), p.179-80

Alexander Munro's worldly possessions would have been kept in his sea chest. These chests, representing the only private space available to a whaleman, were often decorated with carvings or paintings. They provided one of the few opportunities for creative expression for whalers (and sailors in general) in the course of their sea voyages. Munro's chest most likely contained a blanket, spare shirt, a hat, a woollen jacket, maybe a bible, and some tools. Should this clothing wear out in the course of the voyage, it could be replaced from the ship's slop stores. This floating shop sold articles at exorbitant prices which were then deducted from the sailor's pay. Often, this left sailors with very little to show from several years' work, and sometimes it reduced them to debt. The sailor's sea chest, meanwhile, provided him with not just a storage unit but also a table, chair, and writing desk: it was here that Munro, or indeed a fellow crew member would have sat to contemplate the tooth selected in its raw and undecorated state from the brine barrel.

The level of artistic execution on the *Foxhound* tooth suggests that whoever worked it was experienced in the art of scrimshaw. It is possible that while on the board the *Foxhound*, the whalemen were working simultaneously on several items at various stages of the process.⁷⁹ Although worked with only basic tools, such pieces of scrimshaw, often termed 'folk art', can

⁷⁹ Bullen highlights that the carpenter had a half dozen walking sticks in the process of creation. Bullen (2012) [1895] *The Cruise of the Cachalot*, p.45

display considerable levels of artistic skill and craftsmanship.⁸⁰ They included utilitarian items such as walking sticks, tools used in maritime trade such as fids (used for folding creases in to sails), domestic items such as silk winders and pastry crimpers and purely decorative pieces. These were often made as mementos for those at home and include artefacts such as stay busks for corsetry, carved whale's teeth, stitched woollen images, often depicting ships or ports, or images created from shells, known as 'sailor's valentines.'⁸¹

In order to transform the tooth into smooth polished surface, the whaleman would have undertaken a lengthy process of scraping, sanding and polishing. The work would have been done during his 'off watch' with his sea chest serving as a bench. He would have used a penknife to shave the surface of the tooth, removing small, thin shards of material with each scrape. To smooth out the ridges created by the scraping of the tooth, he would then have sanded the surface of the tooth using sharkskin or powdered pumice.⁸² Sharks were deeply disliked by whalemen for obvious reasons and they regularly fished for them off the deck for sport and to harvest their rough skins. The tooth would have then been sanded and polished with oil and whiting,⁸³ and in some circumstances smoked to give it a warm, light brown stain. This technique may have been learned by observation of Indigenous practices in the Fijian Islands where *tabua* were often smoked. The work of sanding and polishing could take hours to achieve the desired shape. Meanwhile, the off-watch crew could be called to action at a moment's notice, be it to man the yards (to adjust the sails) or to launch the boats for a whale hunt. The only time a whaleman was truly 'off watch' was between dusk and dawn when hunting and flensing did not take place due to the danger it posed to the crew. However, even at night they could be called to adjust the sails meaning any work on scrimshaw in progress was set aside for days or even weeks. Once extracted, out of water and stored within the sea chest, the tooth would itself have undergone a series of more subtle changes. It would have begun to dry out, its interior dentine layer starting to harden and in time, small cracks would begin appearing on the outer cementum layer making it harder to carve.

⁸⁰ See for example, Dyer, M.P. (2017) 'O'er the wide and tractless sea': Original Art of the Yankee Whale Hunt. New Bedford, Massachusetts: Old Dartmouth Historical Society / New Bedford Whaling Museum

⁸¹ This list is by no means exhaustive, there was no end to the ingenuity of what could be created.

⁸² Bullen (2012) [1895] *The Cruise of the Cachalot,* p.45

⁸³ Bullen (2012) [1895] The Cruise of the Cachalot, p.45

The process of decorating a whale's tooth was carried out in a number of ways. The more common technique involved puncturing the surface of the cementum layer by carving, scratching or pricking the surface of the tooth and rubbing a pigment into the recess to highlight the marks made: a process similar to that of tattooing. This was carried out using a range of tools that were readily available to a whaleman including pen knives, nails, sail needles, chisels and files. Substances such as soot, oil, ink and (rarely) paint, were used to highlight the designs. Occasionally specific areas of the design such as ships flags and pennants were highlighted in colours of red and blue and green.⁸⁴ The technique of pricking was used to transfer images from a newspaper or magazine to create an outline of the image which could them be infilled. Popular themes found on scrimshaw include vessels, whaling scenes, domestic scenes, military victories, and patriotic emblems. Despite the different types of medium, tooth and skin, it is not surprising that the two art forms share a strikingly similar range of iconography.⁸⁵ A second, and much rarer technique was relief carving. This technique is illustrated on scrimshaw within the collection of captain William Tolley Brookes at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (Figure 7.9) and within the collections of captain Edward Lawson at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (discussed in Chapter 3, see also Appendix 1). The Tolley-Brookes tooth depicts a man in classical dress leaning on a scroll, surrounded by a laurel [?] wreath. With its display of learning and philosophy, it is a choice of design that represents the aspirational nature of an early nineteenth-century whaling captain. I would suggest that relief carving is rarely found in scrimshaw collections because of the immense amount of time and energy required to remove the outer tooth layer. This type of design would also require a significant sized tooth to begin with.

⁸⁴ West & Credland (1995) Scrimshaw pp.17-18

⁸⁵ A process with similarities to that of tattooing and carried out using essentially the same tools. It is thus not surprising find a strikingly similar range of iconography shared by the two art forms. See Utting, R.K., 2018. Reading the Bodies of the *Bounty* Mutineers, in Largeaud-Ortega S. (Ed.) *The Bounty from the Beach: Crosscultural and Cross-disciplinary Essays.* Canberra: ANU Press, pp.95-123



Figure 7.9. A sperm whale tooth carved in high relief with a figure in classical drapes, formerly belonging to Captain Tolley Brookes. NNMG: Accession number AAA0018. Image: author

The image of the *Foxhound* is lightly scratched on the tooth's surface. The ship is shown fully rigged and underway with a slight tilt to windward as would be realistic in this scenario, the sky and waves are indicated by slight horizontal scratches. The marks are confident and delicate and show an understanding of sail patterns and both standing and running rigging. This would suggest that it was executed either by copying a very well observed image, or by someone experienced in sailing such vessels. I would suggest the latter because of subtle details such as the buntlines and reefing lines visible on the sails (Figure 7.10a & 7.10b). Buntlines are the vertical lines running through the sails which when hauled from the deck level act to concertina the sail upward so the crew can lash it to the yard arm, the reverse process lowers the sail. The reefing lines appear on the scrimshawed image as the two horizontal lines of tassels that hang down the sails; these are used to make the sail smaller, and therefore more manageable in strong winds. Such detail suggests that this was one drawn by someone with an intimate knowledge of the ship.

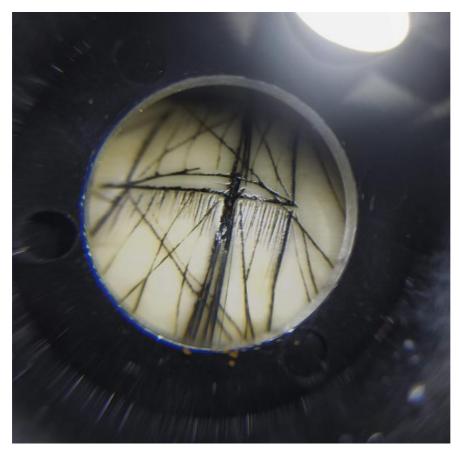


Figure 7.10a Buntlines visible on the sails photographed under magnification. Image author

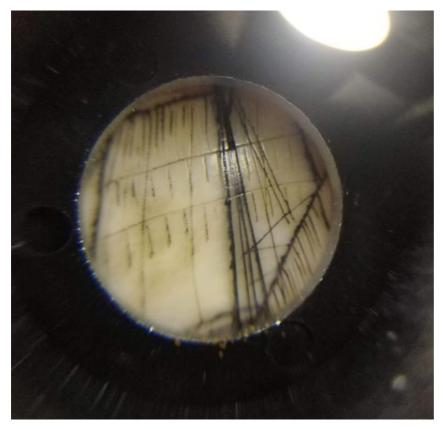


Figure 7.10b Reefing lines visible on the sails photographed under magnification. Image: author

The one constant during these long dangerous voyages, the one thing that protected the crew from violent external forces - be they human, physical dangers like unmarked shoals or reefs, or the extremes of the weather - was the body of the whaling ship itself. Yet as a working space it was also a space of danger. Whalemen were regularly killed falling from the rigging or being washed overboard; these dangers were largely external. They occurred on the outer surface of the ship, on the deck or out on the sea during a whale hunt. The internal space of the vessel kept them alive, as fetid and unpleasant as it was, it kept them safe, and it was a world that operated on rules and structures that they understood and largely adhered too. Therefore, it is only natural that Munro would depict 'his' ship on the *Foxhound* tooth. Each whalemen had an intimate knowledge of and attachment to his vessel, meaning it was an obvious choice as a scrimshaw motif.

This leads to the question of who carved the design. There is no definitive evidence that Munro himself did this skilled work. It could have been carved by a talented crewmate and traded to Munro, or he might have commissioned someone else to carve the image on the tooth. The practice of inter-crew trade is confirmed by Bullen's comment:

I once had an elaborate pastry- cutter carved out of six whale's teeth, which I purchased for a pound of tobacco from a seaman of the CORAL whaler, and afterwards sold in Dunedin, New Zealand, for L2 10s., the purchaser being decidedly of opinion that he had a bargain.⁸⁶

This pastry cutter had passed through at least three separate stages of ownership before beginning a terrestrial life in Dunedin.⁸⁷ Evidence for inter-crew trade is also found amongst whalers in the Arctic fleet. For example, Christopher Thomson, who worked during the 1820s, confirmed that scrimshaw was traded between crew members in exchange for alcohol. In his *Autobiography of an Artisan* he wrote:

I was often employed in what the sailors dignified by the title of "bone carving," which part consisted in cutting on the bone, with a penknife, divers cyphers of the initials of their sweethearts, with borders of diamonds, squares, and vandykes, or "tooth ornaments;" the interstices were filled up with chalk and oil which bought out the pattern; as, in addition to the given round of ornaments, I could add panels of whales,

⁸⁶ Bullen (2012) [1895] The Cruise of the Cachalot, p. 44

⁸⁷ Evidence for inter crew trade is also suggested by Bullen's mention of the carpenter with half a dozen walking sticks in various stages of completion. This would suggest that these were to be traded or sold, as no one requires five walking sticks for personal use. See Bullen (2012) [1895] *The Cruise of the Cachalot*, p.44

ships, birds and the Prince of Wales' feathers [...] For these ornate decorations I received sundry mess-pots of grog.⁸⁸

I would suggest that in the context of the tooth's biography, the question of which crew member undertook the carving is less significant than its overall trajectory. What is important here is the fact that the tooth was collected during the voyage of the *Foxhound*, that it was kept in Munro's care for twenty-five years after returning to London and was eventually gifted by him to Sophia Knight. More pertinent is the question of why this design was chosen. Munro's decision to depict (or commission) the image of the *Foxhound* on the tooth made this piece of scrimshaw more than a sentimental memento: it a memorialisation of the vessel itself.

