



1994

## Whaling Will Never Do For Me: The American Whaleman in the Nineteenth Century

Briton Cooper Busch  
*Colgate University*

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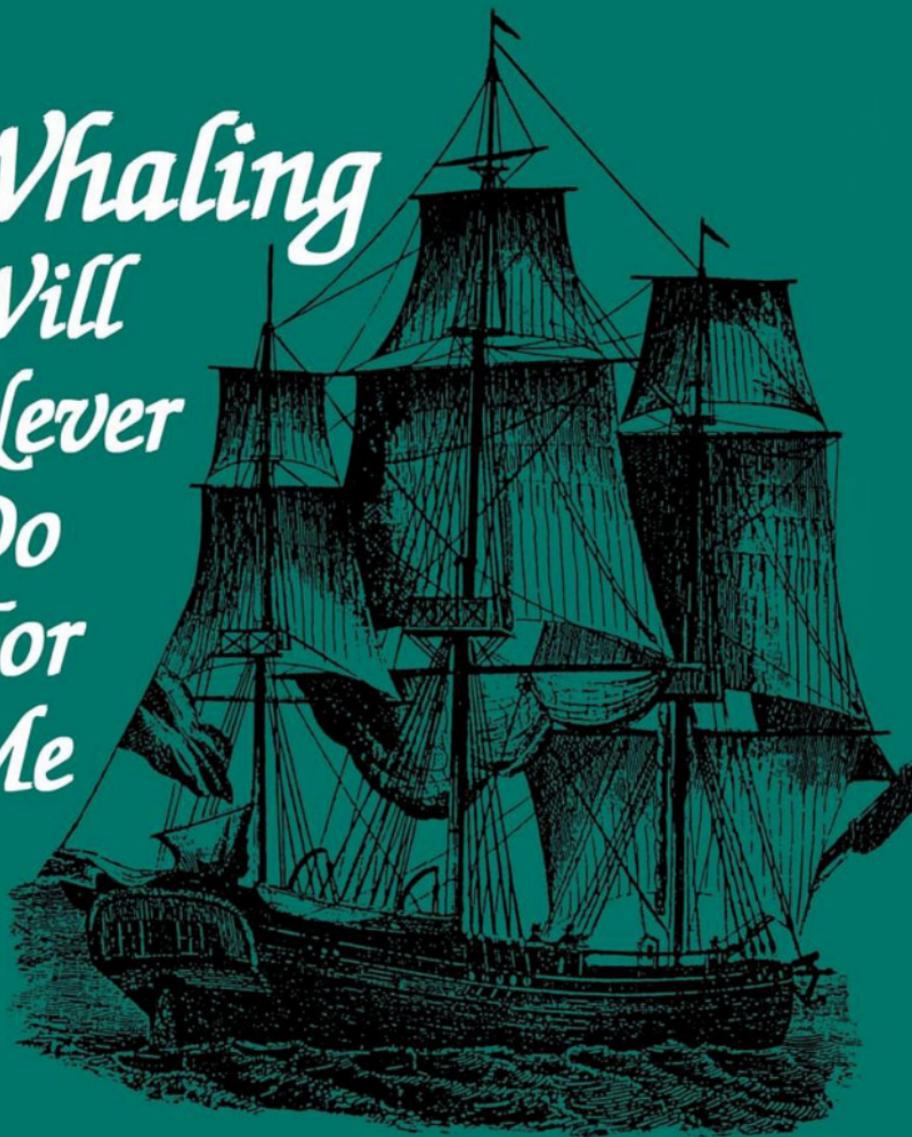
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The American Whaleman  
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BRITON COOPER BUSCH

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The American Whaleman in  
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BRITON COOPER BUSCH

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# Contents

List of Tables	ix
Preface	xi
1. Introduction: The American Whaleman	1
2. Crime and Punishment	18
3. Race and Status	32
4. Work Stoppages	51
5. Whalemen and American Consuls Abroad	62
6. Desertion	87
7. The Practice of Religion	105
8. Whalemen's Women, Whalemen's Wives	135
9. The Festive and the Ceremonial	158
10. Waterfront Havens and the Honolulu Riot of 1852	173
Notes	194
Bibliography	229
Index of Whaleships	247
General Index	260

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# List of Tables

Table 1. Floggings on American Whaleships, 1820–1920	26
Table 2. Causes and Number of Lashes in Floggings, 1820–1920	27
Table 3. Work Stoppages on American Whaleships, 1820–1920	53
Table 4. Causes of Labor Unrest	54
Table 5. Results of Work Stoppages	58

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# Preface

**T**he history of this book lies in another. While at work on a study of the nineteenth-century American sealing industry, I was intrigued by the confined life led by both the hunters of seals and the very many more who went in search of whales. The sealers of New London or Stonington had much in common with New England whalers in their origins, pay, and living conditions aboard. Many other capable researchers have been drawn to the same subject, and the reader will find numerous references to their works in the pages that follow. Yet I have long felt there was more to be said about whalers in their environment. As it happened, the tale of those New London sealers had to be told by working from the few dozen sealing logbooks available in New England libraries. From the whaling industry, however, there exists almost a surplus of riches in the more than five thousand logbooks and journals that survive—a resource that has been exploited mainly to chronicle the industry in a particular corner of the world, or operating from one home port, or to describe the process of whaling. This book is not about catching whales, except incidentally. My inquiry lies in another area: what kept men going on lengthy voyages after whales—and if they decided they had erred in going aboard, could they escape, and if so, how? I hope the study that follows offers some answers.

In tracing data that are to be found primarily in the manuscript and microfilm holdings of libraries, any researcher incurs numerous obligations to those institutions: at least I can repay my debt in some measure by acknowledging their help in these pages. For this study, I have used a number of institutions in New England, Hawaii, California, England, Australia, and New Zealand, as will be clear from the footnote citations in the chapters

that follow. Three libraries in particular put up with my presence for long periods of time and then were bothered in the aftermath for even longer months with a never-ending stream of microfilm requests. Without the help of the librarians/curators of the G.W. Blunt White Library at Mystic Seaport Museum (Gerald Morris and Doug Stein), the library of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society/New Bedford Whaling Museum (Virginia Adams), and the Kendall Whaling Museum (Stuart Frank), this book simply could not have been written.

I owe another debt to the Kendall Whaling Museum, however, for its sponsorship of an annual symposium on whales, whaling, and whaling history. At Sharon, Massachusetts, each October, it has been my great pleasure and gain to meet and listen to experts in many aspects of history and cetaceology, whose ideas and suggestions helped shape this work more, I am sure, than they know. Stuart Frank and his staff, David Boeri, Richard Ellis, David Henderson, Mary Malloy, Kenneth Martin, Robert Webb, and a host of other people, have made those annual weekends not only educational but most enjoyable indeed.

Others have helped with their special expertise. Lela Goodall made useful suggestions on the history of Honolulu. A.R. Tippet of Canberra not only helped me with missionaries but put at my disposal the considerable resources of St. Mark's Seminary Library on the subject. Lisa Norling pointed out some lines of thought new to me regarding issues of gender, while my Colgate University colleague Graham Hodges did the same concerning race. Michael Haines of Colgate's economics department suggested some important research papers on the economics of whaling and lent me his own very useful study. In Australia, Malcolm Bodley, Vaughan Evans, Martin Syme, Nigel Wace, and Ron Winch, and in Wellington, Rys Richards—and their families—gave me good scholarly advice and much appreciated hospitality during a lecture tour of 1985. Robert Webb, curator at the Bath Maritime Museum, read and commented upon the entire manuscript, thus saving me from some errors I would rather forget. Michalis Firillas and Kristin Freund in their undergraduate days at Colgate ran interference for me with the inter-library loan service, whose resources I massively overused—though they never complained. Margaret Abbott, Thelma Mayer, and Linda Reilly each typed a part of the manuscript in one or more drafts, and I am very grateful for their work. My wife, Jill Harsin, was of no help whatsoever, but I dedicate this book to her anyway.

# Introduction: The American Whaleman

1st. IT IS AGREED between the Owner, Master,  
Seaman and Mariners of the Ship *Onward* now  
bound from the Port of New Bedford on a whaling  
voyage not exceeding fifty months in duration . . .<sup>1</sup>

With this contract, a printed form on which the words “Ship *Onward*,” “New Bedford,” and “fifty months” have been written by hand in the appropriate spaces provided, the *Onward*’s master, four mates, four boatsteerers, cooper, carpenter, cook, cabin boy, steward, and twenty-one experienced and “green” foremast hands committed themselves to more than four years aboard a whaleship unless the vessel returned to her home port before the allotted fifty months had passed. The year was 1863, a difficult time for America and for whaling. The height of the industry, measured either by the total of oil brought home or the number of ships at sea, had passed some years before, never to return. Too many vessels had voyaged too far over too long a time after whale populations, at least some of which were under severe pressure. The common assumption that whale stocks were being seriously depleted, thus limiting the industry, has been seriously challenged.<sup>2</sup> There can be no question, however, about the appearance of a replacement fuel for America’s lamps. Petroleum in commercially exploitable quantities had been found in Pennsylvania, and kerosene was rapidly coming to market. Finally, a civil war was raging, from which whaleships were far from immune.

This study is not about whaling, however, but about some aspects of the life of the men (and a few women) who served aboard American whaleships in the nineteenth century. Where and how whales were tracked to their favored “ground,” hunted down in small whaleboats, harpooned by harpooners or “boatsteerers,” killed by the mates (“boatheaders”) who officered whaleboats, taken back to the vessel, stripped of blubber and the “bone” or baleen from the throats of some species, and, finally, how the blubber was

rendered ("tryed out") into oil and stowed away in the hold: this entire process has been portrayed in many excellent works of fact and fiction and need not be repeated in any detail here. Less adequately treated in the literature, but similarly a subject that lies outside this study, is the history of contacts between whalers and other peoples—with the important exception of the Atlantic and Pacific islanders who became whalers themselves, and the women of many societies who interacted with whalers in quite a different, but equally complex, fashion. The focus of this book is rather the instruments of control over life aboard, together with the nature of that life which made the whaleship as much of a total institution as many others that merit a similar label.

Any student of whaling life will soon find parallels: slavery, military life, mental institutions, prisons all had comparable aspects. Yet no one metaphor satisfies, any more than a portrayal of a nineteenth-century mental hospital is satisfied either by the metaphor of the "family writ large" or that of the prison. As Ellen Dwyer remarks in her study of New York asylums, such institutions "simultaneously served as surrogate families, prisons, refuges, and hospitals."<sup>3</sup> A whaleship could be all of these, and in addition a collective industrial enterprise, worked on shares by a crew laboring under a close and arbitrary rule, perhaps even a life-threatening discipline. The whaler was many things: seaman (sometimes), oarsman, "a hunter, butcher, and factory hand."<sup>4</sup> He worked in an industry that experienced a striking rise and fall over the course of the nineteenth century, and that underwent substantial changes in such matters as the quality of crews and the quantity of their remuneration, but that on the whole operated in a fairly fixed, "traditional" manner. It is true that there were technological advances such as the harpoon gun for striking whales and the bomb lance for killing. Hull sizes and designs saw alterations, as did rigging and sail plans. Still the basics of taking the whale from small boats and rendering it into oil remained much the same throughout the age of sail. How the individual whalers in that industry functioned and changed over time, and what escapes from the system of control existed, whether external or internal, mental or physical, is the principal subject of this book. It is necessary, however, to have in mind the summary history of the industry.

Indeed, American whaling has a long and well-studied past.<sup>5</sup> By 1700 at least, Nantucket, which dominated the early history of whaling, was well established in the business; by the second half of the eighteenth century, the island held a dominant position, with some 150 vessels at work by 1775, though mainland ports such as New Bedford (a relative latecomer) had begun to give serious attention to whaling. The Revolutionary War unfortunately began a lengthy era of instability, particularly for Nantucket with

its exposed position. Between 1785 and 1815 wars at home and abroad made both whaling and the sale of oil products difficult. Alexander Starbuck's standard collection of whaling data estimates some 350 vessels working in the industry from all American ports in 1775, but it is probable that the figure remained below 200 in the following era, 1785-1815.

The end of the War of 1812 brought a steady recovery of American whaling, with Nantucket again—temporarily—the focus. With 23 vessels active at the end of 1815, the island's fleet rose to 61 in 1819 and only 84 three years later, and that fleet was venturing further than ever before to find its prey. Already in the 1790s American whaleships had entered the Pacific and within two decades were working off the Japan coast. The prosperity of the 1820s encouraged whaling from other ports, some of which had already fitted out vessels before the war. Fall River and Salem in Massachusetts; Bristol and Warren in Rhode Island; Hudson, Greenport, and Poughkeepsie from New York joined Nantucket, New Bedford, and the others. By 1835 nearly thirty ports sent whaleships to the major grounds; by the Civil War, nearly fifty had participated at some point with at least a vessel or two.

The last decades before the Civil War brought phenomenal growth, with over 600 vessels at sea each year on average until that year, bringing or sending home eight million dollars' worth of oil and bone each year. The continued exploitation of new grounds provided the whales: the Sea of Okhotsk, the Kamchatka coast, and, after the bark *Superior* of Sag Harbor under Capt. Thomas Welcome Roys passed through the Bering Strait in 1848, the rich waters of the Arctic Ocean.<sup>6</sup> At least sixty grounds were in the vocabulary of whalers of experience; it is difficult to find any corner of the world's oceans that was not explored, and any assertion to the contrary is dangerous. "[N]o one searched for whales in the Mediterranean," remark the authors of a detailed study of the New Bedford fleet.<sup>7</sup> James Cottle, Jr., master of the New Bedford bark *John Dawson* would disagree; after loafing along the French Riviera in midsummer 1865 he took a small sperm whale north of Minorca.<sup>8</sup>

The continued antebellum market for whale oil as illuminant and lubricant, coupled with the growing use of "bone," provided the demand. (Heated, the bone assumed whatever shape in which it was made to cool; such plastic material was much in demand for corset stays, umbrella ribs, and the like.) The year 1846 marked the apogee of the fleet, with 736 ships, totaling over 230,000 tons. The market value of the total catch continued to increase in the following decade, even though the number of ships engaged and the amount of oil imported fell off steadily after the mid-1840s.<sup>9</sup> From the mid-1830s to the mid-1850s, whaling enjoyed its "golden era."

In the course of this prosperity, several other developments had oc-

curred. For reasons that are not entirely clear, New Bedford emerged as the equal of Nantucket in the 1820s, surged past her rival in the 1830s, and sent out double the island's fleet in the 1840s. The physical limitations of Nantucket's harbor and the lack of landward communications explain why Nantucket's lead was lost but not why New Bedford, rather than other well-sited port complexes such as Boston, Providence, or New London, emerged in a position of prominence. Whatever the explanation, by the time of the Civil War, of all the towns that had gone a-whaling, only eighteen were left; meanwhile New Bedford kept on course under full sail and was to remain the main East Coast center as long as American whaling continued.