7.4 London bound: the Foxhound tooth on shore

The cargo of the *Foxhound* were brought safely home at the end of their voyage to the Pacific in October 1819. Approaching the south coast of England, the *Foxhound* would have touched at one of the southern English harbours to pick up a local pilot. This was common practice as local knowledge was paramount to avoiding the ever-changing dangers of this coastline, such as the treacherous shifting shoals of the Goodwin Sands off Deal in Kent. Further round the coast the pilot would have disembarked, and a second pilot taken onboard to guide the vessel into London, most likely at Margate, Ramsgate or Gravesend. It was in harbours such as these that natural history dealers and customs officers (men such as John Swainson at Margate) boarded returning vessels to trade for the best shells and curiosities, before the sailors had a chance to disembark at the metropolis and sell their curios elsewhere. John Wilson stated in his journal that on the Gipsy's return voyage, when she anchored at Gravesend in preparation for taking on a pilot, numerous shell merchants boarded the vessel "to see if they could get bargains."⁸⁹ At Gravesend the Foxhound waited for favourable tides and weather before proceeding up the estuary, passing the prison hulks moored at Chatham, Woolwich, and Deptford. On 29th October 1819, the ship moored up in the London docks, after a total of 870 days at sea.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Thompson, C. (1847) *The Autobiography of an Artisan*. London: J. Chapman; Nottingham: J. Shaw and Son, p.152

⁸⁹ Journal of the whaleship *Gipsy*, kept by John Wilson, Surgeon, 19th March 1843

⁹⁰ https://whalinghistory.org/?s=BV034200 (Accessed November 2019)

On arrival the *Foxhound's* captain would have been met by two men, a shipping agent and a customs officer. At this point the crew were 'entered in' at the Custom House. This was a bureaucratic process in which all masters and captains were legally required to register their returning crew and all cargo onboard. This could then be taxed accordingly. From 1817 onwards, information gathered by the Custom House was published daily at close of business in the form of the Customs Bills of Entry lists which detailed the arrival and departure of vessels. This fragmentary resource, where still in existence, was mined extensively by the late A. E. G. Jones who compiled a list of the comings and goings of South Sea whaling vessels.⁹¹ Jones was working in a pre-computerised era and by his own admission there are some errors in this list. For whatever reason, he does not list the *Foxhound* arriving in 1819, though he does note its departure on another whaling voyage in February 1820.

The shipping agent who met the *Foxhound* was most likely to have been John Boulcott. As partner in the prominent shipping agents Boulcott and Cannon, Boulcott specialised in brokering to the South Sea whaling trade. This involved dealing with the logistics of cargo movement, payments to crew and dues owed on transported goods. He was also part owner of several whaling ships, an oil merchant and acted as agent for other owners of whaling ships based in London.⁹² Although the data does not exist for returning vessels in 1819, Boulcott was the agent who met all returning BSWF ships in 1820, with the exception of one.⁹³ Therefore, it is plausible to assume that it was he who met the *Foxhound* on her return a few months earlier, in late 1819.⁹⁴ Jones lamented that "the shipping agents who handled the Custom House work in the South Seas trade is a topic that has not yet been studied."⁹⁵ As much of the materials for such a study were destroyed in a fire at the Custom House in 1814, the historian is reliant on other more indirect sources, such as the newspapers, to build a picture of the role of the agents. While Jones' complaint was made from the standpoint of economic maritime history, more research into shipping agents may also prove fruitful to the study of socio-cultural activities of the dockside. As identified in Chapter 3 Boulcott was

⁹¹ Jones, A.G.E. (1986) Ships employed in the South Seas trade, 1775-1861 (parts I and II); and, Registrar general of shipping and seaman: transcripts of registers of shipping, 1787-1862 (part III). Canberra: Roebuck Society.

⁹² Howard, M. (2015) 'Thomas Sturge and his fleet of South Sea whalers', International Journal of Maritime History, 27(3), pp. 411–433

⁹³ Ref bills of entry

⁹⁴ https://whalinghistory.org/?s=BS0506 (Accessed January 2020)

⁹⁵ Jones and Chatwin (2014) Ships employed in the South Seas trade, p.156

himself a collector of "curiosities from the South Seas."⁹⁶ Since there is no evidence of Boulcott ever travelling to the region himself, it is likely he acquired his collection from returning whaleships. He was also perfectly placed to act as intermediary for whaleship owners who were collectors themselves and it is quite possible that he also acted in this capacity.⁹⁷ Boulcott was also co-owner of the several whaleships including the *Gipsy* and the *L'Aigle* which, as discussed in Chapter 6, carried a significant amount of Hawaiian material culture onboard. It is worth noting that George Hill, Boulcott's business partner and co-owner of the *L'Aigle*, was gifted a Hawaiian feather cloak by the King of Hawaii in 1824.⁹⁸ It is not known if Boulcott received the same honour, however it is clear that as one of the first to greet returning vessels he was in a prime position to acquire curiosities straight off the ship.

After being entered in at the Custom House, Alexander Munro would either have been paid off or retained to assist with the discharging of cargo. Having been paid off, Munro took his sea chest containing his clothes, tools and the *Foxhound* tooth and vanished into the maze of alleyways that made up London's Sailortown, and - it would appear - almost totally from the historical record. According to Milne, the phenomenon of Sailortown was largely linked to the age of sail and the expanding reach of global trade meaning such districts may be found all over the world with recognisable characteristics.⁹⁹ These characteristic features included the industries that evolved to support maritime ventures along the waterside space, such as rope makers, chandlers, coopers, brewers, distillers, inns and boarding houses. In the early eighteenth century, London's Sailortown covered the areas of Wapping on the northern banks of the Thames and Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, Deptford and Greenwich on the southern bank.¹⁰⁰ In the next fifty years the area grew to include areas of Shadwell and Limehouse and extend out through the areas of Rotherhithe and Redriff to link up with Deptford and Greenwich. The dock complex was created between 1802-1805 by the London Dock Company

⁹⁶ London Evening Standard, Friday 5th June 1840

⁹⁷ Boulcott was shipping agent to William Bennett, a known collector of curiosities. Artefacts formerly belonging to Bennett can be found in the Museum of London, Docklands and the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. See Appendix 4.

⁹⁸ See Caldeira, L. (*et al*) (ed.) (2015) *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Ali'i*. San Francisco, CA: Honolulu: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; in collaboration with the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum: University of Hawai'i Press, p.84

⁹⁹ Milne, G.J. (2016) People, Place and Power on the Nineteenth-Century Waterfront: Sailortown. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan

¹⁰⁰ White, J. (2012) *London in the Eighteenth Century: A Great and Monstrous Thing*. London: Bodley Head, p.2, pp.32-33, p.219

which had formed in 1800 in order to ease the congestion in the vastly overcrowded Pool of London. The dock system consisted of two main basins, the Western Dock and the Eastern Dock, with a smaller basin known as the Tobacco Dock linking the two. Commodities such as tobacco, wool, rice, wine and brandy were stored under armed guard in 20 warehouses, 18 sheds and 17 vaults. This vast warehouse complex covered 50-acres of land and it was here that the barrels of oil and produce from the *Foxhound* were unloaded and stored. During construction over a thousand houses were demolished, displacing what had been the heart of eighteenth-century Sailortown in Wapping and relocating it further to the north along the Ratcliffe Highway. Ratcliffe Highway was often associated in the nineteenth century with poverty, crime and squalor. However, in *London's Sailortown 1600–1800*, Derek Morris and Ken Cozens take issue with this view. Whilst recognising that this area of east London suffered its fair share of social deprivation, Cozens' research on land tax documents indicates that Sailortown included places of both great poverty and also great wealth.¹⁰¹

The Museum of London Docklands has a permanent exhibition dedicated to recreating Sailortown in the form of an atmospheric diorama that visitors can walk through, visiting the shopfronts and alleyways in an immersive experience. Included in this recreation is an Animal Emporium; a curiosity shop selling caged birds, a parrot, camels and an ostrich. The exotic animal trade depended on sailors returning with specimens, however, as the century progressed specialised traders emerged to supply the growing demand for exotic specimens – men such as Charles Jamrach (1815-1891), animal and curiosity dealer. In 1875 the Reverend Henry Jones described his establishment:

Besides the store of birds, beasts, and fishes, there is a collection of all sorts of heterogeneous things from all parts of the world—armour, china, inlaid furniture, shells, idols, implements of savage warfare, and what not. Mr. Jamrach not only collects in comparative detail, but does not over-look the promising purchase of a whole museum. Some time ago he brought one in the lump from Paris. No wonder that the Ratcliff Highway is visited by many with money in their pockets for the purchase of antiquities and curiosities. From what I have seen I fancy that sometimes a good judge of these things can pick up a bargain here. Beside that of Mr. Jamrach's, we have divers shops for the sale of birds, especially parrots.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Morris, D. (2011) Whitechapel 1600-1800, A Social History of an Early Modern London Inner Suburb. London: The East London Historical Society, p.37

¹⁰² Jones, H. (1875) East and West London; Being Notes of Common Life and Pastoral Work in Saint James's, Westminster, and in Saint George's-in-the-East. London: Smith Elder, & Co., p.131

While Jones' description refers to Jamrach's as it existed in the 1870s, it was a longestablished business, Charles having inherited his father's already well-established bird and shell business in 1840. He had extended this to incorporate a museum, a menagerie, and a warehouse. This was situated in Old Gravel Lane by the London Docks so he could trade directly with sea captains, employing runners: men hired to intercept incoming ships to secure the most exotic specimens for sale.¹⁰³

In his *Dictionary of Antique and Curiosity Dealers,* historian Mark Wargarth has identifed Wardour Street as a centre for the curiosity trade in London in the 1820s. From this period onward he notes a significant growth in the number of dedicated curiosity shops in the London area which by 1840 had over 155 premises.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, in the years following the return of the *Foxhound*, Munro had a significant number of outlets in which to sell his tooth should he have wished.¹⁰⁵ As the Rev. Henry Jones stated, "many a sailor turns his collection of foreign curiosities into money within the limits of St. George's."¹⁰⁶ That Munro failed to part with his object was indicative of its worth to the whaleman and perhaps also its *lack* of economic value. Afterall, whales' teeth were relatively common artefacts, therefore not of great financial worth or interest (unless unusually large or deformed) until the mid-twentieth century when there was a resurgence in interest in this type of artwork amongst specialist collectors.

There is no firm evidence concerning Munro's movements after the return of the *Foxhound* in 1819. It is possible he moved overseas, went back to sea or remained in Britain, finding employment in some other trade. The eventual gifting of the tooth to Sophia Knight, and the manner of its reworking, suggests that at some point Munro either made, or inherited, some money. It is unlikely he would have made enough as a career sailor to mount the tooth in

¹⁰³ Assael, B. (2004) 'Jamrach, Charles [Johann Christian Carl] (1815–1891), dealer in wild animals'. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

 ¹⁰⁴ Westgarth, M.W. (2009) A Biographical Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Antique and Curiosity Dealers
 Glasgow: Regional Furniture Society, pp.7-10

 ¹⁰⁵ Westgarth (2009) A Biographical Dictionary, pp.7-10. See also: Altick, R.D. (1978) The Shows of London. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press. Wainwright, C. (2002) "A gatherer and disposer of other men's stuffe": Murray Marks, Connoisseur and Curiosity Dealer', Journal of the History of Collections, 14(1), pp. 161–176 For a more global overview of this trade see, Coote, A. *et al.* (2017) 'When Commerce, Science, and Leisure Collaborated: The Nineteenth-Century Global Trade Boom in Natural History Collections', Journal of Global History, 12(3), pp. 319–339

¹⁰⁶ Jones (1875) *East and West London*, p.131.

silver unless he had risen through the ranks to be a successful captain. In this respect, his late start as an apprentice would have counted against him. It is also quite possible, of course, that he pursued a different maritime trade other than whaling. As discussed previously a Wapping sailmaker has been identified as a strong candidate for the whaleman Alexander Munro. If he did become a successful sailmaker Munro's social status may have risen with his fortunes. Clayton's research on the socio-cultural environments of the South Seas whale fishery has identified sailmakers amongst the members of the Dundee Masonic lodge in Wapping which included many men involved in the whaling trade.¹⁰⁷ Through this work she has identified sailmakers who were also owners or part owners of whaling vessels, and it is possible that this was how Munro made enough money to mount the tooth in silver.

In 1837 the tooth underwent its next transformation straddling two different states of being: a curiosity and an artefact. It was inscribed, mounted in silver by Benjamin Smith and gifted. The hallmark dates to 1837, the same year as the inscription was made. The fact that the word 'whale' is particularly cramped, the silver almost overlapping the letter L, suggests that the tooth was inscribed *before* being mounted therefore, when still in Munro's ownership, (see Figures 7.11a &b).¹⁰⁸ Another reason to believe the inscription came first is because the vertical orientation of the mounted tooth contrasts with that of the imagery and the text, both of which were inscribed on the horizontal plane: if the inscription followed mounting it surely would have been etched on the vertical tooth to create a readable narrative.

¹⁰⁷ Clayton and Clayton (2016) Shipowners, p.27

¹⁰⁸ It could have been Knight who had the tooth mounted after she received it, although this would have to had been done almost immediately.





Figure 7.11a &b Inscription on the Foxhound tooth under magnification. Image: author

Close inspection of the inscription under magnification shows that the script was executed in a fluid, confident hand. There are no tentative scratches indicative of hesitancy. The same can be said for the engraving of the *Foxhound* on the reverse side - both were created by a skilled craftsman. Whether that was the work of Munro or not, as discussed previously, is less significant in the present context than the depiction of the ship in which he had sailed and its status as a gift. The inscription states that the whale had been "caught by the bow boat." Whenever a whale was struck and killed, a small flag was stuck in it to indicate which boat crew had been responsible. This was a great source of pride amongst the whaleboat crew and created a strong sense of inter-crew rivalry. This small detail, unusual on scrimshaw, indicates that this was the boat to which Munro was assigned. On 20th September 1837, the highly personalised object was presented to Sophia Knight.

Benjamin Smith III was part of an established silversmithing family. His father Benjamin Smith II created an elaborate dinner service for the Prince Regent (the Jamaica Service) in 1802. Smith junior specialised mainly in large scale commemorative pieces for corporations, such as plates, and trophies. The mounting of the tooth, a relatively small-scale commission, appears as something of an exception, departing from his usual commercial practice. It has been suggested that it may have been created by an apprentice and finished by Smith.¹⁰⁹ The fact that Smith senior had established a workshop in Limekiln Lane, Greenwich, in the early 1800s suggests he was catering to growing middle-class (and largely maritime) communities of the area around Greenwich and Blackheath. In the 1820s the silversmithing trade had predominantly been based around Soho, Hatton Garden and Clarkenwell. However, the founding of the London and Greenwich Railway Company in the 1830s linked this former fringe dwelling with the very heart of London offering craftsmen like Smith opportunities to tap into new, affluent and now more mobile markets, including this commission for Munro.¹¹⁰

The tooth was mounted top and bottom in such a way as to stand in a vertical orientation with its tip pointing downwards and the base of the tooth upwards. This is extremely unusual

¹⁰⁹ This would perhaps explain why the undulating scalloped line on the silver base cramps the inscription around the word 'whale', since a craftsman with the exceptional skill of Smith is unlikely to have made this error. Dr. Danelle Thom, pers comm, January 2020

¹¹⁰ Dr. Danelle Thom, pers comm, January 2020

as the vast majority of scrimshawed teeth are either presented horizontally, or in a way which mimics their natural state; that is, with the tooth tip pointing upwards. This inversion of the *Foxhound* tooth means that when viewed from above one can see into the tooth cavity, its least decorative part, and the hallmarks are also visible from this angle (see Figure 7.12). However, this is clearly not the intended viewpoint; based on the orientation of the engraving the tooth was meant to be viewed horizontally. The mounting of the tooth was the final stage in its transformation into a presentation piece, a finished decorative artefact to be admired on a shelf or mantlepiece in a domestic setting.



Figure 7.12 *Foxhound* tooth viewed from above showing hallmarks and tooth cavity. Image: author

The silver on the mount of the object was crafted in the Rococo revival style. This expressed itself in fluid, naturalistic curves reminiscent of the natural world, such as seashells or flowers and was a particularly fitting style for embellishing a nautical or maritime artefact. The popularity of Rococo revival had waxed and waned over the century preceding Munro's commission, dominating French design in the mid 1700s before falling away then re-emerging as a fashionable style in wider Europe in the mid 1800's.¹¹¹ It was a style favoured by the then

¹¹¹ Exhibition: *Rococo: The Continuing Curve 1730-2008,* February to July 2008. Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum: https://collection.cooperhewitt.org/exhibitions/35350903/page1 (Accessed June 2020)

Prince Regent (later George IV) and had become increasingly popular amongst the bourgeois class, including London's merchants and traders. As the curator of the 2008 Smithsonian Design Museum's exhibition *Rococo: the continuing curve* states:

Rococo erupts in reaction to periods of severe constraint and thrives in times of burgeoning economic prosperity. Rococo objects speak to human desires that go beyond simple necessity, and many are works of extreme craftsmanship. They tap into the sensuous, pleasure-seeking aspects of design when designers and their patrons seek creative freedom and fantasy. Finally, rococo reflects increased respect for the feminine, with objects referencing the female form.¹¹²

This suggests that the choice of Rococo revival was not just an aesthetic one. It also responded to the object's natural habitat and maritime origins, to the aspirations of the working classes (to which we must assume Munro belonged) and also to their gendered sense of style. Femininity was often referenced within scrimshaw design in the form of the female body itself, or decorative iconography considered 'female', such as hearts and flowers. While femininity is not explicitly referenced in iconographic terms upon the *Foxhound* tooth, it is expressed indirectly in the (female) form of the vessel.¹¹³ It is further referenced through the choice of design which marks the shift in ownership from male to female. The transfer of its ownership from Munro to Knight coincides with a change in use-value from a created artefact to a highly decorative one. Whereas it formerly served as a memento of Munro's whaling days, most probably of his first ship, carved (quite possibly) in the exclusively male environment of the fo'castle and imbued with all the energy and action of the whale hunt and subsequent kill, the addition of the silver in a Rococo revival style marks its transition into a decorative artefact worthy of presentation to a woman.

¹¹² Exhibition: *Rococo: The Continuing Curve* 1730-2008

¹¹³ Vessels were and still are always referred to as female

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In 2000 Rhys and Margaret Richards published a survey of twenty-five New England museums, documenting 'curiosities' brought home by American whalemen and dating them.¹ Of the many thousands of Pacific artefacts in these museums, they were able to confirm a whaling provenance and dates for only 106 objects, with a further thirty-seven having a probable link. In the course of research for this PhD, as outlined in Chapter 3, I conducted an online survey of Pacific artefacts in UK museums with a whaler provenance. This identified a total of 120 objects with a whaling connection, including a significant quantity of scrimshaw as well as Indigenous artefacts (Appendix 1). These results, whilst sobering, certainly underestimate the actual number of artefacts associated in some way with the British Southern Whale Fishery, either having been collected by whalers or transported on whaling ships. In the case of the Richards' survey, a strict criterion was used to select artefacts, namely evidence of donation by a named whaleman or whaling vessel. This substantially narrows the range of possible routes through which objects with a whaling provenance actually entered museum collections. By using a broader approach in the case of the BSWF, giving equal weight to evidence in archival documentation and artefactual collections, this thesis has been able to highlight patterns and processes of collecting in ways that would not have been possible through an investigation limited to physical collections alone. Furthermore, by widening the scope of the study to incorporate objects of natural history, I have also sought to situate whaler collecting in the context of cultures of collecting over the period of this study. In addition, I have highlighted other aspects of the history of whaler collecting, above and beyond that of the accumulation of physical specimens, by drawing out elements of knowledge generation linked to the gathering of information by whalers, including oceanographic, geographical and species knowledge. The result is a richer and more diverse view of whaler collecting in the Pacific during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

¹ Richards, R. and Richards, M. (2000) Pacific Artifacts Brought Home by American Whalemen: Pacific Islands Curiosities, Objects, Artifacts and Art in Museums in New England and Long Island: A Report. New Bedford: New Bedford Whaling Museum

As the first large-scale investigation of collecting amongst the whalemen of the British Southern Whale Fishery, this thesis has implications both for the study of collecting and for the future of maritime history display within museums. It has established that whalemen undertaking voyages to the Pacific were significant collectors of artefacts and specimens and also contributed to the generation of new knowledge. As shown in the case studies, it is clear that there were a variety of motivations for collecting activity, both that which was personally managed and that carried out on behalf of others. Nor do whaler collections have a clear chronological trajectory, reflecting some linear process of planning, collection, knowledge production and presentation. In reality the activity of collecting took many forms, reflecting many of the different ways in which Pacific objects came to be acquired by Europeans in the period. As shown by the example of the Foxhound tooth in Chapter 7, the meanings of artefacts changed as they migrated between different contexts, from emulation of indigenous artistry to a curiosity, from land to sea, from sea to dockside. From there they were gifted, sold, interpreted and reinterpreted in light of new and expanding knowledge systems.

Whether opportunistic or systematic, the practices of collecting were shaped significantly by the infrastructure of the whaling trade. Key factors here included the oceanic geography of whaling (guided by the migratory patterns of sperm whales), the strategies of owners and captains as regards preferred routes and ports of call, and the constraints imposed by the physical space of the vessel upon whalemen and their ability to store their collections. The subsequent circulation of collected objects and the knowledge associated with them was negotiated through a complex web of overlapping commercial, institutional, social and scientific networks, operating from the local to the global, in a multiplicity of spaces and shaped by patterns common to much maritime collecting in the period. Those objects which survived in collections, as shown in Chapter 4, were more likely to be connected with the names of whaleship owners or other high-status individuals than with those who often actually acquired them: the whalemen.

The activity of collecting was necessarily subsidiary to the prime objective of a whaling voyage, namely the hunting and processing of whale oil. Nonetheless, the acquisition and circulation of new maritime knowledge was integral to the trade and there are clear instances where whalers contributed significantly to the understanding of aspects of oceanography and

hydrography. Thus in 1769, when whaling captain Timothy Folger was asked by his relative, the polymath diplomat Benjamin Franklin, then American colonial representative in London, why it was that English mail packets sailing to from Falmouth to New York took several weeks longer to make their passage than vessels sailing between London and the East Coast of America, he had a ready response. Drawing upon his extensive knowledge as a whaleship captain, he explained the role of the Gulf Stream, a maritime phenomenon then unknown to British captains who had been sailing against the prevailing current therefore slowing their progress significantly. Folger sketched the course of the stream and Franklin had this information made into a chart in 1769. The resulting Franklin-Folger chart of the Gulf Stream, the first to map the current, is a notable example of the process whereby the lived experience of whalemen filtered into contemporary scientific discourse.²

For our purposes, this example drawn from the world of American whaling in the Atlantic serves to raise a question about the ways in which maritime knowledge of the Pacific world may have drawn on the experience of British whalers.³ As discussed in Chapter 2, we know that British whalemen had long been identified as a potential source of information for natural philosophers and of specimens for collectors even before the initiation of Pacific whaling. Those whalers involved in observing and collecting natural history and ethnography often described their efforts in self-effacing ways, acknowledging their limitations as observers: for example, identifying a new species of flying squid, surgeon John Lyell (discussed in Chapter 6.2) stated "I am I confess an amateur but no connoisseur of <u>Natural History</u>" (his emphasis).⁴ Yet such statements should be seen in context: such whalemen, like missionaries

² Withers, C. W. J. (2006) Science at sea: charting the Gulf Stream in the late Enlightenment, *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, 31(1), pp. 58–76. See also Richardson, P. and Adams, N.T. (2018) 'Uncharted Waters, Nantucket Whalers and the Franklin-Folger chart of the Gulf Stream', *Historic Nantucket*, Nantucket Historical Association, pp. 17–24; *The Works of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. XII Letters and Misc. Writings 1788-1790, Supplement, Indexes*. Benjamin Franklin to Anthony Todd, 29 October, 1769, https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/franklin-the-works-of-benjamin-franklin-vol-xii-letters-and-misc-writings-1788-1790-supplement-indexes (accessed February 2021)

³ This example also draws attention to the links between the American and British trades as Captain Folger was himself closely involved in the community move from Nantucket to Nova Scotia and thence to Milford Haven in 1792 (as discussed in Chapter 5).

⁴ In 2013 a researcher analysing Lyell's journal found that he had indeed described a type of flying squid not officially recorded as a species until the 1880s. It was not until 2011 that scientists were able to show this squid really does propel itself through the air just as Lyell had described in his journal in great detail. Indeed, the researcher questioned if Lyell's description and illustrations provide one of the earliest written English language accounts of this cephalopod. See: Anon (2013) Flying Squid and Island Encounters in the 1830s, *Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums: Unlocking their knowledge and potential*. Available at: https://pacificcollectionsreview.wordpress.com/tag/history/ (Accessed September 2021)

and naval officers, were seeking to participate in a wider discourse of inquiry on terms which would enabled them to be regarded as humble observers. And even where their motives were more financial than scientific, whalemen themselves clearly knew the value of their goods, as, as shown in the example of John Mawe's collecting guide (discussed in Chapters 2 and 6).