By midcentury, however, a shift to the Pacific had already begun. The Hawaiian Islands became a major transshipment point, and San Francisco emerged somewhat later as an important home port, with a permanent whaling fleet at least by 1870. The growth of steam whaling in the Arctic in the 1880s required supportive facilities and rail linkages with the rest of the country, and San Francisco supplied both. By the mid-1890s, more than thirty whalers (two-thirds of them steam-auxiliary vessels) sailed from the Bay area, and again such activity, though considerably diminished in later years, continued as long as the industry was alive.<sup>10</sup>

The decline of the industry, however, had set in long before. After midcentury, a glut in supply brought a decline in prices, a fall given added push by the general depression of 1857. The outbreak of the Civil War multiplied the effect, for during the course of the struggle some fifty vessels were taken or destroyed, another forty sold to become part of the "stone fleet" sunk to blockade southern ports, and a good many more transferred out of the business to other mercantile activity. Already, too, voyages in search of whales had become longer, two years stretching to two and a half, then three, four, even more.<sup>11</sup> Both costs and risks increased, discouraging investment just at a time when capital found many other outlets in any case.

Once the Civil War was over, demand for oil recovered, and whale stocks on the favored grounds had had several years in which to do the same. But the fleet never enjoyed its former greatness. The 514 ships at sea in January 1861 became 263 in 1866, with a total tonnage of 68,525 compared to 158,745 in 1861. The number had fallen 50 percent, but the tonnage 60 percent, meaning that smaller vessels were going out. The unpredictability of Arctic conditions was a relatively new danger; the disasters of 1871 and 1876, when thirty-four and twelve vessels respectively were lost to the unexpectedly sudden onset of pack ice, further diminished the fleet. Above all, the problem was kerosene. In Vermont in 1858, for example, kerosene, at \$1.24 per gallon, outpriced whale oil at \$1.12; thus the inconvenience of added smoke and smell saved twelve cents. A dozen years later, kerosene

was forty cents, and whale oil, though its price had fallen by half, could not compete. In 1880, a gallon of whale oil still cost fifty-one cents, but kerosene a mere eighteen cents.<sup>12</sup> Whale oil, particularly the fine oil produced by sperm whales, now went mainly for lubricants. Falling profitability meant retreating capital, and when vessels were lost, they were not replaced. Even leading ports such as New Bedford turned to textiles, and the whaling industry, now shifted mainly to the Pacific, survived on whalebone. After 1869, the fleet never again numbered three hundred; after 1873, not two hundred; and after 1890, it never rose above one hundred. Little more than a decade later it had fallen below fifty. A few vessels still hunted whales through World War I, but the substantial industry that had been American whaling was no more.

Over the course of its life the industry had been quite profitable. Detailed calculations are difficult, and not the subject of this study in any case. Since, in general, ownership was diverse and firms were small, the unit of measurement must inevitably be the individual voyage. From this perspective there was much variability. One investor might become rich quite quickly, another ruined by the total loss of his investment. And whaling was risky. Of the 750 vessels that sailed out of New Bedford over time, 231 were lost, with a crude loss rate per voyage of almost 9 percent, or 3.2 percent per year at sea.<sup>13</sup>

Initial investments were substantial and increased inevitably when the length of voyages grew.<sup>14</sup> Much depended upon the size of the vessel and the yard in which it was built, but in the 1840s a new whaleship cost in the range of \$11,000-\$21,000. In the 1850s, when costs had in general risen, construction of a three- to five-hundred-ton whaleship was roughly \$60 per ton. Outfitting with sails, gear, and supplies brought the total to \$24,000-\$40,000 for a fully-equipped new vessel ready to sail. Now, however, the vessel faced a 9 percent loss risk, and a greater risk of making a poor voyage, even returning "clean" or empty. But from a successful voyage the rate of return might reach 45 percent on investment, and that is why whalers still went to sea. With crew costs on average one-third of gross return (rising from 31 percent to 36 percent over the era 1840-58 for New Bedford), even after deducting outfitting expenses profits from a good voyage were quite high. Few vessels returned with \$100,000 worth of cargo, but some did—and the dream was always there.

The study of whaling profitability may be left to economic historians, but the question of crew costs is one that requires discussion here. Whaling crews by long custom were paid in "lays" or shares of the final take of the voyage. If the cargo was oil and bone, the crewman was entitled to his specified share of that oil and bone. Normally the vessel's owners or their

agents calculated the cash value of the cargo at current prices and paid out accordingly, but the owner could insist that the crewman take his share in kind. Similarly, a man did not necessarily have to accept the owner's calculations and could insist on his share in kind—and some indeed did just that.

Officers and skilled artisans took "short lays," those paying a share larger than  $\frac{1}{100}$ . This group included the master, paid as much as  $\frac{1}{8}$  or as little as  $\frac{1}{200}$  (on average in the 1840s and 1850s,  $\frac{1}{16}$ ), and lesser-paid mates, boatsteerers, cooper, carpenter, and—less frequently—blacksmith or shipkeeper (who took charge of the vessel when the boats were all lowered for whales). The "afterguard" was completed by a service element of cook, steward who attended the officers, and a ship's boy or two. Cooks, stewards, and boys, like forecabin hands, took longer lays, shares smaller than  $\frac{1}{100}$ , often as low as  $\frac{1}{200}$  or  $\frac{1}{250}$  for "green" hands.<sup>15</sup> The total crew was likely to be roughly thirty; numerical averaging of large and small vessels tends to produce a smaller average total (27.5 in one recent study),<sup>16</sup> but this approach ignores two facts. First, any four-boat whaleship required twenty-four officers and men just to man the boats, and normally the cook and artisans did not do so. Second, crew lists at the moment of sailing are often misleading, since very often extra hands were taken aboard at an early port-of-call (see Chapter 3).

Before a crewman could collect his lay, however, certain charges were deducted. Normally he was given an advance before sailing, on average  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of his anticipated return at the end of the voyage. He would also owe for whatever he had taken in the way of "slops" (supplies) or tobacco from the slop chest while at sea, goods sold at a significant increase over shoreside prices in most cases. He might well be charged interest on what he owed, particularly the advance. In addition, before lays were distributed, gross returns were debted with charges met by the vessel during her voyage, such as pilotage, wharfage, or cooerage of oil (when not done by the ship's own cooper). In general these fees were not extensive (less than 1 percent of gross), if only because the captain was responsible for contracting such obligations, and the captain too was paid a lay and it served him to keep deductions as low as possible.<sup>17</sup> Finally, from the 1850s onward many vessels incurred transshipment fees, freight for oil sent home during the voyage.

As will be seen in the pages that follow, transshipment of oil was often a sensitive issue, but once accomplished, it at least had the advantage of permitting the vessel to refill her hold. Any seaman still aboard would be entitled to the same lay of any additional catch; it was possible also that he might be paid interest on any share owing on the oil transshipped home and sold on the market before the vessel returned to her home port. Other additions—somehow, never as numerous as subtractions—included bonuses for special contributions, such as spotting whales, or other skills.

Over the course of the century, the relative position of the various ranks changed, with captains doing considerably better, mates somewhat less so, but other crewmen's real wages falling steadily.<sup>18</sup> The reasons for this development over time are complex, and include the growing risks for longer and more dangerous voyages (and the resulting higher insurance charges), and the declining attraction of whaling as a form of employment appealing to those looking for work. New immigrants signed on, as did non-Americans in foreign ports all over the world, often to be paid less than their counterparts of earlier years. To put it another way, the general skill level of crews declined, but the minimum essential skilled men—meaning above all the officers—had to be paid more. That widening differential between officers and men was important, since it acted to magnify other differences of authority and standard of living that already existed.

How the change was effected is another question. Increased levels of discipline and greater social barriers between classes aboard did exist, but it is not clear whether discipline increased as a result of the necessity of dealing with less efficient crews, or whether the lower quality of crewmen resulted from the increased brutality of discipline. Perhaps the answer is "both," but either way, pay of whalers steadily declined, reducing the labor force to the status of a "sweated" industry, in which the only goal, as Elmo Hohman put it in his magisterial study of the American whaleman, "lay in reducing the labor costs to a point which was even lower than that of the worker's efficiency."<sup>19</sup> Efficiency declined, in other words, but pay declined even faster, through longer lays and greater deductions. It is sometimes argued that whaling in general would have been better served if pay and conditions had been improved rather than the reverse, and thus a better class of recruit attracted, but to this Hohman has answered that the costs of such effort would have outrun any resultant increase in profits, given the general economic position of the industry—a rationale similar to that made for other sweated industries in the same era.

Economic historians have challenged some details of Hohman's work.<sup>20</sup> All agree, however, that more unskilled hands came aboard, and of all hands, skilled or unskilled, more were illiterate—20 percent in the 1840s, but 25 percent by the time of the Civil War. The question of skill level, however, requires caution. In some cases Atlantic or Pacific islanders, who might indeed have some maritime, even whaling, experience, were regularly signed on as green hands (when they were signed at all)—another method, of course, of achieving the same goal of reducing labor costs. It is therefore more accurate to hold with Hohman's conclusion: "Provincialism and homogeneity gave way to cosmopolitanism and heterogeneity."

Nevertheless, the general conclusion at midcentury, as now, is that the

quality of whalemens had declined. "Generally, crews are not composed of as good men as formerly," wrote Joel Turrill, American consul in Honolulu in 1847. "The rapid increase of the number of ships employed in the business, has rendered it difficult to obtain men. Agents have been sent into all parts of the United States and men and boys collected from our railroads, our canals and our prisons, to supply the deficiency."<sup>21</sup> If quality is taken to mean maritime experience, then the quality was declining (literacy, after all, was of little professional use to a seaman below officer rank). The change did not come suddenly but had been evident since the late 1820s, intensifying as the 1840s approached. Asa Tobey, journal keeper aboard the New Bedford ship *Houqua* in 1835, was not exceptional in his remark upon sailing: "we have 18 formast hands & only 3 of them ever on seamens duty before & the 3 have not had much experience A crew of green bumchins as the saying is I would ask who is to take care of the ship But avast we have a few beaft the mainmast that will help to protect the ship by day & night."<sup>22</sup>

Since whaleships were overmanned, in comparison with other merchant vessels, for the purpose of merely moving the ship from point A to point B, and since whaleships were seldom in a hurry, the absence of maritime skills in some of the crew was less important than it might have been. Understanding the art of handling a whaleboat was not to be expected from nonwhalemens even with deep-sea experience, and it really was oarsmen that were wanted more than "sailors" in the general meaning of the word. Though merchant seamen did sometimes sign aboard whaleships, and whalemens on cargo vessels, in general merchant seamen looked down on those who served on whaleships, and to a substantial degree the labor pools were different. Whaling expertise could only be learned aboard a whaleship, after all—meaning the skills to pursue, catch, cut in, and try out a whale, in all of which stages the officers and boatsteerers were key, and there is no evidence to show that their quality declined. Normal mercantile skills such as sail handling, cargo stowage, even navigation were needed on whaleships as upon merchantmen, but ultimately they were not what whaling was about. As Clifford Ashley, who recorded his own experiences in a justly famous study, *The Yankee Whaler*, put it: "Seamanship was the least part of a whaleman's business."<sup>23</sup>

Still, though 90 percent of crews from New Bedford in the early 1840s had some seafaring experience, by the outbreak of the Civil War, 75 percent had none, a significant enough shift to offset the fact that whaleships carried more men per ton than merchantmen.<sup>24</sup> More importantly the shift allowed them to be paid less. The question remains, however, of how well they were doing relative to merchantmen and shoreside professionals. Such information might, after all, influence a choice of profession, though not for

the desperate, for port sweepings, or for those with no other immediate choices—recent immigrants or Atlantic or Pacific islanders.

It is fairly clear that captains did well, not all captains, or all the time, but their average pay was better than that of their counterparts in the merchant service, the most comparable group. In the 1840s and 1850s, whaling captains on average received over ninety dollars per month, roughly three times the thirty dollars a merchant captain averaged, or so Lance Davis and his group of economic historians have concluded.<sup>25</sup> Mates made more as well, twice as much on a whaleship as a merchantman. Skilled craftsmen, carpenters or coopers, on the other hand, could do better ashore. Ordinary hands, finally, were paid considerably more on average aboard a merchantman—not only more, but with far more certain return.

The whaleman, in fact, might get nothing at all if his ship returned clean, or if her cargo was small or arrived at a time of low prices, given that the average hand was in debt for his advance and slop chest account. He might well *owe* the vessel after a long voyage, but the practice was to discharge a man clear of a debt, which was for practical purposes uncollectable in any case (though he might be pressured to sign on for another voyage). Under such circumstances, particularly if the vessel was clean, the owner was out the man's advance, and the value such as it was of his room and board for the duration of the voyage. Similarly, if the vessel were wrecked or otherwise lost during the voyage (condemned as unseaworthy in a foreign port, for example), a crewman was likely to receive nothing at all, and certainly no share of the insurance if any, regardless of the fact that insurance was one of the predistribution costs in which he shared when the vessel returned safely. All in all, the midcentury whaleman, in terms of wage-levels, was roughly on a par with the low-paid textile worker of the New England mill.