In the course of research for this thesis, a combination of factors – including the restriction on access to museum collections during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the realisation of the potential of archival sources to provide an evidential basis for an expanded sense of the historical role of whaler collecting beyond what can be gleaned from museum collections – prompted a rethinking of the object-focussed methodology as initially envisaged. The typology of archival and object evidence outlined in Chapter 3 represents a working response to the uneven survival of evidence in archival and object form. Taking the historian beyond the kinds of extant museum collections considered by Richards and Richards in their 2000 survey, this approach has enabled a novel reading of the historical significance of whaler collecting. Through an in-depth reading of a variety of archival sources, evidence has been found not only for the acquisition of specimens and artefacts by whalemen, but also for the movement of artefacts between whalers and other inhabitants of the maritime world, including naval officers and missionaries. This process of sharing and exchange indicates something of the fluidity of cultures and networks of collecting in this period, when objects moved between different contexts (the whaleship, the Naval vessel or missionary station) even before arriving in Britain.

The rarity of collections explicitly identified as being made by whalemen extant within museums, combined with the relative neglect of South Seas whaling within the narrative of British maritime history, reflects a notable blind spot amongst academic researchers when it comes to considering the role played by trades such as whaling within the development of global knowledge. The larger corporations, such as the East India Company and to a lesser extent the Hudson's Bay Company, stand as notable exceptions to this rule, having a bureaucracy and infrastructure to support collections in ways that mimicked those of the Admiralty: both thus maintained dedicated display spaces (the East India Company Museum

and the Hudson's Bay Company Hall) and both produced prodigious amounts of records, enabling their scrutiny by future historians. In contrast, most trades – including large-scale industries such as whaling – lacked these centralised resources. In this context, as this thesis has shown, collectors relied more upon individual and family networks to promote, or display, their collections through a variety of local or metropolitan spaces, be they the journals of learned societies, nascent museums or domestic spaces such as Benjamin Rotch's home, Castle Hall.

One of the key arguments of this thesis is that the collecting activities of traders in general and whalemen in particular need to be seen in the wider context of maritime cultures of collecting during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. When viewed alongside the better-known histories of collecting by naval personnel and missionaries, it is clear that whaler collecting shared both commonalities and differences: often undertaken on similar ocean-going vessels but with different structures of command and different kinds of equipment on board, different voyage objectives yet overlapping networks and pathways. While whalers lacked the centralised infrastructure for receiving and circulating their collections that were available to these other collecting groups by the early nineteenth century, there are many examples of parallel modes of collecting and of observation, and of intersection between whaling and other kinds of collecting, such as the swapping of artefacts between naval and whaler surgeons, or the couriering of missionary collection onboard whaleships. A more complete understanding of collecting in the southern oceans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries requires that we better understand the ways in which the collecting cultures within these groups were both differentiated and connected.

The published and unpublished writings of whalers, especially owners and surgeons, provide evidence of the acquisition and transfer to Britain of substantial collections of specimens and artefacts gathered in the course of their voyages to the Pacific. However, these sources are much less informative about their post-acquisition pathways, whether to institutions such as museums or more often their dispersal within commercial and family networks. Over the generations, many such objects have effectively disappeared from the institutional archive, becoming what Daniel Simpson in his work on naval collecting has defined as 'non-extant collections' (see Chapter 3). In the case of whaler collections, the evidence examined for this

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thesis suggests a far greater preponderance of non-extant artefacts and specimens than extant ones. Sometimes, this was the result of accident, though even here accounts of loss can provide powerful evidence of the importance of collecting as an activity. Whaling surgeon Louis Theircelin's devastation at losing his curiosity collection to shipwreck in 1841 is clear from his heartfelt lament "I had lost my collections of curios: living animal, stuffed birds, native weapons and clothes, I had lost them all; and the only treasures I had left were my memories."⁵

Where objects collected by whalers did enter museum collections, their whaling provenance has not always been recognised, with the notable exception of scrimshaw which is of course commonly associated with whaling. The reasons for this lack of recognition of a whaler provenance for other kinds of objects, whether specimens of natural history or cultural artefacts, are many. Amongst them are the relative brevity of British involvement in southern ocean whaling, less than a century, offering a somewhat shorter collecting window than other maritime endeavours. Within this period, whaling voyages were more numerous prior to 1815 (that period accounting for sixty per cent of the trade), while the bulk of whaler donations to provincial and metropolitan collections which have been identified in the course of this research took place between 1820 and 1840. This does not necessarily mean that whalemen were more likely to have been engaged in collecting after 1820, only that their collecting became better represented in documented museum collections with the rise of scientific, literary and learned societies.

Furthermore, the relatively low profile of the whaleman as a donor to museum collections also reflects a wider pattern whereby the names and motivations of subaltern collectors have become displaced by those of the metropolitan collectors who acquired their specimens and artefacts. This is evidenced, as we have seen in this thesis, by the numerous collecting guides aimed at sailors in general, and the direct targeting of this group both onboard and at the dockside by commercial dealers and other collectors such as customs officers or shipping agents. The provenance details of objects collected on whaling voyages were liable to be lost at the moment of exchange, either in the course of a voyage or on return, failing to register

⁵ Thiercelin, L. (1995) *Travels in Oceania: Memoirs of a Whaling Ship's Doctor, 1866*. Translated by C. Mortelier. Dunedin, N.Z: University of Otago Press, n/p, postscript

within museum documentation. And where they do exist, they are often fragmentary: a brief entry in the British Museum's accession register for 1838 thus simply states that a textile sample from the Caroline Islands was "collected by a member of the crew of a whaler".⁶ In contrast, the provenance of objects associated with naval collectors, especially officers and surgeons, typically includes further information: in this case, for example, the preceding entry describes an artefact collected by a captain in the Royal Navy, recording his name, rank, ship and place and date of death. Given the nature of Admiralty archives, the trajectories of even unnamed subaltern sailors can usually be precisely located in time and space; in contrast, whalemen were simply not considered important enough to warrant the recording of their details. The under-representation of whaling artefacts and specimens in extant collection databases is further exacerbated by a tendency amongst some of the best-known whaleshipowners, men like Charles Enderby and his brothers, to distance themselves from mercantile trades, reframing themselves as 'promoters of geographical discovery' or 'students of natural history'. Moreover, many of those with a stake in the whaling trade had other business interests and did not define themselves solely by their associations with whaling, making the identification of a whaling provenance for museum objects still more problematic. The characterisation of collector occupations depends on the vagaries of museum documentation systems in which 'whaling' often does not occur as a search term, in contrast to say fishing or trading.

The groundwork laid in this thesis presents myriad potential opportunities for further research around the people, places and networks involved in Pacific whaling and the role they played in the production of new knowledge through the acquisition of objects as well as the collection of information. At the broadest level, greater attention to the social and economic aspects of British whaling in the southern Ocean within the wider academic field of maritime history would open up new avenues for research on Pacific collecting. Now that specific individuals associated with the trade, their locales and networks, have been revealed, further research is possible. With regard to people, research into familial networks such as those of the Rotches may well reveal further dimensions of the transatlantic connections identified in Chapter 5. For example, a major archive of Rotch family papers survives in New Bedford: this

⁶ Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, Accession Register. Vol. 13. BM Accession no: Oc.1963.04.1

is, as yet, undigitized and due to COVID restrictions it could not be consulted for this thesis. Patient sifting of this resource would, I am sure, reveal a wealth of new information regarding the movement of goods, including specimens and artefacts between different branches of the family leading to a better understanding of transatlantic networks of collections exchange in the late eighteenth century. Furthermore, the relationship between missionary societies and certain whaleship owners, particularly Alexander Birnie, and the company Mellish and Co., deserves further investigation in order to reveal the ways in which their religious and mercantile endeavours were entwined, as in the case of the Rotches. The places associated with whaling that merit further targeted study are many, foremost being the London dockside, specifically the warehouse spaces that received goods from whaleships. Furthermore, investigation into the networks of maritime agents, including those of the customs officers and shipping agents who facilitated these movements, where records survive, could potentially prove fruitful.

As well as suggesting potential avenues for future research on people, places and networks associated with Pacific whaling, this thesis has provided the basis for a fresh approach to the whaling provenance of artefacts and specimens in museum collections in the UK as well as in elsewhere, including within the Pacific. A more critical focus on the ways that museum databases permit or limit the identification of traders in general and whalers in particular as collectors would be beneficial to future museum researchers. The provision of enhanced research resources, including guides to whaling material in national and local museums, would also aid business, local and family historians, especially if connections are made to extant archival material relating to the same objects and collectors. Finally, the accelerated digitisation and transcription of archival sources, particularly whaling surgeon's journals, would be of considerable benefit to many different kinds of researchers, including museum curators. There will always be absences and gaps in the historical record, and in the case of whalers the challenges of identifying even the basic pattern of collecting are many. But in this thesis we hope to have taken a small step towards making sense of the Collecting Leviathan.

Appendix 1 Museum Artefacts with Documented BSWF Provenance

Museum/Donor	Museum Description	Accession no.	Notes from Museum's collection database
BISHOP MUSEUM HA	WAII		
		0.00000//.007.070	
Valentine Starbuck	Cape, 'ahu 'ula. Hawaiian	C.00208/1927.073	Donated by Evangeline P. Starbuck [great grand-
(captain)	Islands. Early 19th century.	6200	daughter] in 1927
	Hawaiian barkcloth	C209	
	Hawaiian barkcloth	C210	
BRISTOL MUSEUM &	ART GALLERY		
Benjamin Rotch	Long paddle	E 1042	Solomons or Tahiti
(owner)			
	Paddle-shaped club, Fiji	E 1088	
	Stone adze head, New	E 1115	
	Zealand		
	Basket	E 1165	
	Wooden pillow, Tonga	E 1176	
	Ivory ear plugs, Marquesas Is	E 1189	Elephant ivory
	Paddle, Marquesas Is	E 1190	
Benjamin Rotch	Shark's tooth sword, Ellice	Ea 7551	Donations Book No 166, Oct 2 1824
(owner), probable	Islands		
	Shell necklace, Marshall	E 1204	
	Islands		
	Steering paddle, Tahiti	E 2760	
	Paddles, Tahiti	E 1042, 2759	
	Paddle, Hervey Islands	Ea 11504	
Benjamin Rotch	Finely carved paddles &	E 1191	
(owner), possible	spear		
	War spear	E 2753	Donations Book - "A warr spear covered with
			Shark's Teeth from the King Mills group"
	Dagger	Ea 7352	A dagger of shark's teeth from the Kings Mills group
	War clubs, Tonga	E 1179	
BRITISH MUSEUM			
Valentine Starbuck	Maori fish hook	Oc1944,02.150	Collected by Capt. Starbuck, whaler 'L'Aigle', "prior
(captain)			to 1824"
-	Maori fish hook	Oc1944,02.153	Collected by Capt. Starbuck, whaler 'L'Aigle', "prior
			to 1824". Registered on 15 July 1927. Bt Miss Eva P.
			Starbuck [great grand-daughter] (Beasley catalogue
	Sample of olona fibre	Oc1944,02.732	"Olana [olona] fibre. Collected by Capt. Starbuck, whaler L'Aigle, 1824"
	Maori fish hook	Oc1944,02.170	"Valentine Starbuck, S. Sea whaler, Ship L'Aigle,
		001044,02.170	prior to 1793" (Beasley catalogue)
	Belt	Oc1944,02.835	Brought to England "prior to 1824". Registered on
			15 July 1927, Bt Miss Eva P. Starbuck [great-
			granddaughter] (Beasley catalogue)

	Fish hook, Hawaii	Oc1944,02.63	Starbuck via Beasley collection
	Maori fish hook	Oc1944,02.191	Starbuck via Beasley collection
	Fish hook, Hawaii	Oc1944,02.72	"Prior to 1793" (label). L'Aigle.
Other L'Aigle material	Feather cape, small 'tippet' type	Oc,+.5769	Given by Kamehameha II to whaleman on L'Aigle
	Feather cape, full size	Oc.1174	Given by Kamehameha II to Sir H Chamberlayne.
	'ahu'ula		"This cloak is with little doubt the one depicted by
			John Hayter in his portrait of Boki and Liliha"
			(Kaeppler 1978: 30-3)
	Hawaiian canoe paddle	Oc1868,0301.1	Donated to the Museum in 1868 by F E Jones
	Cloak (image of)	Oc,B16.21	Now in Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum in Cologne
	Barkcloth, part of King's robe (?)	Oc.1451	Christy collection registration slip describes it as a piece of the tapa robe of the King who came to England in 1824
	Barkcloth, part of King's robe	Oc.1454	Christy collection registration slip describes it as a
			piece of the tapa robe of the King who came to
			England in 1824
		1	I
Frederick Debell	Тара	Oc.1984	See Christy collection registration slip, catalogue ref
Bennett (surgeon)			to Bennett's [Narrative of a] <i>Whaling Voyage,</i> Vol.I, p.116, Raiatea
Poppott family	Canao provi	0c1000 0721 1	Durchased from Bollin & Foundant, originally
Bennett family,	Canoe prow	Oc1900,0721.1	Purchased from Rollin & Feuardent, originally acquired from Arthur D. Passmore
Farringdon (owners)			acquired from Arthur D. Passinore
Other	Cloth, Caroline Islands	Oc1838.4 [?]	Attached note: "Called Wai wai, brought back in
			1838 by the crew member of a whaler" acquired by
			Chelmsford Philosophical Society
	Scrimshaw/ tabua	Oc1931,0714.42	Features carved South Sea whaling scene
	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO	POLOGY	
CAMBRIDGE MUSEU Kamehameha II	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak,	·	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry
	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to	POLOGY	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884);
	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from	POLOGY	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in
	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to	POLOGY	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884);
Kamehameha II	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from	POLOGY	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage	POLOGY	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage	POLOGY 1934.1159	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934.
Kamehameha II	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw	POLOGY 1934.1159	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon)	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw	POLOGY 1934.1159	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw E MUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw E MUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian.	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw E MUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw E MUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait Miniature portrait	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100 MNT0101	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw EMUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait A box with lid made from	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100 MNT0101	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw EMUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait A box with lid made from rows of cloves sewn together	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100 MNT0101 AAA2932	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw EMUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait Miniature portrait A box with lid made from rows of cloves sewn together A box with lid made from	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100 MNT0101 AAA2932	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw EMUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait Miniature portrait A box with lid made from rows of cloves sewn together A box with lid made from rows of cloves sewn together	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100 MNT0101 AAA2932 AAA2929	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale
Kamehameha II GREAT NORTH MUSE William Lisle (surgeon) NATIONAL MARITIM William Tolley	M OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHRO Hawaiian Feather cloak, (ahu'ula) belonging to Kamehameha II from Starbuck's L'Aigle voyage UM, HANCOCK, NEWCASTLE Sperm whale jaw EMUSEUM Sharktooth weapon (teeth missing). Reputedly Fijian. Miniature portrait Miniature portrait A box with lid made from rows of cloves sewn together A box with lid made from rows of cloves sewn together A box with lid made from	POLOGY 1934.1159 NEWHM: S1101 AAA2928 MNT0100 MNT0101 AAA2932 AAA2929	Donated by the widow of the collector William Terry to the South Kensington Museum (1884); transferred to Cambridge from the V&A Museum in 1934. Donated by Lisle, 1840. Mandible of a Sperm Whale

	A whalebone fid, a tool used	AAA0133	
	in rigging and sailmaking		
	A sperm whale's tooth carved	AAA0018	
	in high relief with a figure in		
	classical drapes		
	A whalebone walking stick	AAA0015	
	with a brass ferule.		
	A sperm whale's tooth	AAA0021	
	engraved on one side with a		
	view of a sailor climbing a		
	ship's rigging in a storm		
	Painting of The Active off		
	Dover		
Other	A contemporary full hull	SLR0748	Built 1834. On display at Chatham
	model of the whaling vessel		
	Samuel Enderby		
	Whalebone staybusk	ZBA1481	Decorative carving on bone taken from the lower
	depicting the Cyrus		jaw of a sperm whale, inscribed 'The Cyrus arrived
			Octr 20 th 1833'
	Carved whale tooth depicting	AAA0026	Scrimshaw shows 'Crew of Japan killing a large
	the Japan		whale' and on the other side 'Ship Japan cutting a
MUSEUM OF LONDO	N, DOCKLANDS	DK2001 138/1-4	large whale'. The <i>Japan</i> was a whaling ship built in 1830.
MUSEUM OF LONDO Bennett estate Jowners		DK2001.138/1-4	large whale'. The <i>Japan</i> was a whaling ship built in 1830.
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot		
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i>	DK88.25	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth	DK88.25 ?	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone	DK88.25 ? ?	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth	DK88.25 ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone	DK88.25 ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone Scrimshaw	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners Dther	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the William Nichol Scrimshaw, Foxhound tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners Other	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Whale boat model	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	
Bennett estate owners Other Other	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the <i>William Nichol</i> Scrimshaw, <i>Foxhound</i> tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	1830.
Bennett estate owners Other Other	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the William Nichol Scrimshaw, Foxhound tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Uhale boat model SLIVERPOOL WORLD MUSEUM	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	1830.
Bennett estate owners Dther	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the William Nichol Scrimshaw, Foxhound tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Triangular comb with fibre wound round teeth, Samoa	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	1830.
Bennett estate owners Other Other	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the William Nichol Scrimshaw, Foxhound tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Triangular comb with fibre wound round teeth, Samoa Triangular comb bound with	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	1830. Image: I
Bennett estate owners Other Other	N, DOCKLANDS Wooden stanchions Trypot Painting of the William Nichol Scrimshaw, Foxhound tooth Panbone Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Scrimshaw Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Harpoon Triangular comb with fibre wound round teeth, Samoa Triangular comb bound with	DK88.25 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?	1830. Image: I

William	Whalebone jaw scrimshawed	NMS. Z.1844.15	donated 1844; no documentation
Hardy/Hardie	by the crew of the Woodlark		
(captain)			
	Hawaiian Feather cloak,	A.1948.274	Described as " a gift from Kamahamam to Hon.
	(ahu'ula) of red and yellow		Frederick Byng", 1824: a L'Aigle artefact
	feathers knotted into an		
	olona fibre network of		
	quadrantal shape		
PITT RIVERS MUSEL	JM, OXFORD		
Edward Lawson	Fighting sword edged with	1936.26.12	
(captain)	sharks' teeth, Kiribati		
	Sperm whale tooth with	1936.26.28	
	decoration begun but not		
	completed		
	Undecorated sperm whale	1936.26.27	
	tooth		
	Sperm whale tooth	1936.26.29	
	decorated with 'Masonic'		
	symbols and a steam sail ship		
	on reverse		
	Sperm whale tooth	1936.26.31	
	decorated with 'Masonic'	1950.20.51	
	symbols and ship	1000.00.00	
	Sperm whale tooth with	1936.26.32	
	carved tip and base		
	Sperm whale tooth carved	1936.26.33	
	with relief designs of a bird		
	and a snake on a black		
	painted background		
	Sperm whale tooth carved	1936.26.34	
	with relief designs [as above]		
	Sperm whale tooth carved	1936.26.35	
	with relief designs of flowers		
	and snake		
	Sperm whale tooth carved	1936.26.36	
	with relief designs of a		
	woman with basket		
	Sperm whale tooth carved	1936.26.37	
	with relief designs of an eagle		
	and an elephant		
	Carved walking-stick of whale	1936.26.38	
	bone, with spiral design on	1,20,20,30	
	shaft		
		1026 26 20	
	Carved walking-stick of whale	1936.26.39	
	bone, with spiral design on		
	shaft	1000.00.10	
	Walking stick made from	1936.26.40	
	shark's vertebral column		
	Carved whale bone riding	1936.26.41	
	whip		
	Carved hard wood walking	1936.26.42	
	stick		
	Steel harpoon-head, barbed	1936.26.26	Inscribed 'North Shields' on one side and 'R. Flinn,
	and inscribed		1820'

	Flywhisk of spirally twisted	1936.26.15	Tubuai Islands French Polynesia?
	coconut fibre, mounted on a		
	carved wooden handle,		
	partially decoratively bound		
	with fibre, with two human		
	figures, back to back		
	End-blown flute, koauau,	1936.26.9	New Zealand, North Island?
	carved from wood, three	1550.20.5	
	stops	1020 20 10	
	Small wooden carving, Akua	1936.26.10	
	ka'ai	1026.26.42	
	Sword carved from wood	1936.26.13	Kiribati, Gilbert Islands
	with perforated teeth bound		
	to the edge of the blade		
	Carved wooden feather-box,	1936.26.1 .1	New Zealand
	shaped like a canoe,		
	wakahuia OR papahou		
	lid for above	1936.26.1 .2	New Zealand.
	Carved bone club, Wahaika	1936.26.2	New Zealand
	Wooden four-legged stool	1936.26.3	Society Islands French Polynesia? Tahiti?
	Wooden four-legged stool	1936.26.4	Society Islands French Polynesia? Tahiti?
	Wooden bowl with	1936.26.5	Cook Islands
	elaborately carved handle		
	, and geometric notched		
	patterns all over the bowl.		
	Gourd		
	Stilt foot-rest, carved in	1936.26.6	Marguesas Islands French Polynesia
	human form	1550.20.0	
	Stilt foot-rest, carved in	1936.26.7	Marquesas Islands French Polynesia
	human form	1950.20.7	Marquesas Islands French Polynesia
	Stilt foot-rest, carved in	1936.26.8	Marguasas Islands Franch Dolynosia
	,	1950.20.8	Marquesas Islands French Polynesia
	human form	1000 00 11	
	Throwing club of dark wood	1936.26.11	Fiji
	with bulbous fluted head (I		
	ula tavatava)		
	Necklet of plaited grass and	1936.26.14	Kiribati? Gilbert Islands?
	sennit and serrated pearl		
	shell discs		
	Keris with varnished wavy	1936.26.21 .1	Malaysia. The keris grip has been repaired and
	blade and textile bound hilt		covered with black textile that is stitched togethe
			up the back.
	Canvas-covered wooden	1936.26.21 .2	Malaysia, covered in natural coloured canvas and
	sheath for above		has a small leather band with a copper alloy loop
			attached just below the mouth. Note: Repaired b
			whaler
		1	1
/illiam Bennett	Maori canoe, model of a war	1886.1.1431.1	Donated 1827 to Ashmolean, transferred to PRM
owner)	canoe, 17ft		1886.
	Stretcher from Maori war	1886.1.1277	Donated 1827 to Ashmolean, transferred to PRM
	canoe	1000.1.1277	1886.
	Indonesian canoe model	1886.1.409	Donated 1827 to Ashmolean, transferred to PRM
		1000.1.409	
			1886.
	Haliosis shell x 2	1886.1.1431.2	Thought to be part of Maori canoe model

John B. Gibson	Carved figure 'Tchobeko',		Gable apex figure, probably from the Bay of Islands
(surgeon)	Arawa Central North Island,		carved c.1800 (Richards, 2015)
	New Zealand		
ROYAL COLLECTION	S TRUST		
Kamehameha II	Hawaiian feather cloak [from	69990	On long-term loan to BM since 1903. Said to have
	L'Aigle voyage?] ahu'ula		been presented to George IV by Kamehameha II in 1824.
	Hawaiian feather cloak [from L'Aigle voyage?] ahu'ula	69991	Info as above.
	Tippet (smaller version of an 'ahu'ula	69992	Info as above.
	Tippet (smaller version of an 'ahu'ula	69993	Info as above.
	Tippet (smaller version of an 'ahu'ula	69994	Info as above.
	Tippet (smaller version of an 'ahu'ula	69995	Info as above.
MONTROSE			
MUSEUM			
William Reid/Reed	"A large collection of shells (upwards of 500) from the	Details from Proceedings of the	No response due to furloughing of staff
	South Seas and Indian	Montrose Natural	Whaling surgeon on the South Seas
	archipelago, also several	History and	vessel Margaret in 1838.
	archipelago, also several ornithological specimens	History and Antiquarian Society	vessel <i>Margaret</i> in 1838. Donated in 1842.
			-
	ornithological specimens	Antiquarian Society	-
	ornithological specimens from the same Islands. Malay	Antiquarian Society	_
	ornithological specimens from the same Islands. Malay curas sword and spear, with several other warlike weapons from the same	Antiquarian Society	-
	ornithological specimens from the same Islands. Malay curas sword and spear, with several other warlike weapons from the same coast. A collection of rare	Antiquarian Society	-
	ornithological specimens from the same Islands. Malay curas sword and spear, with several other warlike weapons from the same	Antiquarian Society	-