Why then did men sign aboard? Just as in whaling's early days, some became whalers because they came from whaling towns and whaling families.<sup>26</sup> Others were innocent adventurers, responding to the lure of the sea but knowing nothing of the nature of whaling and its low rewards, lured perhaps by the rosy promises of recruiting agents, "runners," who scoured the factory towns and remoter farm areas on behalf of a shipping master. Such agents were essential, for dreamers of fortunes, waterfront idlers, spoiled sons, refugees from the law, drunkards, the sick seeking health—all of which were found on whaleships—were not enough to fill the needs of the industry. One source that provided few recruits, however, was the merchant marine, and not simply because they were more likely to have an idea of what life was like aboard a whaleship. Clifford Ashley explained why: "The merchant seaman made a very undesirable whaleman. The reason was almost purely a

psychological one. His whole training had made him look upon a small boat as a last resort, and a flimsy one, in time of extreme peril. If he had been two or three voyages in the merchant service, nothing on earth could rid the sailor of his timidity in a small boat—he was no good whatever, except as a ship-keeper, aboard a whaler. And when he was relegated to that job, as invariably he was, his pride was hurt, and he became a malcontent."<sup>27</sup>

Once recruited from any source, the prospective green hand was handed over in most cases by the shipping agent to an outfitter (who might be a shipping agent himself), the runner receiving perhaps ten dollars for the man in the two last antebellum decades, and more after the war. The outfitter normally made no direct charge to the man or to the vessel to whom the recruit was finally consigned but instead "outfitted" the man with the necessary mattress, blankets, clothing, foul weather gear, eating utensils, and other items necessary for a long deep-sea voyage in all weathers. It was in this transaction that notorious frauds were committed by providing shoddy goods at inflated prices, often exhibiting one set of items of quality but actually putting a chest of worthless goods on board just before sailing. The bill for this outfit, and probably for room and board as well, would be presented to the vessel's agent after sailing, and the amount debited to the man's account. Outfitters, boarding-house keepers, grog-sellers, brothel owners, shipping agents, runners, crimps: all collectively were the "land-sharks" whose main function in life was to put the recruit aboard with empty pockets, useless gear, and a considerable debt into the bargain.<sup>28</sup>

The sums involved could be substantial taken all in all. Billed for perhaps seventy dollars' worth of outfit (Hohman puts the average at seventy-five dollars),<sup>29</sup> a man might find himself with twenty-five dollars worth in fact. Once aboard his ship he would be forced to replace worthless items. The result was explained by Fayette Ringgold, American consul in Paita, Peru, in an 1858 analysis of the industry: "in the beginning of the voyage the men are not only dissatisfied but they are compelled upon the first appearance of cold or rugged weather to seek warm clothing from the slop chest which in many instances is placed on board by the owners as a profitable speculation they paying the master a small commission for his trouble." The original seventy dollars, plus any advances on pay, might also be charged interest, perhaps at a rate of 12 percent or so. Then the man faced a deduction of 10 percent from his eventual lay for leakage and storage of the oil, another 3 percent for insurance, ten dollars per man for "fitting shipping and medicine chest," a phrase, added Ringgold, who had considerable experience of whaleships and whalers, "the meaning of which I have never been able to have satisfactorily explained to me."<sup>30</sup>

Thomas Adamson, Jr., American consul in Honolulu in 1870, was frus-

trated by his inability to interfere: "I cannot prevent advantage being taken of a seaman's necessities to the extent of charging him the value of a years voyage for a pair of boots." He was able to deduct fees for "shipping," i. e., the bounty paid to the shipping master, from lays paid out to men discharged in his office. This was not likely, however, to offset the inflated prices of which he provided some examples. Tobacco, as a case in point, was billed to seamen at \$1.25 per pound, when good quality tobacco could be purchased in Honolulu for under forty cents, and the poorer quality actually given seamen at fourteen to twenty-five cents per pound, a markup of roughly 500 percent for this heavily used item. Similar markups applied to other goods; blankets, for example, costing two dollars each were sold for five dollars.<sup>31</sup> Then interest might be charged—and for the entire year in which the item was purchased, regardless of the actual date of the transaction.

Owners and masters justified such extortion with the argument that if they made a poor voyage, the man would not ever pay his slops account in any case. Moreover, they were forced—or so they claimed—to pay higher lays than they could afford and had to make up the difference somewhere. Clifford Ashley adds further that these supplies turned over just once in the course of a long voyage, as opposed to the experience of an ordinary store ashore, and in addition suffered loss from damp and other causes aboard and would be a total loss if the man deserted. "On the whole," he concludes, "the prices appear to have been fair."<sup>32</sup> Few would have agreed. As Adamson in Honolulu put it: "Why it is the duty of U.S. Consuls to support them in these frauds has never been made perfectly clear to my mind. I hold that if the whaling business cannot be conducted honestly it had better be allowed to decline. As a retired whaling master told me 'it is robbery from the commencement of the voyage to the end of it.'"<sup>33</sup>

Consul Ringgold provided his superiors in Washington, D.C., with a specific example of what all this could mean for a greenhand serving for  $\frac{1}{180}$  lay on a sperm whaler at sea four years returning with a cargo of 1,200 barrels of oil (generally regarded as the average for a good voyage). A lay of  $\frac{1}{180}$  was 210 gallons, worth at 1858 prices \$262.25. With \$70.00 advance for outfit, \$30.00 cash advances at various liberty ports, \$40.00 worth of slops, \$10.00 charge for fitting ship, 10 percent discount on the \$262.25 for leakage (\$26.22), \$16.80 interest on the outfit, \$7.20 interest on the \$30.00 advances (no interest, however, was charged on the slops account in this example), and finally 3 percent interest charged on the \$262.25 (or \$7.86), the debits totaled \$208.08, leaving a return to the man for four years of work of \$54.17, or roughly \$1.13 per month (and room and board, of course). Even if virtually all debits were waived, and cash advances added to the total, it was still a miniscule amount, "a sum so preposterously small that I

feel almost ashamed to mention it. It seems incredible that an intelligent active young American should pass through four years of labour (not to mention dangers from both sea and monster) separated from family and country at the rate of five dollars and twenty two cents (\$5.<sup>22/100</sup>) per month. Yet such is the case."

Ringgold's figures do not quite work out, but if the man received his full \$262.25, the monthly average is close enough, amounting to about seventeen cents per day—a figure which may be compared with the average pay calculated by Hohman of twenty cents per day, plus food and bunk, as opposed to about ninety cents per day (without room and board) received by an unskilled worker ashore in the era 1840-60.<sup>34</sup> It was indeed a sweated industry, and it must be kept in mind that Ringgold's example was for a ship that filled its hold, and filled it with the sperm oil that was more valuable than that of other whales.

Owners answered complaints on this matter by noting that the man could now trade his experience for a better lay on the next voyage, perhaps qualifying as boatsteerer, and thus advancing up the ladder toward mate and captain, much as an apprentice moved on to journeyman and master worker, or an army or navy recruit to petty officer or sergeant. Yet there was absolutely no guarantee, argued Ringgold, that the green hand had been trained in anything, "or whether they have (which I am sorry to say is generally the case) left him to himself in that sink of immorality in the forecastle." In Ringgold's estimate three to four thousand young men sailed from the United States as green hands each year "and becoming disgusted desert and either from shame or moral corruption never return or if they do return in after years are no credit to their country." Particularly in the last half of the century was such "demoralization" apparent to observers. J.C. Cover, briefly American consul in Fayal in the Azores, put it this way in 1871: "Some of these seamen are really spoiled men, a few totally depraved, but quite a proportion are young men of standard worth and conduct, integrity good and intelligence entitling them to rank among the first of our country." If discharged in the Azores, they probably had not been long enough aboard to sour them, but a long voyage was very likely to ruin them by close experience of "perhaps the most demoralizing service of any upon earth."<sup>35</sup>

But green hands were not normally signed on to be let free at the Azores, and they now had to face conditions aboard their new home for just such a long voyage. From a modern viewpoint, the cramped forecastle quarters were anything but luxurious. Poorly ventilated, wet, and often vermin-infested, with only crude wooden bunks surrounding deck space barely adequate for a seachest for each man, the forecastle commonly invoked a decidedly unfavorable response. "The forecastle was black and slimy with filth, very small and

as hot as an oven. It was filled with a compound of foul air, smoke, sea-chests, soap-kegs, greasy pans, tainted meat, Portuguese ruffians, and sea-sick Americans."<sup>36</sup> Such was journalist J. Ross Browne's unattractive picture, one no doubt shared by many new recruits. But to refugees from urban or rural poverty, domestic or foreign, the prospect of a berth for himself, a chest of one's own clothing, and regular meals might still have real attraction. Nor did all green hands feel that their lives were now forsaken. Charles Stedman, a green hand who kept a journal aboard the New Bedford ship *Mt. Wollaston* in 1853-56, had his complaints to make of the voyage, but they did not include either his quarters or his shipmates: "The Fore-castle is larger & more airy than in most larger ships; fine berths, & plenty of room to stow away things. The officers are a fine set of fellows, the crew mostly good fellows; but, very few able seamen among them. The mate, especially, has been very kind to me, and saved me many a dirty job. I like the Captain very well, except that he has all hands on deck, oftener than is necessary;—at which, the crew grumble very much, and many of them threaten to desert her at the first opportunity."<sup>37</sup> Ringgold in Paita agreed with this view, and he was no defender of whaling practices in general: "Many full & numbers of half clippers have been of late years added to the whaling fleet and others are annually being built. As a matter of course new tight and commodious vessels render the labours of the seaman much less and their comforts much greater. . . . The men have dry bunks to sleep in, and when not cutting in whales or trying out oil, their work is comparatively light."

Throughout the century, however, a whaleship's living quarters were arranged to preserve a strict segregation by rank. The captain lived in his cabin aft, with the mates nearby in smaller staterooms. Further forward, but closer to the stern (and the officers) than to the fore-castle, was the steerage, usually containing eight bunks in which lived the boatsteerers, skilled craftsmen, and the steward. Normally the steerage denizens ate in the cabin, as did the officers, but in another shift. The rest of the crew lived, and ate, in the fore-castle in the bow.

Food aboard was likely to be a shock. Thomas Roe, green hand of the New London ship *Chelsea* in 1831, found himself living in the fore-castle with "the most filthy, indecent and distressed set of men I ever came across." But the food won particular attention. "Our fare since we have been at sea has been nothing but salt cod, pork and hard bread. The pork at least five years old, the water is very bad," as were the cockroaches. Six months later, on going aboard the Nantucket bark *Sarah*, he found conditions even worse: seven men had for supper a pound of rice and a little sour molasses. "A person who has never been on board a Nantucket Whaleman cannot imagine how close and miserable they live."<sup>38</sup>

A quarter century later, Stedman on the Mt. *Wollaston* also found food a problem, at least at first:

I have found the provisions and the manner of eating them, the hardest thing to reconcile my self to. For breakfast we generally have a kind of minced meat, consisting of pieces of meat, bread & potatoes and each square [word uncertain] piece half cooked, and of a flavor very much resembling ransid lard fried. This I can bring myself to eat but very little of. For dinner we have, on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, duff (a compound of flour, water & slush [melted pork fat], eaten with molasses pretty good) together with potatoes & salt horse [beef]; on Monday, Pork, potatoes & hard bread, on Friday, boiled beans and Pork, on Saturday Cod-fish. Each man has his dish (tin pan), tin pot & spoon, and looks out for number one. Each one cuts, with his Jack knife, a piece of meat or pork, and exemplifies the old saying, "that fingers were made before forks." At first I could not eat much but I am learning to eat with a better relish, and no doubt, shall soon eat as much as any one.<sup>39</sup>

Stedman forgot Wednesday, which probably featured pork, but his description is typical of midcentury conditions. William Abbe on the Fairhaven bark *Atkins Adams* in 1858, reported duff three times a week, beans and rice each once a week, stews of potatoes (quite frequent for a spell when the fresh stores taken aboard before sailing began to go bad), occasional lobscouse (a hash of biscuit and salt meat, sometimes with potatoes and onions), "beaf & pork and hard bread at every meal. I think we live very well indeed, better than expected." Six weeks out, however, the food was worse: the meat scanty and often tainted, the bread old and wormy, the molasses full of cockroaches and dirt, the rice burnt and badly cooked, the water foul and stinking. "Our suppers are generally eaten on deck, when we are surrounded by the pigs, or rather pestered by the poor hungry brutes who will stick their nasty snouts in our pans if they are left a moment unguarded."<sup>40</sup> As Robert Weir on the bark *Clara Bell* in 1855 put it, "we have to work like horses and live like pigs."<sup>41</sup>

The food, in other words, depended much upon variables—time at sea, quality of supplies at sailing, the abilities (or more often, lack thereof) of the cook. Forecastle hands might find that the boatsteerers had somewhat better fare, and the officers better still, including luxuries such as butter and sugar instead of the cheaper molasses furnished to the crew. As long as they lasted, the afterguard was more likely to receive fresh vegetables or more of those pigs when eventually slaughtered. Too much should not be made of such differences, however; fresh supplies were soon gone, and butter was not likely to be so appetizing after some months or years at sea. Fresh meat was a rare treat for any long-voyage whaleman, enough so, for example, to inspire the master of the bark *Richmond* of Providence to haul his mainsail aback and

order two boats lowered in midpassage, all to rescue a single chicken that had accidentally gone overboard (the result was not logged).<sup>42</sup>

In the case of food, as in that of forecandle conditions, much depended upon the eye of the beholder. As will be seen, crews could and did complain of poor or inadequate food but less often than of other grievances. Seldom, indeed, was there insufficient ship's biscuit to go around, though other staples might run short. In general, at least in Consul Ringgold's view, there had been considerable overall improvement in the food supplied by midcentury over earlier conditions.

It was also found that the system of bad beef bad pork and worse biscuit [sic], turned out in the end an unprofitable economy. For good men accustomed to wholesome food at home and shipped at small lays or shares, would desert with the hope of bettering themselves and the master would consequently be compelled to take any class whether good or bad to make up his compliment giving at the same time better lays and a large advance. I am satisfied that there are no vessels afloat as a general rule that have better provisions and in greater abundance than whalers. Beside the salt provisions and small stores, these vessels touch at some port at least every six months and lay in large supplies of fresh meat, vegetables, and fruits.

Such resupply was a continual process, though scurvy was always a danger if it were not taken seriously enough. The New Bedford ship *Midas* at Hilo traded cloth for sweet potatoes, fruit, fish, hogs, poultry, beans, and wood, and did the same in the Marquesas (though adding muskets, powder, and tobacco as trade goods), Raiatea in the Society Islands (onions, pumpkins, potatoes, and yams taken aboard), a second time at the Marquesas, and finally at the Navigator Islands, all the while keeping cash expenses to an absolute minimum. Some cash money inevitably flowed out; while gunpowder could be traded for harbor dues at the Navigators, consuls demanded cash for their fees, as did Samoan pilots and Marquesan deserter-hunters.<sup>43</sup>

Quantities were critical. A large hog would probably mean fresh pork for the forecandle, but a chicken or two would be unlikely to escape the captain's table. Such supplies were soon gone, with the exception of whatever could be kept alive for a while (hogs, turtles, chickens) or stored reasonably well for some time (potatoes, yams, coconuts). When they were gone, it was back to salt horse and biscuit, plenty of cheap tobacco, and occasionally drink. Alcohol seems to have been fairly widely used before the 1830s but from that date the temperance movement took serious hold on the merchant fleet, including whalers. Owners and captains alike had little use for a drunken crew, and the majority of ships henceforth did not at least distribute liquor, though officers might have some aboard, and foremast hands smuggled aboard what they could.<sup>44</sup>

If over the course of the century vessels had been modified in design and increased in size and food become more palatable, such improvements could be set off against other, more negative changes. Longer voyages meant added dangers—of Arctic inhospitality, longer periods without fresh food, increased danger of frostbite, or a wreck in the ice—all perils that receive fairly frequent comment in consular reports from American representatives abroad. Whaling was always prone to accident, and while new technology saved some men, it also took the lives of others—men killed by explosions of bomb or lance guns, for example. Only the most rudimentary medical supplies and expertise were to be found aboard whaleships (the famous "medicine chest" for which the seamen paid); unlike British whaleships, which were required to carry surgeons, American vessels seldom had a doctor aboard. Finally, as will be seen in the chapters that follow, there was still conflict—with indigenous peoples met along the way, with shoreside authorities, with officers, with other crewmen.

Still, too, were whaleships divided hierarchically between officers and crew, a differential that widened at least economically over the century, and was enforced by powers of discipline and punishment discussed in Chapter 2 and by racial diversity in the forecabin and steerage, the focus of Chapter 3. While the officer-foremast hand dichotomy was rigid in many ways, it was also to some extent blurred by the presence of boatsteerers and skilled craftsmen, generally to be expected to side with the officers in any dispute, and by the service element of cook and steward.