Appendix 2 BSWF Logs and journals consulted

British archives

British Library						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
Add MS 30369	JOURNAL	Rattler	Captain James Colnet	t Captain James Colnett RN	1793	1794
Culture Perth and Kinross						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
Archive No.463			Thomas Garbutt		1829	1832
Archive N0.465	JOURNAL (2 VOLS)	Ranger	momas Garbutt	Surgeon, John Lyell	1629	1652
Exeter County Archives						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
? UNLOCATED AS OF 2020	LOG	Brothers	W. Perry / R. Bagnall	?	1804	1806
Gloucester County Records Office						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
D543 (ACC 236)	JOURNAL	Sarah and Elizabeth	Capt. Wakeling	Surgeon, George Eaton Stranger	1836	Fleet
			?			
D543 (ACC 236)	JOURNAL	Solway	f	Surgeon, George Eaton Stranger	1837	lost
Hull Maritime Museum						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
W3.112.76 (NRA 1766)	LOG , 3 vols transcript	Comet	Abel Scurr	?	1812	1815
Littlehampton Museum						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
D246	JOURNAL	George Home	Thomas James	Surgeon Edward Harris	1832	1835
5210		le conge monte			1002	1000
Museum of London Docklands						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
No. 82.680	LOG	Mary	Edward Reed Lacy	?	1823	1825
National Maritime Museum, Green	hwich					
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
NMM MRF/90	LOG (Micofilm)	Pusey Hall	Robert Newby	Robert Newby	1830	1833
NMM MRF/40	LOG (Micofilm)	Pusey Hall	Robert Newby	Robert Newby (James Lowton?)	1833	1837
		i usey nun	nobert new by		1000	1007
	LOG (Micofilm) also includes Muster book and					
NIMANA MARE (00		Sir Androw Hammond	Robert Newby	Robort Nowby	1020	1942
NMM MRF/90	letters	Sir Andrew Hammond	Robert Newby	Robert Newby	1838	1843
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/90	letters LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn	John Meek	Robert Newby (1° mate)	1827	1830
	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames	John Meek Day	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate)	1827 1824	1830 1826
NMM MRF/90	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth	John Meek	Robert Newby (1° mate)	1827 1824 1820	1830 1826 1821
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby	1827 1824 1820 1818	1830 1826 1821 1819
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Dicofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brooke	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ?	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ?	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 59	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG LOG	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda Active	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ? ?	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832 1838	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836 1842
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ?	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 59 NMM MRF/146 Royal Geographical Society	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG LOG LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda Active Adventure	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ? ? ? Robert McCarty	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832 1838 1834	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836 1842 1847
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 59 NMM MRF/146 Royal Geographical Society REFERENCE	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG LOG LOG LOG LOG (Micofilm) LOG OR JOURNAL	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda Active	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ? ?	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832 1838 1834	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836 1842
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 59 NMM MRF/146 Royal Geographical Society	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG LOG LOG (Micofilm)	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda Active Adventure	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ? ? ? Robert McCarty	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832 1838 1834	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836 1842 1847
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 59 NMM MRF/146 Royal Geographical Society REFERENCE	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG LOG LOG LOG LOG (Micofilm) LOG OR JOURNAL	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda Active Adventure VESSEL	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook William Davis	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ? ? ? Robert McCarty	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832 1838 1834 1844 DEPARTED	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836 1842 1847 RETURNED
NMM MRF/90 NMM MRF/77 NMM MRF/77 NMM JOD 61 NMM JOD 59 NMM MRF/146 Royal Geographical Society REFERENCE RGS 303662	letters LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG LOG LOG LOG LOG LOG (Micofilm) LOG (Micofilm) LOG OR JOURNAL	Sir James Cockburn Thames Ann Elizabeth Asp L'Aigle Recovery Matilda Active Adventure VESSEL Tula and Lively	John Meek Day Caslin, Thomas Valentine Starbuck William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook William Tooley Brook William Davis MASTER John Biscoe	Robert Newby (1° mate) Robert Newby (2° mate) Robert Newby John Rose ? ? ? Robert McCarty KEEPER	1827 1824 1820 1818 1822 1828 1832 1838 1834 1844 DEPARTED 1830	1830 1826 1821 1819 1824 1831 1836 1842 1847 RETURNED 1833

N.B All archival sources listed were consulted apart from those at Littlehampton Museum (due to Covid restriction) and Exeter County Archives (due to item not being located)

America

Nantucket Historical Association						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
.OG 55	JOURNAL	Coronet	Addis Bond	Surgeon, Eldred E. Fysh	1837	1839
LOG 213	LOG	Redbridge	J. Brown	George Rule	1800	1801
LOG 46	LOG	Cyrus	Paul West	Paul West	1808	1810
LOG 228	LOG	Spring Grove	George Rule	J. K. Davidson	1818	1821
LOG 229	LOG	Fanny	George Rule	J. K. Davidson	1822	1824
LOG 54	LOG	Coquette	Capt. King	James H. Wild	1820	1823
New Bedford Whaling Museum						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL?	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
0263	LOG	Kingston	Thomas Dennis	Thomas Dennis	1800	1801
0534	LOG	Frolic	Benjamin Disney	Benjamin Disney	1840	1843
NBW 1208	LOG	Mary	Henry Green	Henry Green	1848	1852
ODHS 0809	JOURNAL	Japan	William Edmund Hill	Surgeon, James Brown	1834	1837
0098	JOURNAL	Warrens	George Grey (Gray)	Surgeon, Robert Smtih Owen	1837	1840
0605	LOG	Lady Amherst	Barnett, William	Henry Reynolds	1833	1836
0898	LOG	William	George Fitch	Thomas Wetling/William Mott	1796	1797
0641	LOG	Eclipse	Martinson	James John Wheeler	1837	1841
0708	LOG	Cyrus	Paul West	Paul West	1810	1812
Rauner Special Collections Library	, Dartmouth Historia	cal Library				
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
CODEX D03 385	JOURNAL	Sussex	George Hammer	Apprentice, Henry Forster	1840's	1840's

Australia and New Zealand

National Library of Australia				* Transcription by Joan Druett available in archive		
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
NLA MS 3454, ID 57429	JOURNAL	Lusitania	Robert Ross	Rose (Ordinary Sailor?)	1826	1830
				Partial transcript provided by Mark Howard		
State Library of New South Wales						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
DLMSQ 366	JOURNAL	Kingsdown	Capt. Underwood	Mrs Eliza Underwood *	1829	1832
SAFE/DLMSQ 36 (Microfilm CY 2824)	JOURNAL	Britannia and Speedy	Thomas Melville	Surgeon, D Brown	1791	1796
SAFE/DLMSQ 36 (Microfilm CY 2824)	JOURNAL	Britannia and Speedy	Thomas Melville	Surgeon, D Brown	1791	1796
A1418 [microfilm CY111]	JOURNAL	Elizabeth	Edward Deanes	Henry Ransome, Ordinary Sailor	1831	1834
State Library of South Australia						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
BRG 42/81	LOG	Sarah and Elizabeth	Capt. Wakeling	John Simpson / Surgeon George Eaton Stanger	1836	1840
BRG 42/82	LOG	Sarah and Elizabeth	Capt. Wakeling	William Jones / William Campbell	1840	1842
PRG113/5/3	JOURNAL	Reliance	Joseph Cockle	Surgeon, Richard Francis Burton	1832	1835
National Library of New Zealand						
REFERENCE	LOG OR JOURNAL	VESSEL	MASTER	KEEPER	DEPARTED	RETURNED
MS-0501	JOURNAL	MULTIPLE VESSELS	/	James Choyce, authored 1825	1	1

Appendix 3 Wills of BSWF Whalers, 1778-1853

		Rank or		
Name	Ship	Occupation	Date	Archive ref
Nero Rider	Experiment		1778	PROB 11/1045/74
Will Townsend	Southampton		1792	PROB 11/1224/101
Samuel Enderby		Whaleship		
Snr		Owner	1797	PROB/11/1297/8
Thomas Gage	Rasper	Master	1798	PROB 11/1303/131
John Allez	Venus		1800	PROB 11/1343/185
Andrew Anderson	Earl Spencer		1801	PROB 11/1360/269
George Phillips	Young William	Second Mate	1802	PROB 11/1378/182
Ammeill Hursey or				
Amiel Husse	Britannia	Master	1810	PROB 31/1039/436
				SD/1812/13 (Welsh
James Reynish	Ranger		1812	probate)
Peter Chase	Albion	Seaman	1813	PROB 31/1072/132
Thomas Birch	Elizabeth	Boatsteerer	1819	PROB 11/1619/261
William Wall				
Weekes	Monmouth	Baker	1819	PROB 11/1617/354
John Girk	Cumberland	Master	1819	PROB 31/1153/1033
Benjamin Hamma				
tt	Greenwich	Master	1821	PROB 11/1651/83
John Carter	Lydia	Chief Mate	1821	PROB 31/1177/1028
Charles Howland				
Coleman	Tuscan	Master	1821	PROB 31/1173/658
George				
Denneman	Latona	Master	1821	PROB 31/1165/946
Thomas Clarke	Mary	Seaman	1822	PROB 11/1656/389

George Thompson	Emma	Chief Mate	1825	PROB 31/1224/1155
Alexander				
Montpatis	Offley	Seaman	1825	PROB 31/1225/1302
		Whaleship		
Daniel Bennett		Owner	1826	PROB/11/1718/149
Thomas Tait	Kent	Seaman	1827	PROB 31/1247/1103
David Thomas	L'Aigle		1827	SD/1827/325 (NLW)
Walsingham or				
James Masters	?	Cooper	1828	PROB 11/1747/11
John Pittman				
Westbeach Young				
er	Phoenix	Chief Officer	1829	PROB 11/1756/300
Benjamin				
Stephenson	Kent	Mariner	1829	PROB 11/1753/318
Samuel Enderby		Whaleship		
Jnr		Owner	1829	PROB 11/1762/335
John Hardman	Lady Amherst	Seaman	1831	PROB 31/1282/1504
William Beaton	Норе	Carpenter	1832	PROB 11/1798/91
John Hughes	Warrens		1832	SD/1832/364 (NLW)
Thomas Lee	Perseverance	Cook	1833	PROB 31/1322/1743
Philip Thomas				
Roza	Japan	Seaman	1834	PROB 11/1836/330
Hans Hansen	Princess Mary	Carpenter	1834	PROB 11/1835/207
James Boswell	Princess Mary	Cook	1834	PROB 11/1837/23
Peter Gilson alias				
Peter Liljewall	Recovery	Carpenter	1840	PROB 11/1921/236
Thomas Luccock	Folkestone	Surgeon	1840	PROB 11/1921/341
		Master Mariner		
Thomas Garbutt	Resolution	and Commander	1841	PROB 11/1948/320
		Whaleship		
William Bennett		Owner	1844	PROB 11/1992/336

James May		Diana	Master	1844	PROB 11/1993/297
Abijah Lock		Stratford?	Master	1849	PROB 11/2103/51
George	Daniel				
Terry		?	Master	1853	PROB 11/2175/41

Source: TNA unless otherwise stated in the Archive reference

Appendix 4

Whaleship Owners as Artefact Collectors: the Bennetts of Faringdon House

On or before 1827 William Bennett of Faringdon house, Buckinghamshire (now Oxfordshire) donated several artefacts to the Ashmolean Museum, which in turn were transferred to the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1886.¹ These included a 17ft model of a Maori war canoe, a wooden carved stretcher said to be from the same canoe, two haliotis shell disks possibly associated with the canoe, a model of an Indonesian canoe and a large example of a saw fish (now unlocated).

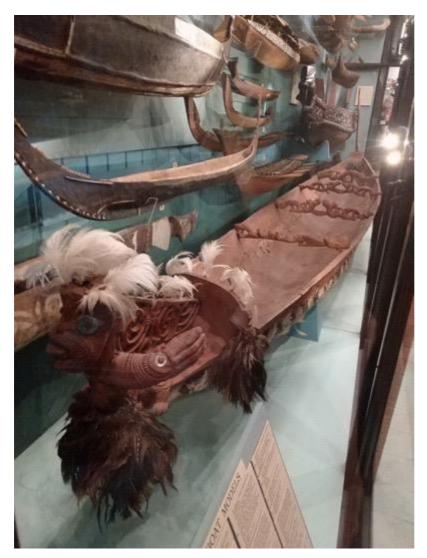


Figure A4.1: A 17ft model Maori war canoe (*waka*) from the collection of whaleship owner, William Bennett, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford

¹ Nicholas Crowe, Assistant curator, Pitt Rivers Museum, pers comm, 2018

William Bennett (1788-1844) was the son of Daniel Bennett (1760-1826) who bought Faringdon House in 1818. Daniel Bennett was originally a brazier based in Wapping but through shrewd investment in whaling vessels by 1800 had become wealthy oil merchant and the most important shipowner in the Southern Whale Fishery, overtaking the Enderbys in this respect.² On his death in 1826 he left a substantial fortune including property on the Isle of White, Rotherhithe, Wiltshire and Buckinghamshire split between his son William and his daughter Sarah.³ Faringdon House and all its contents were inherited by William. The donation of artefacts to the Ashmolean Museum took place the year after his father's death. Whereas there is no definitive evidence that Daniel Bennett was a collector of curiosities, his son's name is mentioned in association with Maori material at the Pitt Rivers and the Field Museum in Chicago. William does not appear to have travelled abroad himself but utilised his captains to collect for him. In Field Museum documentation it is noted that the Maori artefacts were collected for William Bennett by one of his whaling captains named Thomas Younger in 1824.⁴ Also part of the Fuller collection at the Field Museum are an unidentified number of acquisition donated by Captain P Younger, "a whaling Captain", before 1824.⁵ According to whaling data sources, a Captain Younger undertook three voyages for Bennett and Co., two of which occurred prior to 1824 and none of which appear to have touched at New Zealand as they were bound for Timor and Patagonia.⁶ It is possible Captain Younger traded for his curiosities, or did in fact go to New Zealand, but the data sources are incomplete. Upon his death in 1846 William left his collection of Natural Curiosities in his Will to his son Daniel.

Artefacts from the "Bennett collection at Faringdon" are also held in the British Museum and the Docklands Museum. The British Museum acquired a Maori canoe prow in 1899 from the

² Clayton, J.M. and Clayton, C.A. (2016) Shipowners Investing in the South Sea Whale Fishery from Britain: 1775-1815. Chania, Crete: Self Published, p.86. See also Jones, A.G.E. (1981) 'The British Southern Whale and Seal Fisheries. Part 1.', The Great Circle: Journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History, 3(1), pp. 20-29

³ Will of whaleship owner, William Bennett. TNA: PROB 11/1992/336

⁴ Richards, R. (2015) *Tracking Travelling Taonga: A Narrative Review of How Maori Items got to London From 1798, to Salem in 1802, 1807 and 1812 and Elsewhere up to 1840*. Wellington: Paremata Press. p.156

⁵ Force, R.W. and Force, M. (1971) *The Fuller Collection of Pacific Artifacts*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p.151

⁶ https://whalinghistory.org/?s=bennett [Filter: Voyages for British Southern owners/ agents: Bennett] (Accessed April 2021)

collection through Arthur D. Passmore, of the Imperial Yeomanry. According to the Museum website, Charles Hercules Read paid Passmore directly for the acquisition, though according to the Register it was bought from the dealer Rollin & Feuardent.⁷ The canoe prow is a much-exhibited object. A noted in Chapter 1, Bennett artefacts - namely a try pot and two wooden stanchions - are also on display at the Docklands Museum. Former curator Chris Ellmers has provided the following account of their provenance:

These were acquired in the mid-1980s following an offer by a private individual to donate the trypot and two between deck stanchions. The donor's family had once been tenant farmers on what had been the Bennett's Faringdon House estate, Berkshire, and the trypot and stanchions were on the premises that they leased there. When the donor subsequently moved to another premises at Chilton, near Didcot in Berkshire, they were permitted to take the stanchions and trypot with them. The trypot had served as a water-butt and the stanchions supported part of a barn roof. The donor did not donate any other BSWF or Bennett related items. [...] It is clear, however, that the Bennetts must have retained some emotional link with their vessels once they progressively ceased operations. They moved a number of other trypots to their Faringdon House estate, which the family had owned since 1818. We took photographs of these during a visit there in the mid-1980s, and Jane Clayton also mentions them. There were no other whaling artefacts on the estate or in the house when we went there.⁸

A total of 305 voyages were made by Bennett-owned whaleships between 1776 and 1827, the date of the donation to the Ashmolean Museum.⁹ The Table below shows a selection of those voyages destined for the whaling grounds off Australia, New Zealand and the Southern Pacific. This is an incomplete list since the destination of nearly half of the 305 voyages is unknown. Moreover, as the example of Captain Thomas Younger indicates, artefacts from these regions may have been acquired indirectly via trade with intermediaries. This list does however show that Bennett ships were amongst some of the earliest whaling voyages to the Antipodes and any collections made would potentially have been significant.

⁷ https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Oc1900-0721-1 (accessed May 2021)

⁸ Dr Chris Ellmers, pers comm, April 2021

⁹ As of April 2021. This number will change as more information regarding Bennett voyages emerges and is added to the dataset. https://whalinghistory.org/?s=bennett [Filter: Voyages for British Southern owners/ agents: Bennett] (Accessed April 2021)

Bennett-owned vessels destined for the whaling grounds off Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, 1791-1835

Vessel	Departure	Owner	Master	Destination	
Countess de Galvaez	Date 1791-08-18	Daniel	Henry Delano	Pacific Ocean	
	1791-00-10	Bennett			
Betsey	1794	Bennett	Highland / William	Pacific Ocean	
			Hyland		
Fanny	1795	Bennett	Robert Turnbull	Pacific Ocean	
Sally	1796-01-19	Daniel	Charles Clark	New Holland	
		Bennett			
Betsey	1797	Bennett	William Bacon	Pacific Ocean	
Sally	1798	Daniel	S. Moore / Moores	New South	
		Bennett	/ Morris	Wales Fishery; Peru	
Kingston	1798-03-11	Daniel	Charles Clark	Pacific Ocean	
		Bennett			
Betsey	1798-08-17	Daniel	Obediah Clarke	Pacific Ocean	
		Bennett and			
		Company			
Elligood	1800-01-19	Daniel	Christopher Dixon	Coast of New	
		Bennett & Co	/ Dickson / Job Anthony	Holland	
Kingston	1800-01-19	Daniel	Thomas Dennis	Coast of New	
		Bennett		Holland	
Ferrett	1803-08-05	Daniel	Philip Skelton	New Zealand	
		Bennett			
Indispensible	1806-05-14	Daniel	Robert Turnbull	New Zealand	
		Bennett			
Ferrett	1806-06-20	Daniel	Philip Skelton?	New Zealand	
		Bennett			
Recovery	1807-09-11	Daniel	Bacon	New South	
		Bennett		Wales Fishery	
Mary	1808-03-15	Daniel	Simmonds /	New South	
Diana	4000 40 07	Bennett	William Simmons	Wales Fishery	
Diana	1808-10-07	Bennett	William Parker	New Zealand	
New Zealander	1808-11-08	Daniel	William Elder /	New Zealand	
Indian ar site is	1000 02 20	Bennett	Alder	Now Zeales d	
Indispensible	1809-02-20	Daniel	Henry Best	New Zealand	
		Bennett			

Frederick	1810-05-26	William Daniel Bennett	&	Hammond / Body	New Zealand
Catherine	1813-12-13	Bennett		Robert Graham	New South Wales Fishery
Catherine	1816	Bennett		Robert Graham	New Zealand
Inspector	1817-04-09	Daniel Bennett, Blackheath		John Duncan	Pacific Ocean
Echo	1819-09-24	William Daniel Bennett	&	William Spence New Zealand	
Vansittart	1819-12-17	William Daniel Bennett	&	Thomas C. Hunt	New South Wales Fishery
Sarah	1820-09-19	William Daniel Bennett	&	Mark Munro / Monro / Monroe / John Buckle / Buckles	New South Wales Fishery
Marianna	1821-01-09	Bennett		Barnabus Gardner New Zealand / Garner / Barnabus Gardiner	
Arab	1821-04-09	Daniel William Bennett	&	Alexander Sinclair	New Zealand
Phoenix	1823-01-07	William Daniel Bennett	&	John Palmer / William Parker	New Zealand
Francis	1823-06-05	William Daniel Bennett	&	T. C. Hunt	New Zealand / Japans
Vansittart	1823-06-17	William Daniel Bennett	&	Bacon / William Beacon	New Zealand / Japans
Sisters	1826-01-09	Bennett		Robert Duke / Riley / Wright / Pyley	New South Wales Fishery
Eclipse	1831-02-15	William Bennett		King	Pacific Ocean
Royal Sovereign	1831-09-27	William Bennett		William John Green	Pacific Ocean

Recovery	1835-10-04	William	William Green	Pacific Ocean
		Bennett		

Appendix 5 Surgeons in the BSWF, 1794-1853

					Prior sailing	Prior BSWF
Date	Ship	First name	Age	Birthplace	experience	experience
1794	Pomona	Robert T. Crossfield	36	Spennithorn	Unknown	
1803	Courtland	Francis Gray		England	Unknown	
1803	Courtland	Francis Gray		England	Unknown	
1803	Elliot	Thomas Birch	30	England	Unknown	
1803	Policy	Robert Hurst		England	Unknown	
1804	Brook Watson	Thomas Coleman		England	Unknown	
1804	Caledonia	Christian Kooke		Germany	Unknown	
1804	Cambridge	Thomas Crow		England	Unknown	
1804	Elizabeth and Mary	John Murry		England	Unknown	
1804	Indispensible	Thomas Tingle		England	Unknown	
1804	Richard and Mary	Samuel Burwood		England	Unknown	
1807	DuBuc	Thomas W. Birch	34		Yes	Yes
1814	Thames	John Younger			Unknown	
1818	New Zealander	Robert Main			Unknown	
1819	L'Aigle	Joshua Williams			Unknown	
1820	Seringapatam	Daniel McCurdy			Unknown	
1821	Marianna	Dr Cribbin			Unknown	
1822	L'Aigle	Joshua Williams			Yes	Yes
1823	Policy	John O'Brien		Belfast	Unknown	
1823	Phoenix_	William Dalton	22	Swansea	Unknown	
1823	Rambler	James McCabe			Unknown	
1824	Tuscan	Dr Layman			Unknown	
1826	Harriet	William Dalton	25	Swansea	Yes	Yes
1827	Cape Packet	Dr Parker			Unknown	
1828	L'Aigle	Richard Dwyer			Unknown	
1829	Ranger	John Lyell	22	Newburgh	Unknown	
1829	Wildman	William Emerald	32	Gloucester	Unknown	
1830	Kent	Thomas Beale	23		Unknown	
1830	Lady Amherst	John Salter			Unknown	
1830	Pusey Hall	Lewis H. Vaughan			Unknown	
1830	Sarah and Elizabeth	Dr Hildyard			Unknown	
1830	Tuscan	Charles Sturges			Unknown	
1831	Elizabeth	George Miller			Unknown	
1831	Harriet	Thomas Bryce			Unknown	
1831	Oldham	William Stevens			Unknown	
1831	Vigilant	J. G. Gracie			Unknown	
1832	Gledstanes	W. W. Isaacs	28	Edinburgh	Unknown	