There were other ways by which a crew was organized, and these too were important. Every mate, boatsteerer, and foremast hand belonged to one of two watches, alternating duties on deck through a twenty-four-hour cycle, particularly when on passage to and from whaling grounds. The watch below joined forces with that on duty, however, whenever required by the needs of weather, or the business of catching whales, at which moment the division of watches became less important. The "idlers"—cook, cooper, carpenter—worked during daylight hours for the most part, and all hands could be expected to turn up in the early evening second "dog watch" (6-8 P.M.) to enjoy such leisure as was allowed. Watches were selected by officers on the basis of ability and experience, and normally would not be found in serious competition—but a man was likely to form friendships within the group with which he shared work and rest.

The smallest formal group of which a hand was a member was the crew of a whaleboat, which normally carried six men: a mate (or the captain in his own boat), who was in command as "boatheader," and who killed the whale once harpooned; the harpooner, who attached the whale to the boat in the first place and then traded places with the mate and became "boat-

steerer"; and four oarsmen. Likely to spend many hours together and suffer the same luck or misfortune, this unit too could be significant. Men of a particular watch went on liberty together; a whaleboat's crew could all be destroyed by the flick of a whale's tail. Such groupings had a role to play, but this study focuses upon the officers and men as separate and distinct primary social classes aboard a whaleship.

It is to these elements, in the main, that one must turn in answering the critical question: given the sweated nature of the industry, and the low rewards paid to most men, what kept the men in the service once their illusions, if indeed such had brought them aboard, were shattered? The chapters that follow attempt to answer exactly that query, exploring work stoppages (Chapter 4), legal appeal ashore (Chapter 5), and physical escape—desertion—when these means did not satisfy (Chapter 6). But there were other, non-physical alternatives, internalized escapes from the total institution (one mark of the success of which, after all, is the degree to which the member or inmate internalizes acceptance of its workings). Religion (Chapter 7), sex (Chapter 8), various festivals and ceremonials (Chapter 9) were all a part of the whaleman's life. Finally, the last escape was to some portside haven, though as will be seen such waterfronts were not always the refuge anticipated (Chapter 10).

The history of whaling is not simple. Whalemen were not merely eager young Ishmaels or grim Ahabs. Though whaling was a sweated industry that prepared its product in a setting more remote than the most forgotten mill town, still there were opportunities to alter circumstances, to leave the service, even to protest, and sometimes in most public ways. In 1853, ten men of the ship *Emerald* of Sag Harbor were lodged in the Fort at Honolulu for refusing to work their vessel after it had transshipped its cargo of oil and bone. They not only addressed a strong letter to the American consul protesting their treatment but managed also to have it published in the local newspaper, the *Polynesian*: "We wish you, sir to understand that seamen are not always the poor, degraded class of beings you may have supposed. We, as well as yourself, have lived in the United States, under 'the banner of the free,' we know something of the laws and institutions of the country, and we also know that there the humblest citizen has the privilege of calling to account the highest officer, for misconduct in office."<sup>45</sup> What brought these men to refuse to work, and then to offer such resistance in such form, is the subject of the pages that follow.

# Crime and Punishment

On December 18, 1841, the log of the New Bedford whaleship *Samuel Robertson* (William H. Warner, master) recorded an occasion of punishment: "Flogged the blacksmith for disobeying Orders." That day or shortly thereafter, foremast hand William Allen elaborated upon the incident in his private journal.

A sketch of a punishment on board Sam'l Robertson.

What are you down in that steerage for after the watch has been called a half an hour for Blacksmith?

I did not hear the watch called, and the noise of their scrubbing over my head was what waked me up, sir.

Up with you to masthead and stay till I call you down.

I do not think that oversleeping myself merits such punishment!

Up you to masthead!

I cannot! Sir.

Here the Capt gets a piece of rope about  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch diameter with which he gave him one dozen he then told him to go to masthead upon which he went. At breakfast time he started to come down the Capt saw him and told him to stay there but he would come down. After he was down the Capt gave him a most unmerciful flogging and sent him back. For such a slight cause as that the Capt mad[e] a smart fellow deny his duty and then give him a most unmerciful flogging. Such is the usage on board of one of Brother Jonathans republican Whale Ships.

Floggings from Capt. Warner were continuous on this voyage; the *Samuel Robertson* was a hellship by any definition. After yet another incident,

when the captain beat a man for not repeating every word of an order from the mate, Allen reflected upon such punishment:

I do not know but the laws of the U.S. are proper in regard to the power that is vest in the capt. of ships but it seems to me that if capts can abuse their men in this way and yet not go contrary to law that something should be done. the men for the most part who man our whale-ships are young men just beginning the world warm from the domestick circle and from a country where they never saw their fellow creatures striped to the skin and the flesh quivering and lacerated by the cat-o-nine-tails like a southern slave—yes, worse than a slave for a slave is brought up where it is the practice, and to a northerner it would be a shocking sight even with all his prejudices against a negro.<sup>1</sup>

As the testimony from the *Samuel Robertson* demonstrates, there did indeed exist terrifying and terrible experiences on whaling voyages, as inescapable as the punishment dealt to sailors of Nelson's navy. Such voyages, and the bloody mutinies to which they sometimes gave rise, have given an unsavory reputation to nineteenth-century American whaleships. A study of the eight-volume collection of newspaper reports on *American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790-1870*, for example, shows in its numerous accounts of brutality and rebellion how much attention was given such events by nineteenth-century America.<sup>2</sup> The question may yet be asked, however, whether and to what degree severity of punishment was typical of the thousands of whaling voyages made in the era 1820-1920. This chapter attempts at least a partial answer through an examination of crime and punishment in the written record of whalemen's logbooks and journals.

For this purpose the author has studied approximately 3,300 such documents of the 5,000 known to exist in libraries open to public access. Complete quantification is not justified, since in a number of cases only a part of the journal or log could be used, the rest being too faint, illegible in handwriting, or unusable as a result of having been turned into a scrapbook or used for some other purpose. Nor is it certain that every logkeeper recorded each incident of punishment, particularly of the more routine sort. On the other hand, regulations in effect by the end of the eighteenth century required an official log of events of a voyage, and first mates, who kept the log, were expected to enter into it instances of physical punishment.<sup>3</sup> The possibility of subsequent legal action, if nothing else, led most official keepers, whether master or mate, not only to record the more serious crimes and their disposition, but to do so in considerable detail—in the case of flogging, for example, often noting the precise number of lashes and describing in detail the implement used. Supplemental source material is available in the substantial collection of American consular reports in the National Ar-

chives, and in assorted published and unpublished retrospective memoirs, but the main source here is logbook testimony—always recognizing that the men punished might have had an interpretation of events different from that of the punishers who kept the written record.

Crime by definition is an act in violation of a rule prohibiting it. Aboard whaling vessels, some activities viewed as criminal were similarly regarded ashore: theft, from the ship or from crewmates, or murder, or assault of one man upon another. But whaleship society was strictly hierarchical in nature, and indiscipline, disrespect, insolence, or refusal to perform an assigned task were punishable offenses. Desertion, or the attempt to do so; collective indiscipline (which might or might not be called "mutiny"), or an attempt to interfere in the application of discipline; sabotage to the vessel (damage or destruction to equipment or the vessels, attempts to set the vessel afire): all were serious crimes. Striking an officer, whether boatsteerer, mate, or master, was likely to result in severe chastisement. While these were the most numerous offenses recorded in whaling logbooks, others were possible, requiring only imagination on the part of the perpetrator, or a very wide definition of what was forbidden by shipboard authorities. Some captains had rules against swearing, smoking, card playing, or whistling (it was unlucky and supposedly alarmed whales). The use of one's own language other than English was often prohibited, for the obvious reason that it might conceal disrespect—or a plot of some sort.<sup>4</sup> All were punishable in various ways; flogging was only the most extreme penalty.

The most common reaction to a perceived breach of discipline was a tongue-lashing, and/or slap or punch or two. Such encounters were less likely to be recorded in the log than more formal punishments, unless they were unusually frequent. The log keeper of the ship *China* in 1862 recorded "another disgraceful scene, getting to be so common that don't note half of them," when the captain took issue with a boatsteerer named Brown who was washing his clothes on the fore hatch. The master, Sylvester Hathaway, "went forward kicked B in the face, the man didn't know what for, and asked him, but he got kicks in the face for answers and some slang with them, the man was abused shamefully his face is lumped & black eyes, this is one of the many cases that happen there is other modes of punishment without beating & banging a man in that shape."<sup>5</sup> Such physical discipline was common enough to make unusual any expression of regret, such as that of G.W. Howland (a mate and later master of whaleships himself) after settling a problem on the ship *Horatio* in 1880: "i was foured to strike him before i could take the 2nd thought witch i was very sorry a few minutes afterwards although i think i was foured to do as i did please may i be excused from trying my hand upon eny one again this voyage and with the

help of one hand from our heavenly farther i think i will succeed.”<sup>6</sup> A man who returned the blow, however, was likely to have equal cause for regret, but of another sort, for he faced even more serious punishment. Few were as lucky as the steward on the *Zephyr* in 1845. Slapped about by the captain, he retaliated with a blow to the face. The captain, who kept his own log, thought of flogging him, and did not—“but made him get down on his knees and ask my pardon before all the crew.”<sup>7</sup>

The standard punishment for more formal misdemeanours was to be “ironed,” or placed in handcuffs. Few voyages avoided one or more instances of such confinement as logbooks testify—and even then, this lesser punishment may not always have been logged. Severity depended upon the circumstances: whether the man or men were ironed in front of the body or with wrists locked behind the back, whether in double irons (both hands and feet), whether confined on deck or below, and if below whether in the cabin (with air circulation), or in the black hole beneath the cabin flooring known as the “run”—a most unattractive space in which to spend any time. Prisoners might be given regular rations, or only bread and water, allowed to attend to bodily needs or merely left to rot. Duration was a key variable, obviously. Where the vessel had no irons aboard (an unusual occurrence), or not enough for immediate needs, prisoners might be bound with rope (always plentiful!) or irons might be borrowed from another vessel or even, as on the ship *Milo* in 1849, made aboard by the blacksmith (“we went to work & made some cut up three harpoons & a quantity of hoop & made some” in order to iron thirteen foremast hands who had refused duty).<sup>8</sup>

Usually a few hours in handcuffs—even a few minutes—would suffice to effect an “attitude adjustment.” When two men tried to swim ashore to the island of Tenerife in the Canaries from the bark *Catalpa* in 1875, after they were recovered from the water they were ironed, their arms tied behind them and a wooden pole thrust through the arms and legs. One man had had enough after three hours, the other held out through most of a day.<sup>9</sup> On the bark *Matilda Sears* in 1872, when two men were ironed for refusing to climb to the masthead as a punishment for fighting, the rest of the crew said they would do no more work until the two were released. The captain now had twelve men put in irons and tied by their hands to the main rigging for a total, according to the log, of thirty-five minutes overall, after which they returned to duty. The original culprits remained in irons overnight and still refused the masthead order, but now tied in the rigging, still in irons, for three minutes, they soon changed their minds.<sup>10</sup> On the Edgartown brig *Vesta* in 1846, five men who refused duty held out for six days in irons, “placed up aft,” before they would agree “to go to duty and behave respectfully acknowledged capt’s ‘kindness’ to them.”<sup>11</sup> On the steam brig-

tine *Karluk*, on the other hand, a dangerous man who had stabbed another and was much feared by the crew was kept in irons from 7 April until 26 September 1905 (presumably he was let out occasionally) and, after the vessel wintered over in the Arctic, was a problem again the following spring.<sup>12</sup>

Irons were the universal cure-all for discipline problems. On one vessel, a man was ironed for not taking off his shoes while sailmaking, on another for throwing porpoise meat overboard rather than eat it, on a third for attempted sodomy.<sup>13</sup> On the *Walter Irving*, a Provincetown schooner whaling in the Caribbean, two men were ironed for swimming off the vessel, thus breaking a rule designed to keep them safe from sharks.<sup>14</sup> But a breach of regulations was not always required: on the *Clarice* the captain ironed men for fear they *might* desert, and on the *Clematis* the master put a Marquesas Islands beachcomber (over whom he had no authority in law) in irons for encouraging his men to desert.<sup>15</sup>

Irons were a common punishment, but not the only one. Men were often denied their watch below for an offense, or kept long hours at a task ("unnecessary work" as the log keeper put it with disarming honesty on the *Aurora* in 1865) to impress some point upon them.<sup>16</sup> Men who refused duty through collective action (see Chapter 4) were often nailed shut in their forecabin refuge, denied food and/or water—and then possibly smoked out with a charcoal fire when the captain required their presence on deck.<sup>17</sup>

Long hours at the masthead, scrubbing decks, or scraping out the try-pots in which the blubber was rendered into oil were also common punishments for foremast hands.<sup>18</sup> (Officers were also capable of breaking regulations or committing some form of indiscipline, but normally in such cases they were simply relieved of duty and confined to their cabin, either temporarily or until they could be discharged ashore; boatsteerers were more likely to be disgraced and sent forward as ordinary hands.)<sup>19</sup> Particularly ingenious captains designed sentences deemed appropriate to the crime, for example gagging a man for insolence. On the bark *Mattapoisett* in 1863 a man talked back to the captain; when the captain demonstrated how he would put a stick across his mouth if he persisted, the man bit the master's finger quite severely. The man soon found himself in irons with a stick fastened across his mouth for an hour and a half (on the *Niger* in 1888, the gag was a heavy belaying pin).<sup>20</sup> A man on the *Bartholomew Gosnold* who had apparently stolen some tools was kept at work all day on deck, denied his off-duty watch below; "he wares a piece of canvas on his back marked Thief and Lier" (sic).<sup>21</sup> Occasionally the punishment was extraordinarily severe. On the ship *Canada*, the steward was not only flogged but subsequently confined for six weeks, until the vessel made port, in a closed cask in the hold.

The log notes he was sometimes taken out for an "airing"—presumably the cask also had air holes to permit him to breathe.<sup>22</sup>

This particular punishment was most unusual. To be "seized" in the rigging (i.e., tied up), on the other hand, was quite common, though less common than to be ironed. Handcuffs were degrading and confining, but not necessarily so immediately painful. To be tied helpless in the rigging might be much less tolerable, depending upon how it was done. To be fastened with rope to the rail or rigging with arms at shoulder level or higher was exhausting enough, but if the hands, or worse, the thumbs, were tied over the head in such a manner that the feet only just, or only occasionally, touched the deck, the pain was excruciating, in most cases soon resulting in submission if that was the objective.

A man thus seized up might pass out (Warren Tobey in a published memoir recalled a cabin boy thus treated on the *Xantho* in the late 1860s),<sup>23</sup> or show serious aftereffects whether he remained conscious or not. Hollier Griffiths, American Consular Agent at Port Louis, Mauritius, and not a man to treat whalemens' complaints with indulgence, nevertheless attributed the mutinous conduct of the *Liverpool's* carpenter to the "intense pain he suffered from having been lashed up during many hours." His report put his point in official language, but his intent was clear: "however unwilling I am to censure or even to criticize the precautions which the Captain & officers of said vessel might consider necessary for the safety of their persons & the maintenance of due discipline I could not refrain from considering that this man appeared to have been treated with more severity whilst on board than his safety seemed to require."<sup>24</sup>

On the bark *Bertha* in 1907, a man had his hands ironed behind his back with a rope to keep tension on the arms in an upward direction; "he was there 45 minet and he beg to take him out that he would behave him self."<sup>25</sup> On the *California*, in the Bering Sea in August 1853, a hand in trouble for fighting "was made to strip off] his clothes all except pants and undershirt then was seized in the rigging when 19 bucketsful of water from over the side was thrown in his face." This frigid experience was soon followed by a further assault upon the man when the captain descended into the forecaskle and struck him in the face.<sup>26</sup>

Just to be shown the irons was sometimes enough to quell a disturbance among troublemakers, as on the *Alice Knowles* in 1907.<sup>27</sup> In another similar instance, a man on the bark *Nautilus* refused to take the wheel in 1870 and was tied to the rigging—but too loosely, for he escaped and jumped overboard. Once rescued, the man was ordered into irons by the captain, but when the cuffs were being put on him, as the master's wife recorded sympathetically in her journal, "he cried, said he was sorry he had refused duty,

and would never do it again but would obey every officer in future."<sup>28</sup> The aftermath, too, was important. William Woods went before the mast on the bark *President* in 1878, and inadvisedly shared in a collective refusal of duty. With three other men, he was put in irons: "so i know that it [is] no use for me to try and go whaleing any more i had a good chance to get along fast for all the officers thought a good deal of me but being put in irons killed my name it was very foolish in me to hang out when all the rest went to work but i did not know it till it was to[o] late if you ever go to sea dont be ruled by the sailors for they are all the time growling about the officers and ship."<sup>29</sup>

Irons, "unnecessary work," seizing in the rigging or to the rail: these were the most common punishments. It was also possible for a determined captain to rid himself of a troublesome man or men, perhaps after punishment of some form. Desertion was most common on whaleships on long voyages; the log of a voyage lasting more than one season that does not include desertion by one or more men is rare. A master could always encourage desertion if he desired, by making opportunity available, or even abandon men taken ashore as part of a boat's crew. There were other options. For example, a man might be allowed to exchange into another vessel,<sup>30</sup> or he might be given his formal discharge ashore. But in ports in which an American agent resided, discharge was a formal process requiring not only that the action be performed before the consul but also, after the passage of legislation to this effect in 1803, that any seaman discharged in a foreign port be paid three months' wages over and above wages earned to that point, as will be discussed below in Chapter 5.<sup>31</sup> Such a sum was fairly significant in any mid-nineteenth-century master's accounts, especially when multiplied over time.

A man against whom criminal charges might be laid could be handed over to local authorities for punishment—for mutiny, for example. Indeed, civil officials the world over were usually happy to oblige, if only thus to assert their authority over foreign vessels and seamen in their territory. The judgments meted out might be severe, as that given several hands on the whaleship *Susan* when sentenced to six weeks on the Hobart treadmill in 1841, or that rendered to others from the *Nantucket* who in 1846 were condemned to ten years on a Chilean chain gang.<sup>32</sup> American consuls were more likely to urge that seamen charged with serious crimes be sent home on the first available vessel. This procedure, however, while warranted in some instances, had the adverse effect—from the master's perspective—of costing him several more crewmen as witnesses (if any) to the crime who had also to be sent home, thus further reducing his crew, perhaps of his best and most experienced hands, and in some port where suitable replacements were scarce.<sup>33</sup>

One solution was to drop off an unwanted man at some uninhabited spot, to leave him marooned in a tradition more appropriate to piratical societies of an earlier age. Marooning was less likely to appear in a log, perhaps, but the press took note when and if some retribution was rendered. The master of the *Beaver* was arrested in 1845, for example, for leaving two men ashore on Rotuma, a Fiji outlier; the master of the *Betsy Williams* was fined one hundred dollars for setting a man ashore in the Galapagos in 1858; that of the *Hope On* was jailed in Chile as late as 1883 for abandoning a man on Juan Fernandez Island.<sup>34</sup>

But discharge or abandonment were not always desirable or practicable, especially in situations that called for immediate resolution. Most captains had firearms available in case of truly desperate circumstances—and were not above using them, as did the master of the *Lucretia* in 1883, who when faced with a mutinous crew saw no recourse but to shoot dead the ring-leader.<sup>35</sup> A shooting of this sort was not always so justifiable to the courts, however. The master of the ship *Milton*, incensed in 1853 by the attitude of the cook, threatened to put him in irons, and, when the man walked forward in a display of independence, the master shot him in the back. “The pistol was fired to intimidate or frighten him,” explained the log keeper.<sup>36</sup>

The use of firearms was thus not unknown, but it was not common. For the most part the whaling master faced with serious crime or rebellion—or simply wishing to punish severely—turned to the lash. Experience on land and sea alike over the years made flogging the most widely used serious punishment, and whaleships were no exception—at least until use of the “cat” was abolished in 1850 on American merchant vessels, a category that included whaleships as far as the courts were concerned.<sup>37</sup> Even then, while the practice declined in subsequent years, as table 1 demonstrates, flogging continued as a fairly regular practice through the Civil War years, only to become virtually extinct in the logbooks after 1865. Clearly it was a form of chastisement that masters were most reluctant to surrender. Nor was it simply a case of ignorance of the law. As the mate of the *Eliza F Mason* explained in 1855, in expectation of the flogging of two deserters recovered in the Ladrone (Mariana) Islands: “They were put in irons and I suppose will be flogged as Capt. J. [Nathaniel M. Jernegan] holds it to be right for him to violate the laws of his country if his men do or in plainer words he treats the laws of his country with contempt and calls any person a fool who lets himself be governed by them.”<sup>38</sup>

There were no rules applicable to whaleships stipulating for what, and to what extent, a man could be flogged; as with all other punishments, flogging too was at the master’s discretion. (Indeed, since flogging was al-

Table 1. Floggings on American Whaleships, 1820-1920

Years	A No. of logs Examined (1st year of voyage)	B No. of Vessels Returning	C A as % of B	D Voyages on which Flogging logged	E D as % of A
1820-24	58	495	11.7	2	3.4
1825-29	62	394	15.7	3	4.8
1830-34	171	721	23.7	6	3.5
1835-39	263	1026	25.6	6	2.3
1840-44	337	1126	29.9	23	6.8
1845-49	295	1089	27.0	38	12.9
1850-54	372	1108	33.5	25	6.7
1855-59	367	1030	35.6	17	4.6
1860-64	248	814	30.5	14	5.6
1865-69	276	786	35.1	1	0.4
1870-74	153	585	26.1	4	2.6
1875-79	183	530	34.5	-	-
1880-84	111	370	30.0	-	-
1885-89	89	376	23.7	-	-
1890-94	92	275	33.5	1	1.1
1895-99	52	151	34.4	-	-
1900-4	66	137	48.2	-	-
1905-9	58	102	56.9	-	-
1910-14	47	77	61.0	-	-
1915-19	36	69	52.2	-	-
Total	3,336			140	

Sources of Column B: Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, rpt. (Secaucus, N.J.: Castle, 1989).

ways subjective in the sense that its severity could vary with every separate blow, it was exactly the sort of variable corporal chastisement that prison reformers, determined to establish regular, efficient, equal, and dispassionate punishment such as solitary confinement, objected to most.)<sup>39</sup> Table 2 indicates the cause and number of lashes of the 157 floggings carried out on the 140 voyages noted in Table 1. The difference is owing to multiple floggings at different periods for different offenses on the same vessels; multiple floggings of several men for the same offense are counted as one, but a flogging for a different cause at another time is counted separately. Hellships, where flog-

Table 2. Causes and Number of Lashes in Floggings, 1820-1920

Cause	# not given	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-36	37-47	48-72	73+	Total
Disobedience, disrespect, insolence	6	8	12	3	8	7	1	1	1	47
Desertion or attempted desertion	4	4	7	6	2	2	-	-	1	26
Fighting	1	5	9	1	5	-	-	-	-	21
Share in collective work stoppage; interfere in discipline	5	1	4	2	4	-	-	1	2	19
Poor performance of duty	5	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	11
Theft	1	2	1	1	-	4	-	-	-	9
Sabotage	2	-	-	1	3	2	-	-	1	9
Assault on captain or mate or threat to do so	1	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	7
Other	1	-	-	-	4	1	1	-	1	8
Total	26	24	33	16	28	16	3	3	8	157

gings were a common occurrence, are counted no more than three times on the other hand, in order to avoid completely misleading conclusions from data that is difficult to quantify in any case.

Despite such qualifications, some generalizations seem safe enough. Table 2 makes clear that the most common cause of flogging was insolence or disobedience—normally some form of verbal abuse, “saucy” rejoinders, or simple refusal by one individual to perform an assigned task. Desertion or the attempt to do so, along with fighting, similarly were often punished in the same manner, with all other causes following in the order shown.

But whalemens could be flogged for any cause, just as they could be ironed for any cause. On the *Jasper* in 1840, the steward was serving as shipkeeper when the whaleboats were away in pursuit of whales; for allowing the vessel to “gully” (alarm) the whales, he was flogged.<sup>40</sup> On the *Palestine* in 1842, a man was flogged for stowing away on board, having deserted from another whaleship—to which he was returned after his punishment;<sup>41</sup> on the *Louisa Sears* the desire to exercise a supposed citizen’s right to see the American consul had the same result (“they should not see the council that he was captain and council when he came on board” was the captain’s judg-

ment).<sup>42</sup> Occasionally the captain consulted the other officers, even the crew, in such matters, but such collective decisions were rare:<sup>43</sup> for the most part, the captain was indeed jury and judge, and "council" too.

The most common sentence was of 12, 18, or 24 lashes; fairly seldom was a man sentenced to more, and rarely indeed were more than three dozen blows administered. In only two cases of the 157 were more than 100 applied—one of 135 (desertion and theft), the other "about 250" (mutiny), though the record of the latter is vague enough to be uncertain.<sup>44</sup> Consular files show additional heavy sentences—100, 160, and so on. Such extreme punishments were for desertion, poor job performance (particularly of cooks and stewards), and especially mutiny. In 26 cases, the number of lashes was not recorded, or simply given as "flogged till he submitted."

What is perhaps most surprising is the substantial number of floggings in which the number of blows was less than a half-dozen. The smallest number encountered was the smallest possible, one lash—and not once, but in three separate instances. On the *Alfred Gibbs* in 1860 a man was put in irons for three days for desertion, then put in the rigging "and gave him one lash and sent him to duty." The leniency, if such it was, was little rewarded; the same man was given a dozen more nine months later for threatening to burn the ship and striking the captain.<sup>45</sup> On the *Canton Packet* in 1851 a man refused to go to the mizzen crosstrees as punishment, and was given one blow and sent aloft till the captain called him down.<sup>46</sup> On the *China*, in 1854, the blow was applied in the presence of all hands called to witness punishment for desertion and enticing another man to the same crime: "The Capt gave him one cut with the cat & then let him go forward."<sup>47</sup> Clearly these instances were largely symbolic; it was far more common to give four or six, as the half dozen administered to a man who pulled a knife on the mate of the *Lapwing* in 1862 ("I say not half enough," commented the log keeper).<sup>48</sup> There appears to be no correlation between number of lashes and year of flogging, it should be added; both light and heavy sentences occur throughout the era considered.

Of equal concern, at least to the man punished, was whether the act was performed on bare skin or over clothing. There was a considerable difference, for example, between two dozen stripes "on his back with 4 parts of seizing stuff he having an under and uper shirt," or "1 dozen lashes with his jacket on"<sup>49</sup> and a severe flogging with many lashes upon a bare back. Nor was the back always the target. On the *Canton Packet* in 1857 two men implicated in setting the ship afire were beaten: "a small sized rattan say about  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch in diameter was applied about the nether parts," to encourage them to confess.<sup>50</sup> On the bark *New England*, two men were punished for fighting: "gave Jago two dozen across the bare

ass—and gave Tom over the pants half a dozen—Jago begged at every lick and promised he would do [better] but he had to grin and bear it” (Jago had started the fight).<sup>51</sup>

Another consideration was the implement used. A true cat-o-nine-tails or “cat” (both terms occur regularly in logs) was a vicious weapon, composed of nine cords each with three or more knots, all secured to a short piece of heavy rope as a handle. But whaling mates and masters might not be so equipped, using instead a handy piece of rope, such as the “seizing stuff” noted above. Seizing stuff, “ratlin” or “rattling” stuff, worming line, or simply “one inch manilla rope” are all similar type ropes of fairly small circumference, normally  $\frac{3}{4}$ -1½ inches. Worming is thin line (“spun yarn”) that was passed around a heavier rope or cable to smooth its contours, usually as preparation for waterproofing; a ratline—“rattling”—was a horizontal line set in series connecting the shrouds, on which men went aloft like rungs of a ladder; seizing was thinner line used to bind two ropes together without splicing. The threads, or strands, varied in thickness. “9 thread rattling” used on the *Hector* in 1847,<sup>52</sup> for example, was not necessarily thinner than a twelve-strand line; the normal three-strand ratline was about one inch in circumference. Even fishing line might be used, however, doubled over enough times. But when the judgment was swift and sudden, the flogger grabbed whatever was nearest: on the *Millinoket* in 1851, three lashes were administered with the “end of the main top sail clu [clew] line”; on the *Navy* in 1861, “with the main brace”; on the *Globe* in 1869, twenty-six blows with “the end of main topsail reef tackle [tackle], he crying to the capt in the name of the lord to have mercy.”<sup>53</sup>

In one sense, however, the instrument or number of lashes mattered less than the act itself, for it always meant degradation—to victim, flogger, and witness alike, though all might not believe so at the time.<sup>54</sup> But in another sense, the details of the act determined whether it was symbolic only or was indeed a painful and brutal form of punishment. In either case, flogging was a fact of life, found on naval vessels, in the army ashore, in foreign lands, and on foreign-flag vessels whether mercantile or naval. Sailors might flog each other (on the bark *Emerald* in 1838 the crew flogged the cook in their own forecabin).<sup>55</sup> Even an appeal to an American consul might result in the same recourse to the lash. Charles Ward, U.S. Consul in Zanzibar in 1848, ordered the recalcitrant crew of the New Bedford bark *Emma* to receive two dozen lashes each with “a piece of 12 threath ratlin rope,” and be confined to the local fort, there to be flogged “every day or as often as they can bear it until they submit” (once proved enough).<sup>56</sup>

Even a sensitive mate or master could find the necessary rationalization. On the *Montreal* in 1851, the log keeper defended the flogging of five men

for troublemaking, including the destruction of the property of other foremost hands.