1832	Diana	George Rutledge	28	Hampshire	Unknown	
1832	Favorite	Dr Johnston			Unknown	
1832	Harriet	Robert Greene			Unknown	
1832	Perseverance	Levity Gault	24	Newcastle	Unknown	
1832	Reliance_	Richard F. Burton			Unknown	
1832	Stratford	John Coulter			Unknown	
1832	Thetis	Henry A. Davey	27	Chelsea	Unknown	
1833	Corsair	Dr Smith			Unknown	
1833	Eleanor	William Hall	34	Coventry	Unknown	
1833	Folkestone	Thomas Luccock	32	Malton	Unknown	
1833	Jane Eliza	J. W. Cross	24	Edmonton	Unknown	
1833	Pusey Hall	William Duncan			Unknown	
1833	Tuscan	Frederick Debell Bennett		Plymouth	Unknown	
1834	Eclipse	George Cobban	16?	Bantff	Unknown	
1834	Griffin	W. C. Brown	26	Cheshire	Unknown	
1834	Japan	James Brown	32		Unknown	
1834	Louisa	David W. Oliver	19	Stettin	Unknown	
1834	Montreal	J. B. Gibson	?		Unknown	
1834	Pacific	Dr Pearson	?		Unknown	
1835	Kitty	George Brasler	25	Wales	No	
1835	Mary Ann	Charles Bowater	23	Kent	No	
1835	Offley	J. L. Smith	20	Oxford	No	
1835	Elizabeth	Dr O'Connolly			Unknown	
1835	George Home	W. Hardwich	28	Worcestershire	Unknown	
1835	Indian	Dr Anderson			Unknown	
1835	Lucinda	Joseph Crocome			Unknown	
1835	Mellish	Richard Walter	28	Plymouth	Unknown	
1835	Vigilant	Dr Heyn			Unknown	
1835	Kingsdown	Adam Scott	27	Scotland	Yes	
1835	Recovery	Henry Raine	22	Yardley	Yes	
1835	Narwhal	Levity Gault	27	Newcastle	Yes	Yes
1836	Conservative	Charles Cathcart	22	Glasgow	No	
1836	Eleanor	Charles Coates	23	Cork	No	
1836	Favorite	James Gray	25	Newcastle	No	
1836	Fawn	George Hallorand	23	Henry Dale	No	
1836	Harriet	Edward Dollman	22	Lewisham	No	
1836	Ranger	William Butler	23	Essex	No	
1836	Rochester	Alfred Sharpe	28	London	No	
1836	Thames	Frederick Simpson.	23	London	No	
1836	Pilot	Robert Grace	37	Edinburgh	Unknown	
1836	Fawn	John O'Halloran	24	Kerry	Unknown	
1836	Folkestone	George Poundall	24	Derby	Unknown	
1836	Harriet	Dr Mason			Unknown	

1836	Elizabeth	Dr Louis	26	London	Yes	
1836	Folkestone	John Anderson	27	Hull	Yes	
1836	Matilda	A. Newman	39	England	Yes	
1836	Conway	J. W. Cross	27	Edmonton	Yes	Yes
1836	Diana	George Rutledge	32	Hampshire	Yes	Yes
1836	Folkestone	Thomas Luccock	36	Malton	Yes	Yes
1836	Reliance	W. W. Isaacs	32	Edinburgh	Yes	Yes
1836	Woodlark	William Emerald	39	Gloucester	Yes	Yes
1837	Rifleman	William Munro	26	Scotland	No	
1837	Alert	John Thomas	26	Carmathew	No	
1837	John Palmer	Thomas Howell	22	Bristol	No	
1837	Nelson	James Rowland	24	London	No	
1837	Coronet	Eldred Fysh			Unknown	
1837	Eclipse	William Hardwick	34	Oxford	Unknown	
1837	Warrens	Robert Smith Owen			Unknown	
1837	Kent	S. McGeorge	22	Dumfries	Yes	
1837	Mars	Alexander Douglas	36	Edinburgh	Yes	
1837	Henrietta	James Ford	25	Belwick	Yes	
1837	Harpooner	William Hall	38	Coventry	Yes	Yes
1837	Harpooner	William Hall	38	Coventry	Yes	Yes
1838	Kitty	James Carson	23	Scotland	Yes	
1838	Cyrus	R. Martyn	31	Cornwell	No	
1838	Japan	R. B. Penny	21	Bermondsey	No	
1838	Cyrus	Francis Rankin	33	Highants	Unknown	
1838	Sir James Cockburn	William Walsh	23	Deal	Unknown	
1838	Margaret	William Reed	20	Montrose	Yes	
1838	Foxhound	Thomas Cowen	25	Wexford	Yes	
1838	Perseverance	W. C. Brown	30	Cheshire	Yes	Yes
1839	Narwhal	William Jelly	20	Scotland	No	
1839	Conway	Henry Fraser	22	London	No	
1839	Gipsy	John Wilson	29	Beeston	No	
1839	Kingsdown	Charles Thomaslane	24	Hereford	No	
1839	Lady Amherst	Edward MacDougal	25	Berwick	No	
1839	Marshall Bennett	William Thornton	23	Sevenoaks	No	
1839	Recovery	William Grey	24	Newcastle	No	
1839	Rover	William Ayliffe	25	Twickenham	No	
1839	Offley	Henry Iclarke	29	Carlisle	Unknown	
1839	Offley	George Mackenzie	25	England	Yes	
1839	Grasshopper	Robert Grace	40	Edinburgh	Yes	Yes
1839	Griffin	George Cobban	21	Bantff	Yes	Yes
1839	Recovery	John O'Halloran	27	Kerry	Yes	Yes
1839	Resolution	Richard Walter	32	Plymouth	Yes	Yes
1840	George Home	William Ogilvie	30	Abroath	No	

				Pentrakline,		
1840	Frolic	William Tryning	34	Wales	No	
1840	Rochester	David Oliver	24	Dalgelley	No	
1840	Woodlark	Charles Tryning	27	Pembroke	No	
1840	Elizabeth	W. H. Southam	25	Birmingham	No	
1840	Ranger	Samuel Tounant	24	Liverpool	No	
1840	Samuel Enderby	Edward French	23	London	No	
1840	Waterwitch	John Sutton	21	Rotherhithe	No	
1840	Pilot_	J. W. Blackwell	32	Yaxley	Unknown	
1840	Thames	Richard Ford	50	Colebrook	Yes	
1840	Waterwitch	William B. Smith	29	Oxfordshire	Yes	
1840	Favorite	Henry A. Davey	35	Chelsea	Yes	Yes
1840	Ranger	Charles Cribber	50	Isle of Man	Yes	Yes
1840	Thames	George Poundall	28	Derby	Yes	Yes
1841	Henrietta	Frederick Rubett	30	Saxenham	No	
1841	Nereide	Henry Rowland	24	Bristol	No	
1841	Matilda	Charles Cribber	48	Isle of Man	Unknown	
1841	Foxhound	William Mann	27	Southwark	Yes	
1841	Warrens	Charles Coleman	27	Maidstone	Yes	
1841	Warrens	William Dyer	41	Wardland	Yes	
1841	Alert	J. W. Blackwell	33	Yaxley	Yes	Yes
1841	Brothers	David W. Oliver	26	Stettin	Yes	Yes
1841	Cyrus	Francis Rankin	36	Highants	Yes	Yes
1841	Kent	William Walsh	26	Deal	Yes	Yes
1841	Rifleman	William Hall	42	Coventry	Yes	Yes
1842	Kitty	William Harrison	21	Sheffield	No	
1842	Margaret	Thomas Wheeler	25	Middlesex	No	
1842	Japan	William Hardwick	39	Oxford	Yes	Yes
1843	Griffin	George Machell	30	Wolsingham	No	
1843	Samuel Enderby	Edmund W Cook	27	Yarmouth	Yes	
1844	Kingsdown	James Cowling	27	Milton	Yes	
1847	William Nicol	Julius Drew	25	Hackney	No	
1847	Adventure	William Roderick	23	Swansea	Unknown	
1851	William Nicol	John Henning			Unknown	
1851	Adventure	William L. Roderick	24	London	Yes	Yes
1853	Adventure	William L. Roderick	26	London	Yes	Yes
19_A	Tuscan	John Morgan			Yes	

Source: Extracted from BSWF Databases compiled by A. G. E. Jones, Dale Chatwin and Rhys Richards, available at https://whalinghistory.org/bv/crew/ (Accessed September 2021)

Appendix 6

The whaleship and the swordfish: A newspaper report, 15th August 1818

May/June 1818, Off New Caledonia

The whaler, Foxhound Captain Watson, whose arrival we last week mentioned, sustained a great deal of bad weather, during the latter part of her whaling cruise, much to the injury of her trey-works and other equipments; and three months ago, when off the coast of New Caledonia, in 29°, she experienced an accident which may be consistently ranked among the order of phenomena; and which might have consigned to a watery grave all the persons on board, without a possible testimonial of their unhappy fate. The ship at evening was struck with a degree of force which was perceptible to the crew, and which from the mildness of the weather was the more extraordinary: a seaman who was forward exclaimed at the instant, that there was a man overboard, and he had seen him alongside; but upon a muster of the hands being called, this report was found to be erroneous; and the man began to summon into action those powers of intellect which the first impulse had impaired, and he described the size of the object as far surpassing the human form, it appealing, as he then recollected, to exceed considerably eight feet in length. No leak ensued, and the ship pursued her course; but, upon a shortly subsequent observation of her copper at the water's edge under the larboard bow being wripped from the side, the cause was examined into; — when, strange to relate, the horn of some monstrous fish was found in the ship's side, having gone through the copper, perforated the outer plank (of four inches thickness and the perforation of four inches of diameter), passed between the ribs, and pierced also through the lining (of two inches), and thus passing through six inches of oak plank, besides the length of at least eight or nine inches occasioned by the interception of the ribs, leaving also a part of the horn visible within side the ship- the enormous animal extricating itself by tearing from its horn, which, from its appearance, must have gone from its root. The horn still remains in the ship's side and was very kindly shewn to us by Captain Watson.

This singular phenomenon, which must be considered so to every naturalist, is attributed by the seamen to the swordfish, in the description of which authors differ materially. With the great size of the sea unicorn it cannot correspond, unless it be considered a diminutive species of that prodigious animal. We have examined all the authorities within our reach, but find no species mentioned to whose velocity or formation we can attribute this extraordinary occurrence; but upon the extraction of the horn itself much speculative enquiry may arise, which will perhaps amuse the closet, while it arms the adventuring marine with a new subject for the exercise of his precautionary science.

Source: 'May/June 1818, off New Caledonia' *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 15 August 1818

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See also: Appendix 2 (BSWF logs and journals consulted) and Appendix 3 (Wills of BSWF Whalers, 1778-1853)

2. Databases and other web resources

Academy of Natural Sciences, Drexel University

https://archivalcollections.drexel.edu/repositories

Australia National University, School of History: Third Fleet Ships

https://history.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/ncb/third-fleet-ships-and-passengers

Australian Dictionary of Biography

https://adb.anu.edu.au

Bristol Museum

https://bristolmuseums.org.uk

British Museum, Collections online

https://britishmuseum.org/collection/

British Newspaper Archive

https://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

British Southern Whale Fishery – Voyages and Crew Database

https://britishwhaling.org

Charles Miller Ltd. (Auctioneers)

https://charlesmillerltd.com

Cooper Hewitt Collections online

https://collection.cooperhewitt.org

Dictionary of Sydney

https://dictionaryofsydney.org

Dictionary of Welsh Biography, Y Bywgraffiadur Cymreig

https://biography.wales

Find My Past

https://Ancestry.co.uk

- Greenwich Peninsula History Society
 - https://greenwichpeninsulahistory.wordpress.com

Hakluyt Society

https://hakluyt.com

James Arnold Mansion

https://jamesarnoldmansion.org/mansion

Massachusetts Historical Society

https://masshist.org

McManus Museum

https://mcmanus.co.uk

Mystic Seaport Museum, Collections & Online Resources

https://research.mysticseaport.org/collections

Nantucket Historical Association

https://nha.org

National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Collections online
https://rmg.co.uk/collections/objects
National Museums Scotland
https://nms.ac.uk
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National Portrait Gallery, London
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New Bedford Whaling Museum
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New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Manatū Taonga
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