We are well aware that there are many, very many persons (landsmen) pious, moral and upright men, who would turn up their eyes in holy horror, at the bare mention of whipping on ship board, but would exercise the same prerogative in their own families and consider it a christian duty. . . . The master of a ship is in precisely the same position, the head also of a family, but composed of a heterogeneous mass frequently from all nations, men arrived at the age of maturity, with dispositions as varied as the hues of the rainbow, their characters already formed, whether for good or for evil and most of them entire strangers to the master, at the departure of the ship. The strong arm of the law does not reach him on the wide waste of waters, and by its protection enforce obedience among a refractory crew.

Yet the master must protect the owner's property nevertheless, he continued, and could not, as with merchantmen, rely on the fear of loss of regular wages alone to discourage disobedience.<sup>57</sup>

Doubts about the efficacy of flogging or distaste for the act were probably less common among masters than men, but these too were possible. Edward Harding, master of the ship *Cambria* in Lahaina, Oahu in 1844 whipped a man who was ringleader in a "mutiny," having given him twenty-four hours "to make an acknowledgement to me or his time is up tomorrow and then he is to be put in the rigging and whipped until he is willing and does it." After twelve lashes, the man made the necessary submission. "And I sincerely hope this will be the last time that I shall be under the necessity of doing the like again to make a man comply with my wishes which is nothing more than for them to do their duty willingly."<sup>58</sup> The mate of the *Alpha* had similar thoughts in 1850 when the black cook was given a dozen by the master, talked back, and was given another "50 or 55 more." The crew had been called to witness the punishment "in regular man-of-war style." "I am strongly opposed to flogging but on this occasion," remarked the mate, "I must confess that it was merited and could not well have been superseded by any other mode of punishment with the same likely results."<sup>59</sup> But as another witness to a different flogging put it, the act was never justified, "for God never made one man, however high that man's station is, to have a brother man tied up in the rigging, and flogged with a stiff piece of rope. There is no reason, no consistency, no humanity, no love to God or man in such a case."<sup>60</sup>

Exactly the same opinion was gradually making headway in America. Already before the abolition of flogging in 1850, the courts had spoken out against the practice "so cruel and degrading," as a judge put it in 1844, though he recognized that flogging was traditional upon whaleships.<sup>61</sup> Even

after 1850, however, not all masters gave up the practice, nor were all judges willing to enforce the prohibition with necessary severity. Hezekiah Allen, master of the bark *Sea Queen* of Westport, Massachusetts, in 1879 was brought before the U.S. District Court in Boston for flogging several crewmen. The judge found that the 1850 act had indeed abolished flogging, defined by him as “all blows or stripes inflicted as deliberate punishment, whether by a cat, or rope, stick or other instrument”—but also found that the seaman libellant had not been seriously injured, and thus assessed the master a penalty of only fifty dollars—this nearly four decades after the practice had been outlawed.<sup>62</sup>

Captain Allen would no doubt have defended his behavior in much the same manner as the logkeeper of the *Montreal* quoted above, citing the lack of homogeneity of the crew and the lack of other restraints upon them. Indeed it was the case that the nature of whaling crews had changed substantially over the course of time, as pointed out in Chapter 1. Fortunately, flogging was not standard in 1879. The world was smaller, as was the whaling fleet; it was less easy to escape the lengthening arm of the law as, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, whaling came to look less like the absentee plantation that it so strongly resembled early in the century—a closed society, overseen by managers acting on behalf of distant owners, enforcing their writ with the lash—and more like the land-bound factory.<sup>63</sup> In its heyday, however, and in particular the era 1830-1860, the cat was simply one of the more ultimate expressions of authority, demonstrating clearly what Foucault called “the inevitability of power.”<sup>64</sup> It was also a form that, unlike many others, carried the stigma of slavery, a point so obvious to the logkeeper of the *Samuel Robertson* quoted in the first paragraph of this chapter. It was that aspect, of course, that made the lash so hateful on the one hand and so useful on the other. The abolition of such corporal punishment in 1850 altered attitudes as much as the abolition of slavery itself, that is, to a greater or lesser extent depending upon time and place and the nature of the society involved. Racial prejudice hardly vanished with the Civil War, and brutal floggings clearly continued aboard whaleships after 1850. In the end, however, flogging disappeared, as the ocean-going world of deep-sea sail also disappeared.

While whaling lasted, however, the discipline system could be brutal indeed, with or without flogging, serving very effectively to keep those raw green hand recruits in line. As will be seen, if pushed too far, a crew was capable of resisting force with force. But such resistance required solidarity, and this was a bond not easily built, particularly if crews were racially mixed.

### T H R E E

## Race and Status

**T**he question of race is one that has long perplexed students of the history of whaling. There is no doubt that African-Americans and Native Americans served aboard whaleships in the earliest days—but in what numbers, and in what capacity? And, particularly important for this study, what changes in racial distribution and status took place in the industry over the course of the nineteenth century?

One may begin, as many do in their first encounter with whaling life, with the works of Herman Melville, who was, it must be stressed, a whaler himself. A search of his several works upon the sea soon reveal the fact that his African-Americans come in several forms, from the proud and capable Daggoo of *Moby Dick*, to the stereotypical nameless black cook who served the *Pequod*, “this old fleece, as they call him,” whose bit part was only to cross the stage “shuffling and limping along.” The *Julia*, from which the hero of *Omoo* deserts, similarly had an elderly black cook, a runaway Maryland slave named “Baltimore,” good-natured but without a major role; Mungo, a “black cook,” served the whaler *Dolly* in *Typee*. Yet equally stereotypical is the “Handsome Sailor” of *Billy Budd*, who parades along Prince’s Dock in Liverpool among a crowd of admiring fellows, “like Aldebaran among the lesser lights of his constellation.” Large and powerful, with a jolly kerchief around his neck and gold hoops in his ears, he personifies Jack Tar ashore, except that he is “so intensely black that he must needs have been a native African of the unadulterated blood of Ham.”<sup>1</sup> To complicate the issue further, Melville has still other racial images to offer of Pacific Islanders in *Typee* and *Omoo*, and even of dark-skinned Cape Verdean seamen in a satirical essay on “The ’Gees.”

It is not the purpose of this chapter to argue, once again, the larger meaning of Melville's characters, which of course serve both literary and social purposes.<sup>2</sup> Rather it is to use the evidence of logbooks and journals to demonstrate that race relations in the whaling world familiar to Melville were complex—a complexity that quite naturally was reflected in his work. It is equally my purpose, however, to take issue with those historians and social critics who ignore the same complexity from another standpoint, and, perhaps influenced by the unforgettable crew of the *Pequod*, make of whaling that which it was not: a fully integrated enterprise. In this context, it is necessary to remark separately upon the role of African-Americans, Cape Verdean Islanders, and Pacific Islanders.

In the early years of American whaling, and of American seafaring generally, African-Americans do seem to have been integrated to a considerable degree. As has been argued persuasively by Jeffrey Bolster and others, blacks occupied a central role at sea up to the 1830s.<sup>3</sup> On whaleships, blacks served as cooks and stewards, but they were also foremast hands, and sometimes were found as skilled craftsmen aboard, such as coopers, sailmakers, or blacksmiths. The 1848 inventor of the important toggle-iron harpoon head, in fact, was Lewis Temple, an African-American blacksmith of New Bedford—but he worked on shore, not at sea.<sup>4</sup> Non-whites certainly served as boatsteerers; such were Queequeg, Daggoo, and Tashtago. More rarely blacks were mates, and, least frequent of all, masters. Few equaled the accomplishments of Paul Cuffe or Pardon Cook, notable black whaling masters, but there were other captains, and some sailed with all-black crews, though they were a small fraction of the hundreds of whaling vessels in the American fleet in its prime.<sup>5</sup>

There is also no question that the numbers involved were substantial. Martha Putney has catalogued more than 3,000 on New Bedford vessels alone in the era 1803-1860; there may well have been more, but their identification in the sources available is difficult.<sup>6</sup> The question, however, is whether the considerable African-American role was sustained to the same degree beyond the early decades of the century. Rather misleading in this regard is the often-cited estimate that appeared in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* in 1846 of 2,900 blacks then serving in the whaling fleet.<sup>7</sup> This figure was arrived at by the arbitrary and rather subjective expedient of assigning an average of four men to each of the 732 vessels, large and small, then engaged in whaling.

In actuality, as Bolster has shown, a general decline of African-American seafarers set in after 1830. Putney's catalogue of 3,000 does not distinguish by year before 1840 but clearly shows an average of only two blacks per vessel for the 1840s, a decade of considerable growth of the whaling industry,

and under one per vessel for the 1850s. For this decline, several reasons may be cited. European immigration to the United States was increasing dramatically, and white foreigners competed for jobs formerly held by blacks on land and sea. Similarly, the "landsharks" who controlled the supply of manpower to whaler and merchantman alike saw to it that blacks increasingly were excluded. Finally, racism itself was on the increase in the era 1830-50, propelled by a pseudoscientific rationalization that included such studies as "phrenology."<sup>8</sup> The overall result for whaling seems to have been different only in degree from seafaring generally: blacks were being driven out from both cabin and forecabin and, where they remained, were increasingly relegated to less-favored positions such as cook and steward.

If it is too easy to assume that blacks continued to occupy the same position in whaling in the middle of the century as at the beginning, it is similarly too easy to assume that the industry remained as integrated as it may have been in earlier years, despite—and in clear if improbable contradiction to—shoreside attitudes. "There might be name calling, there was often the feeling that the captain preferred one racial or national group over another," Michael Cohn and Michael Platzer have concluded about the industry through its lifetime, "but whaling was a truly integrated trade."<sup>9</sup> But much depends on what is meant by "integrated." Blacks, for example, were not discriminated against in their pay, which was the same for all in the same rank regardless of race. On the other hand, the paucity of black officers indicates that they were the exception rather than the rule. As one owner put it to an aspiring white whaleman-to-be, "the promotion of an energetic young man . . . is rapid, since a large proportion of the foremast hands are ignorant blacks and men of mixed blood who have no ambition to rise."<sup>10</sup> As Bolster correctly notes, whaling was "one of the few places black men might sail as officers," but this remark should not be taken to mean that they had equal opportunity to advance.<sup>11</sup>

Bolster has not studied whaling in depth, however. Had he done so, he would have found that his general conclusions on seafaring are equally applicable to whaling: the number of blacks overall declined, and those who still found employment on whale vessels were more likely to be relegated to the galley or steward's pantry. Exceptional officers were just that—exceptional. If the antebellum black seafarer did not quite become the "lonely being"<sup>12</sup> portrayed by Bolster in other forms of seafaring, it was only because he came to share second-class status with two other groups important to this industry: dark-skinned islanders from both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. What made whaling unique, in other words, was not that it was more integrated or tolerant than other aspects of post-1830 seafaring, but that it revolved

around a complex racial interrelationship not found, at least to anything like the same degree for reasons which will be explained, in other forms of maritime enterprise.

It is of course possible to think of whaling simply as a branch of American industry, for which investment, rates of profit, and the like can be calculated. But from the standpoint of on-board race relations, it is more useful to return to the concept of the whaleship as an isolated total society. Certainly there was a workplace in which labor was exchanged (though often the reward over time was little more than food and shelter of a sort), and in which industrial disputes and work stoppages may be discerned. Still the governing relationships were based upon the virtually unlimited power of the officers described in Chapter 2. At sea, the rule was simple: officers commanded, and men obeyed; to do otherwise was to risk dire punishment.

Black and white, foreign and American, foremast hands were forced to tolerate each other's existence in such circumstances, simply in order to survive. All shared one goal, however unconsciously: to avoid being further reduced to a totally servile status, such as "Baltimore" and other runaways like him had already experienced. But "tolerate" is not necessarily the same as "integrate." While there are exceptions to every rule, and as Cohn and Platzer note, there are few documented on-board racial conflicts between groups,<sup>13</sup> the testimony of logbook evidence—evidence, in other words, normally provided only by white officers—indicates racial attitudes that closely approximated those found ashore. Fighting was normally strictly forbidden, and men of whatever race who fought each other might well find themselves tied to their opponent and ordered to fight to exhaustion with the likely aftermath of a flogging whether they complied or refused (on the *Mary Ann* of Fairhaven in 1861, the captain ironed the cook and steward back to back with their arms interlocked, placed them in the after hold, and told them to fight it out as much as they pleased).<sup>14</sup> That racially motivated altercations seldom occurred (but they did occur) might indicate integration, but might equally well indicate only that tension was kept in check by fear of a greater power.

To some extent, safety lay in living up to racial stereotypes demanded of "Old Fleece," of "Moses" ("at 3.0 AM the ships cook Mosses Posey [colored] died"),<sup>15</sup> or "Pompey," the nickname with which John Williams, an African-American from Delaware, was burdened on the 1851-53 voyage of the New London ship *New England*.<sup>16</sup> Francis Allyn Olmstead, fresh from Yale, journeyed around the Horn in 1839 on the *North America*. The whaleship's crew included "Jumbo" (also called "Mr. Freeman"), the comical cook, "fountain of all the fun and good humor aboard the ship," to whom the

captain and officers daily gave "a serio-comic punishment," but delighted all with his singing, fiddle playing, jig dancing, and the fact that he could "roll up the white of his eye—all in the genuine negro style."<sup>17</sup> The persistence of such stereotypes leads one to ask whether Melville's cooks, then, should be seen less as either a statement on race or a literary device, and more as a reflection of shipboard reality.

The very language of logbooks is indicative of commonly held attitudes. When the master of the ship *Lucy Ann* of Greenpoint, New York, labored beside his crew in making repairs to his damaged vessel, he left no question in his journal of the magnitude of his efforts: "All hands employed with myself & worked like A negro."<sup>18</sup> In the bark *Draco* of New Bedford, on the other hand, the master was troubled with a mate who feigned sickness, and the log witnessed his impatience: "He has been with me nearly eleven years and this voyage he shows the negro. O dear when shall I be clear of sailors."<sup>19</sup> The logkeeper of the sealing schooner *Charles Colgate* complained in 1875 when a misguided black crewmen "niggered" the elephant seals he had planned to kill, i.e., stirred them up and allowed them to escape to sea.<sup>20</sup> The collective image of such terminology is clearly that of the slave who was capable of hard work if closely supervised, but who could not be trusted otherwise. This was an attitude, moreover, that might well be amplified by simple distaste for a different color of skin. Mary Brewster, who sailed with her husband, master of the Stonington ship *Tiger* in 1845, recorded considerable trouble with the cook, "a large fat dirty looking negro and if blackness was a recommendation he must be first rate."<sup>21</sup> Mrs. Brewster's life aboard, it should be remarked, had much more to do with the cook and steward, the equivalent of house servants, than with the foremast hands on whom she seldom remarked.

The power of a master at sea, however, was vast indeed, and he at least could befriend any individual crewman, even an African-American. The attitude of white officers and crew, nevertheless, was likely to be critical of such unusual associations. The log-keeping mate of the ship *Archer* of New Bedford in 1846 was clearly upset when Moses Snell, his religiously inclined master, made the cook, a "Guinea Nigger," his confidant "respecting things said and done by the officers," a breach of custom from the double perspective of race and rank.<sup>22</sup> Even a participant in such a relationship was likely to realize its atypical nature. Gurdon Hall, shipkeeper on the *Charles Phelps* in 1843, noted in his journal his surprise after talking of religion to Washington Fletcher, a black boatsteerer, that "this man though of a sable complexion is possessed of good feelings and belongs to the Baptist church in Stonington," the vessel's home port.<sup>23</sup>

More common was the sort of voluntary segregation off duty noted by

Frank Bullen in his whaling cruise; on the fictionalized *Cachalot*, the crew at once divided themselves in the forecabin upon sailing, with blacks to port and whites to starboard, with suspicion the most probable relationship.<sup>24</sup> Such separation might, however, require an incident before implementation. On the bark *America*, in 1856, several nights of disturbance were initiated, according to the African-American members of the crew, by a white man stealing tobacco from one of them. The captain upon investigation could find nothing to substantiate the charges, so he kept the entire crew on deck in their off-duty hours to discourage further disturbance. It did not work. The next night: "more disturbance with the negroes one of the men struck by one of them the consequence was that the white men removed to [the] larboard side of the forecabin and the negroes on the starboard."<sup>25</sup>

Name calling violated the unspoken truce; to call a fellow crewman "nigger" was tantamount to a challenge, regardless of any ship's rules. On the bark *Atlantic* in 1866, James Brown, who hailed from "New Granada" and perhaps was black, stepped up to James Foster leaning against a cask and stabbed him with a sheath knife. Foster lived about five minutes; Brown "said that Foster had called him a nigger was the reason that he did it."<sup>26</sup> On the *Roman* of New Bedford in 1844: "The Steward John Harper Acting Cook in Irons for not giving Dick so called quit[e] so pleasant an answer as might be as Dick frequently called him a damned nigger it would not appear strange if he was a little unpleasant."<sup>27</sup> If opportunity arose, such name calling might be evoked as cause for legal discharge, as used by one of the *Alto's* crew before the American commercial agent at St. Helena in 1857. He complained, among other charges, that the mate had "called him a Negro."<sup>28</sup>

The pejorative stigma was obvious, but verbal abuse might only be the prelude to physical mistreatment. Any whaleman of any race might be subject to harsh punishment—flogging above all. As noted in Chapter 2, flogging was abolished in 1850, but the practice continued at least through the Civil War era.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, any man might be singled out as deserving of special treatment; it is in that context that the power possessed by the captain and his delegates was only too evident. But there seems to have been a special callousness where blacks were concerned. Some instances, arguably, could have involved a man of any race. For example, off Upolu (Western Samoa) in 1862, Captain E.H. Cranston of the bark *Lagoda* flogged a black hand for refusing duty, and then confined him in the "run" below the cabin. Still the man refused to give in, and perhaps after a second flogging (the log is unclear), Cranston was so angered that he ordered the mate "to take my boat and land him (the Negro) on the beach the land then being about 5 or Six miles distant." The assignment proved impossible, for heavy weather

prevented the boat either from making shore or returning to the vessel the entire night. Eventually the mate landed at a settlement on the island, and the captain had to pay a ransom of tobacco and cloth for his boat and crewmen (the black hand remained on shore at this spot, along with another left with the captain's consent).<sup>30</sup>

Special attention on a whaleship was paid to cooks and stewards by virtue of their unique status as preparers of food for both crew and officers. When cooks were also black, their position was unenviable to say the least, though as with name calling and other aspects of racial confrontation the evidence is anecdotal. It is clear, however, that while the first rule for all was not to speak back to officers, even forecandle hands were likely to demand respect from the cook. As J. Ross Browne put it in his published memoir of a midcentury whaling cruise, "I had been too long living in slave states to bear very quietly the insolence of a negro, and on several occasions we came to pretty close quarters." (The cook, a mulatto, had served as wardroom steward in the U.S. Navy.)<sup>31</sup>

Equally important, there was little tolerance for a job poorly done, as the cook of the *Alpha* of Nantucket found in 1850. After being seized up in the rigging, he defended himself by claiming the fire in his galley would not burn. "Ah! wouldn't him eh! well we'll see if we cant make it burn, and with these words the captain struck him a dozen! there I think it will at least feel warm if it wont burn. This dozen rather got up the nigger's mulish disposition and made him saucy—the Captain turned and struck him some 50 or 55 more, but before he had laid on one half the man prayed and begged for mercy like a good fellow."<sup>32</sup>

The cook of the bark *Emerald* in 1838 was attacked in the forecandle where the crew "sweetened him high with a large piece of tarred rigging, he then made attempts to go up the forecandle steps and then they sweetened him again, he drewed his large knife at them which he soon lost the privilege to use." Four months later, the same cook was bound in the mizzen rigging by the captain and "there the old darkie took a dozen with the Cat o nine tails." The same day, the black steward was beaten about the head by the mate, who also "put his head in a bbl. of flour and sent him to his duty," an unusual punishment to say the least.<sup>33</sup> It was not always one-sided. The cook on the *Kathleen*, according to the articulate boatsteerer who recorded her voyage of 1880, fared easier, even though he was attacked by three Portuguese forecandle hands. "The cook is a southern darky and a tough, thick-set little fellow. He blackened the eyes of one of them and I believe would have mauled the three of them. The Portuguese cannot fight even in a rough-and-tumble. Mr Gifford [the mate] sent the three to masthead until dark for punishment."<sup>34</sup> The *Kathleen's* cook was fortunate to escape pun-

ishment himself for fighting. As the versifying log keeper on the ship *Parachute* put it in 1839 in reference to an altercation between the cook and the carpenter, rephrasing the captain's judgment:

To the carpenter he says your sentence you will find  
the next time your caught will bear hard on your mind.  
To the cook you damd old Nigger what I say is true  
Next time I will flog you till you are black & blue.<sup>35</sup>

There was no humor in a flogging. Owners and masters in sail justified the practice for the same reason given by admirals and generals of more than one nation: it was degrading and painful to bear, and frightening to watch—and at the same time removed the punished man from duty for the least amount of time when compared to other possible punishments such as imprisonment. William Allen's reflections upon the brutality of flogging aboard the *Samuel Robertson* in 1841-45 have already been quoted in Chapter 2. "Worse than a slave" was his opinion, and he was so horrified that he kept a "list of men flogged, struck, etc., etc."<sup>36</sup>

He was not alone in such revulsion. The journal keeper on the *Meridian* in 1830 had similar thoughts after witnessing the whipping of a "colored man" aboard the *Spartan*, anchored in the same harbor at Maui, frustrated into near incoherence that no man on the other vessel would take the part of the punished man.

And I think it is not right for the low bred blubber captains to carry the sway on the sea when there is so many ships of war to see that there is no such actions done except on board of them but the Americans fought once for free trade and sailors and why dont they sho it amongst themselves . . . But it is not a sight for a man to see another one whiped by no means I assure you What authority have they got to ship a man but it has been done on board of our ship once or twice but no more so ends this 24 hours.<sup>37</sup>

At times the horror needs no further comment. On the ship *Sea of Warren*, Rhode Island, in 1852: "William Perry a coullored seaman that the captain had tyed up for stabbing worked him self loose and took a hatchet out of the stabbourd boat and cut off his right hand in the rist joint. Captain said [he] done all he could towards repairing the damages but we fear that it cannot recover without another operation. . . . the poor devil has ruined himself for life and yet I think he is pleased with what he has done. He had the worst disposition of any man I ever saw."<sup>38</sup> On the ship *Sharon* of Fairhaven in 1842, the captain flogged a man for wasting meat (he had been turned in by another man), but not satisfied with giving him three dozen lashes, returned after breakfast and "kicked him about the face head and

temples," all the time beating him with a rope, "still swearing at an awful rate." The man fell to the deck. Captain Howes Norris commanded him to rise, and when he did not, ordered the second mate to get him to his feet—but he was dying. Norris had the body sown into a blanket and laid out upon a plank: "John Babcock a colored Man was taken to the west and Launched overboard without a word of seramony or a tear shed to my noledge He has gone I hope to rest he has asked times previous to this what would become of him if he jumped overboard or cut his throat when Capton Norris had ben flogging him it seames that he wanted to Dy But did not want to go to hell as he had said before I hope that he has gone home to Glory May God bless him."<sup>39</sup>

It comes as no surprise that even the most racially prejudiced crewmen might still work together to protest or otherwise interfere with such brutality, lest they suffer it themselves. No such resistance was recorded on the *Samuel Robertson* or the *Sharon*, though they were both clearly "hellships." In a later voyage of the *Sharon*, under a different master, such collective action did take place. "Two collared men" had words with one another, and the captain, observing the argument, put the men in irons and gave them the choice of "slushing down" the topmast (i.e., to work from the top down of the topmast applying a vile mixture based mainly upon "slush," the excess and often rancid grease remaining from the cook's endeavours), or take a dozen lashes each, "witch is ginerley the punishment on bord of our whale ships it shows what feelings a man has for his fellow being," remarked log keeper James Johnson. When, apparently having chosen the lashes, one man was given a dozen as promised, the entire crew refused to return to duty until persuaded to do otherwise by the captain.<sup>40</sup> Similarly on the Mystic bark *Shepherdess* in 1848, when William Gamman, a black foremast hand was beaten by the mate and took refuge in the forecandle, only to be dragged out, put in irons, and later flogged, "boatsteerers cooper and sum of the men interfering trying to rais the Devle."<sup>41</sup> In a very striking case, the crew of the *Clarice* in 1845 interfered at the island of Timor in the East Indies to stop what they feared was the actual sale into slavery by the ship's "master" of a black foremast hand.<sup>42</sup>

Such collective action was thus not unknown, though it was also generally ineffective, as will be seen in Chapter 4. Whether such events demonstrate "integration" is of course a question open to the interpreter. When the issue of relations out of sight of the officers within the forecandle itself is raised, much the same uncertainty remains. Men of every race were likely to encounter dominant individuals who might put them to a severe physical test, demonstrating at least a sort of rude equality where fighting skills were concerned. George Fred Tilton, who rose to be a whaling master, found on

his first sperm whaling voyage in 1875 that a powerful black hand enjoyed beating up new recruits for practice "whenever he felt particularly grouchy." According to his own account, Tilton in the end had to lay him out with a handspike, "a club quite a bit bigger and longer than a baseball bat" ("If he had been a white man, 't would have killed him deader than King Tut"), for which retaliation he spent two hours in irons tied to a spar rack as punishment.<sup>43</sup> On the New Bedford ship *Illinois* in 1845, Elias Trotter, a rare foremast hand journal keeper—who incidentally arranged to have a servant of his own by paying Valentine Willet "a colored man" seventeen dollars to do his washing, mending, and shaving during the entire voyage—recorded a fight between his own friend Doyle and an unnamed black cook who attempted to rule the forecabin. "Doyle, however, got the worst of the fight but in fighting gained the goodwill of the whole crew. The cook by gaining, lost the feeling of the forward men in his behalf, which, I prophecy, will follow him during the voyage. Twill not answer for one man & especially a *coloured* man to dictate to American feeling men what they should do & what they must do. He must sooner or later suffer for his conduct. Another insult like this one offered to either watch, must meet with its merited reward."<sup>44</sup>

A struggle of this sort was not necessarily contained on board but might flare up during a rare leave ashore, when the ship's rules were much more difficult to enforce. At Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas in 1861, the second mate of the ship *Alfred Gibbs*, one Samuel Sargeant, became involved in a drunken scuffle with one of the foremast hands, "a collared man by the name of Frank Wilson." The fight escalated, however, when John Silva, the fourth mate, interfered, calling Wilson "a damed black son of a bitch, and asked him what he was doing fighting with white men." Wilson replied that he did not want to fight, but Silva attacked him, only to be assaulted in turn by two other men. Silva, clearly a hard case, drew a knife and stabbed both interlopers, one very seriously. The net loss to the *Alfred Gibbs* was one man sent to Tahiti for medical attention, and another, Silva, turned over by the French authorities on Nukahiva to the American Consul at Tahiti for legal action.<sup>45</sup>

Shoreside relations, like work stoppages, deserve separate attention, but obviously racial prejudices were not simply left aboard. A particular problem arises in the incident just described in the name of fourth mate Silva; though of Portuguese extraction, he clearly classified himself both as officer and white. But it was not always so. A significant number of Portuguese seamen from New England, the Azores, and the Cape Verde Islands served aboard American whaleships in the nineteenth century, and their presence complicates any discussion of race relations, as already seen for example in

harpooner Ferguson's disparaging remarks on the fighting qualities of Portuguese in a "rough-and-tumble." It is necessary to discuss here the role of the "Portagees" as they were often called.

To the whalemens, "Portuguese" meant mainly Azoreans and Cape Verdeans. Though inhabitants of both groups entered into American maritime activity quite early on, Azoreans came first in substantial numbers, to be followed, after the middle of the nineteenth century, by Cape Verdeans, or "Bravans" or "Bravas" as they were often called after the main island of that group. Azoreans spoke Portuguese and were light enough in skin color to mix in white society; the dark-skinned population of the Cape Verdes was mulatto or creole, a mixture of white Portuguese rulers and black African slaves from the Guiné coast, speaking a version of Portuguese known as Crioulo or Caboverdeano.<sup>46</sup> Cape Verdeans came from an island chain poorly endowed in resources by nature and subject to killing famines and droughts. Desperate to escape, the men of these islands were eager to serve on American whaling and sealing vessels, usually for the lowest pay rates going, in order at the end of the voyage to be somewhere else—preferably America. Seldom did they have the maritime experience to demand higher wages; few in their islands had the wherewithal even to own a small boat. Whaling masters were seeking tractable green hands in any case, and these islanders fit their needs perfectly. In the 1860s, Portuguese seamen, primarily Cape Verdeans, made up 20 percent of whaling crews, but up to 35 percent in the 1880s—some six hundred to one thousand signing aboard every year.

Once aboard, an Azorean or Cape Verdean was obliged to survive under the same conditions as his black or white peer, with the important difference that he might not understand a word of English. Skin color, foreign modes of behavior and dress, and short-term inability to communicate made for difficult relationships, particularly when it was a question of considerable numbers. A man here or there might mix in well enough, and win the favor of peers and officers alike for a willingness to work and whatever skills he might develop. When John Antone was killed in an accident hoisting casks out of the hold of the *Governor Troup* in 1866, the log keeper bemoaned the death of a promising man whom he had taken to steer his own boat: "thus passed away a man I really liked, as he had been in the ship all the voyage, and a man I placed confidence in."<sup>47</sup> At the other end of the tolerance scale, the white mate of the schooner *Era* bound for whaling and trading in Hudson's Bay in 1900 refused to serve with a Cape Verdean boatsteerer in his whaleboat. George Comer, the master, valued the boatsteerer, who had sailed with him before, more than the mate, and put about in Long Island Sound in order to replace the latter.<sup>48</sup>

But the mate of the *Governor Troup* and the master of the *Era* were not

really typical. Portuguese seamen, like African-Americans, might over time rise to positions of authority, but the odds were against them. Nor were their problems ever once promoted to boatsteerer or mate. Robert Strout, second mate of the New Bedford bark *Cleone* in 1858-62, had trouble with his captain, whose name was Simmons but who nevertheless was Portuguese. "As Capt. S. was a Portuguese by birth," Strout recorded in his unpublished memoirs, "he generally appeared and would oft times hint that he did not get all the respect that was due him as Captain by his officers and crew. I don't think I ever slighted him, for I had been brought up to respect the office that the man held, let him be who he might be."<sup>49</sup>

Racial bias meant that respect was difficult to earn at every level. Sixteen-year-old S.B. Morgan recorded the death of Joe King from dropsy aboard the *South Boston* of Fairhaven in 1851. All hands gathered, bare-headed, to attend his watery burial, "and when the prayer was finished the crew returned to their places not a word being spoken by any of them but I suppose they would have felt worse had he not been a portugee."<sup>50</sup>

Used in this manner, "Portugee" (which Melville abbreviated to "Gee," though unlike "Portugee", "Gee" is a term which I have seldom found used in logbooks and journals) meant Cape Verdean to most whalemens. Certainly it had that meaning for Melville, in an essay that Sidney Kaplan has called "the ugliest, most tasteless thing Melville ever wrote":<sup>51</sup> "In his best estate the 'Gee is rather small (he admits it), but, with some exceptions, hardy; capable of enduring extreme hard work, hard fare, or hard usage, as the case may be. . . . His physicals and spirituals are in singular contrast. The 'Gee has a great appetite, but little imagination; a large eyeball, but small insight. Biscuit he crunches, but sentiment he eschews. . . . owing to the clumsiness of their feet ere improved by practice in the rigging, green 'Gees are wont, in no inconsiderable numbers, to fall overboard the first dark, squally night; insomuch that when unreasonable owners insist with a captain against his will upon a green 'Gee crew fore and aft, he will ship twice as many 'Gees as he would have shipped of Americans, so as to provide for all contingencies."<sup>52</sup>

With a largely Cape Verdean crew, relationships might never progress very far. As William Whitecar put it in his account of a voyage on the bark *Pacific* in 1855-59: "If there are half a dozen together in the forecabin, they jabber and chatter their unmusical jargon from morning until night, and will go a three years' voyage, knowing at the end of it little more English than is embraced in the technical terms of the service, which, being impressed on their memory with a kick or blow by way of injunction, they are apt to retain."<sup>53</sup> R.G.N. Swift, logkeeper on the *Contest* in the South Atlantic in 1869, had such an experience, finding the crew "were largely Dagos,

suspicious of each other and inclined to be surly and disagreeable." Given liberty at Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands, the men became embroiled in a drunken brawl, "a mean sort of a Dago fight where certain Gees in the crowd were stabbing with knives in the dark."<sup>54</sup> John Thompson, a fugitive slave from Maryland who found refuge on the New Bedford bark *Milwood* on her voyage of 1842-44, recalled in his memoirs four deserters betrayed by natives on the island of Madagascar who resisted with force a mate with a Portuguese boat's crew who were sent after them. When the captain himself, accompanied by the captains of five other vessels arrived, the men submitted, "saying they would have gone before had he sent Americans for them, but that they would not willingly submit to be fettered by Portuguese."<sup>55</sup>

On board the vessel itself, the fear that Portuguese hands might aid one another could keep tension high. On the ship *Plover* in 1863, the captain and mate, in disciplining one Portuguese hand for insolence, found they were dealing with two—and then the two called for the aid of all the Portuguese in the crew, though no more joined in, thus permitting the officers to prevail and end the matter with a double flogging.<sup>56</sup>

When an officer favored one group over another, serious trouble might result. Aboard the bark *Lagrange* of Fairhaven, off the coast of California in 1855, the Portuguese third mate would not stop a fight between a fellow-countryman and a non-Portuguese hand, "thinking that the American would get worsted." The captain ended the fight, and then on inquiry found that the mate had told the Portuguese crewmen to come to him if they had a problem with the other men, upon which "he then would go forward call the American and flog him all this work was a going on unbenone [sic] to me and my first officer." The captain had no choice in the end but to put the mate off duty, lectures on proper behavior having proved useless: "some of them alows they shipped under him and not me but I think they have found their mistake."<sup>57</sup>

Language was a particular irritant. John Harlow, journal keeper on the bark *Zone* in 1855: "We have got plenty of music on deck now; for there is nothing else to be heard, but a pig squalling, or a goat bleating; and if that is not enough to satisfy, go forward and you can hear a half dozen of 'Dagos' jabbering Portuguese. Maybe that will cause you to express a wish to get to the masthead, or somewhere else, where you cannot hear."<sup>58</sup> Speaking Portuguese itself might be against ship's rules. On the *Pacific* in 1858, one man who insisted to the mate that "that was his lingo", adding that he would be damned if anybody was going to tell him not to speak it, found both himself and his fellow-conversationalist in irons.<sup>59</sup> On the Bristol, Rhode Island ship *Metacom* in 1839, a similar incident led to blows with the mate when a

Portuguese answered criticism with remarks in his own language. The man then "took his nife out of his bossom in order to cut him &c but did not Untill the capt ordered him to be ceased [seized] Upon the rigking while doing it or trying to he cut the cpt. in two places . . . then we got his nife from him and put on some irons at 12 give him some dinner."<sup>60</sup>

On whaleships, then, there might be little to distinguish between the categories of African-American and Cape Verdean, either in status or function. "At 10 turned the old darkey out of the galley he is to[o] durty for me and is not capable of what he shiped for put one Joseph Mary Francis a portugee for the 135 lay and one half the slush."<sup>61</sup> If "Gees" had the consolation of a culture and language shared with fellow islanders, they also had the stigma of foreignness. To such men there was a certain anonymity as far as officers and other crew were concerned. On the ship *Betsey Williams* in 1849 a foremast hand hit several others with a hammer; the log keeper could only record him as "a Portugee (his name is Antone I believe)."<sup>62</sup> The *Hannibal* of Sag Harbor, New York in 1827 carried a number of American crew members, including "Robert Butler cook Neagro", "Stephen Dick neagro," and, in addition to several other African-Americans, "Henry Willis Little neagro boy"—but "Antonio a Portugee," "Constantine A Portugee," and, with special distinction, "Domingo a Portugee from Fayal," but Fayal is in the Azores.<sup>63</sup> Melville was thus in complete conformity in adding "Antone, a Portuguese, from the Cape-de-Verd Islands" to the crew of the *Julia* in *Omoo*.<sup>64</sup>

Antone or Antonio, Constantine, Domingo: at least these men bore their own names. The third racial element of color aboard American whalers, the Pacific Islanders generally known as "Kanakas" (not a pejorative term, "Kanaka" is derived from "Te Enata," "the men," the term used by Polynesians for themselves),<sup>65</sup> were likely to bear only some completely artificial nickname—a part at least of the process of denying their different cultural identity. Unfortunately some later commentators make the same mistake, and confuse together African-Americans, Cape Verdeans, and Kanakas in one dark-skinned category. James Farr, for example, uses Bullen's harpooner "Sam" from the *Cachalot* as an example of an African-American, though he was from Samoa.<sup>66</sup> Similarly Eleanor Simpson, in her study of Melville, does much the same with Queequeg: "though perhaps not technically a Negro—he is from one of the South Pacific Islands—Queequeg is described as though he were,"<sup>67</sup> a very arguable assertion.

Like Cape Verdeans, Pacific islanders were eager to serve on American whaleships. Whalersmen were at Hawaii in the 1820s, but Kanakas had begun in the preceding century to sail on American merchantmen active in the Northwest fur trade to China. As whalersmen spread out across the Pacific,

Hawaiians were soon joined by Maori from New Zealand, and, indeed, islanders from every spot where a whaleship might touch for "recruits," by which term whalers meant mainly provisions, and the occasional extra hand or two. The numbers involved were large. The Hawaiian Ministry of Interior in 1846 reported to the king that some 3,000 "Sandwich" Islanders alone were estimated to be at sea at that time, 651 having left the islands officially—and doubtless more unofficially—in the preceding year.<sup>68</sup>

The names, however, were an impossibility. The bark *Lagoda*, for example, in 1870 signed twenty-three Hawaiian seamen for a year's voyage at the end of which they were to be returned to the islands. The obligatory whaler's shipping paper gives their Hawaiian names: Kawaka, Keahe, Kealeili, Kealau, Keimona, Keopu, Keano, Keipapa, Kaahu, Kawaka, Keama—fourteen of the names began with the letter "K." Each was at once assigned a new name: John, Jim, Pike, Jim Crow, John Berg, Long Tom, John Seaman, and so on.<sup>69</sup> Some names are obvious, such as the *Lalla Rookh's* James Mowee, Peter Kanaka, and David Kanaka in 1837-40.<sup>70</sup> The bark *Alto* of New Bedford had Jim Raratonga and Benjamin Raratonga—but also a "Sambo" who might be from any of the three groups discussed here.<sup>71</sup> Other names are less obvious, such as Uncle Sam, Sam Johnson, and Jim Sulavan, all Kanakas aboard the bark *Callao* in 1870.<sup>72</sup> Some, however, are deceiving, or inexplicable, or both, such as Samuel Kelly, "an old Kanaka" who died aboard the *Alfred Gibbs* in 1871,<sup>73</sup> or "William S. Cobb 3rd", a Kanaka from Oahu, aboard the *Osceola III* in 1859-61.<sup>74</sup> Mixtures, too, were possible. On the *Gay Head* of New Bedford in 1855, both "Portuguese Joe" and "Kanaka Bob" found themselves in trouble;<sup>75</sup> "Moses" on the *Palmetto* in 1882 might have been taken for African-American had he not been listed as "Moses a Kanaka" when he deserted at Pohnpei.<sup>76</sup> The problem is just as complex when Kanakas made boatsteerer or mate. Joe King and Dick Williams were both Kanaka boatsteerers, shipmates of Moses on the *Palmetto*. Aboard the brig *Bogota* of New Bedford, twelve men died in a few days from malaria at Zanzibar in 1843, including seven Azoreans and "John P. Newell, 2nd Mate (Kanaka)".<sup>77</sup>

Often the historical trace of an individual is brief indeed. The ship *Phenix* in 1849 was making toward Petropavlovsk on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula: "Died, Bob a native of Ocean Island. His complaint was scurvy."<sup>78</sup> It might be a grim record indeed in its brevity. John Brown, a Kanaka hand on the New Bedford bark *Triton* in 1863 ran amok and stabbed three hands in the forecabin; when chased by boatsteerers and mates, he simply went overboard, never to be seen again.<sup>79</sup> The loss from natural causes was high, and equally tragic. At Drummond's Island (Tabiteuea in the Gilbert Islands), Captain Marin of the bark *Sea Shell* in 1854 shipped a man who

swam out to the vessel. "He was entirely naked, with the exception of a mat he had around him. The old man sent him forward and told us to use him well and learn him something. One gave him a shirt, another a hat, pants, &c. We then cut his hair, put a knife in his pocket, christened him Hope, and he metamorphosed into a yankee sailor." (The *Sea Shell* had recently sailed in concert with the New Bedford bark *Hope*.) Two years later the man was left ashore at Lord Howe Island, seriously ill since the vessel visited the whaling grounds lying off Japan. "He is a sheer wreck of the lively lad we took from Drummond's Island, and could not possibly survive the stormy passage of the Cape Horn."<sup>80</sup>

As with African-Americans or Cape Verdeans, the loss of a good Kanaka was much regretted. William Brown died aboard the *Orion* bound home in 1832. A native of Rotuma in the Fijis, "he was endowed with an uncommon share of good nature, always ready to do his duty, and without a murmur, it is rarely that we find so many good qualities combined in one person, especially in a native who but a few years ago left his country where Christian people have had but little intercourse. He was the first that ever left the Island to see a Christian country."<sup>81</sup> Four years later, in Madagascar's St. Augustine Bay on the other side of the world, a native of Oahu died aboard the *Houqua*: "without doubt I believe that he died a Christian for his conduct has ben such since he has been on board this ship I never heard him use any bad language allways quiet peasable & willing when he was able to doe his duty bore his sickness without murmuring & died like a lamb & his spirit has gone to rest without doubt a solom thing to think on & a warning to all the ships company."<sup>82</sup> Such attrition was only too common, and an experienced whaleman knew what was coming when islanders were recruited. "It is a shame, aye a crime to take these poor natives to sea," wrote William H. Wilson on the *Cavalier* in 1850; "the Captain enticed them away . . . What hardship and abuse they have before them and it is doubtful if they can again see Ascention [Pohnpei]."<sup>83</sup>

But equally with African-Americans and Cape Verdeans, the addition of Kanakas to a crew might only provide another opportunity for discrimination in one form or another. White whalers who disdained African-Americans or Cape Verdeans were not prone to see more value in the culture of Pacific Islanders—at least not among males, at sea. Perhaps because Islanders often signed on only for that portion of a vessel's voyage that occurred in the Pacific, and were likely, individually, to sail with a vessel for a period of months rather than years, there are few general slurs upon them in logbooks. On occasion, however, a petulant remark hints at friction. James Munger, who published his account of a two-year whaling voyage in 1852, put it simply when the Kanakas aboard his vessel were finally dis-

charged at Hilo, "and this, we were not sorry for, for they are not the most agreeable ship mates in the world."<sup>84</sup>

Seldom, it seems, did Kanakas rise above boatsteerer, or at the best, third or fourth mate, perhaps because they lacked literacy in English or in the basic knowledge of instruments necessary for navigation—skills required of first mates or masters.<sup>85</sup> Calvin J. Reynolds, journal keeper aboard the ship *India*, revealed his own attitudes when he railed against the master of the vessel, John Fisher, who had beaten up the fourth mate when the latter, very unusually, had objected to a flogging (a foremast hand was given twenty-nine lashes about the head and shoulders). "Such a man as he is is no more fit to command a ship than a wild Kanaka."<sup>86</sup>

Nor were Kanakas immune from the gratuitous violence served out to white and black alike. On the *California* in 1852: "Capt. Wood to day made a cat of 15 lashes he struck a Kanaka while at the wheel 7 times drawing blood through his clothes the offense was nothing of consequence he let the sails shake when the captain told him to keep full and struck him near the same time he threatened of doing it he threatened of using it on all of us."<sup>87</sup> "At sundown wore ship heading NNE," recorded the log-keeper on the *Callao* in 1870, "the Capt called up 2 kanakas Jim and Sulavan and struck them in the face and then kicked them aft and seized them in the rigging and keep them 3 hours and then took them down and put a iron pole through their legs and tied them to it and then sent them up aloft. Middle part good weather."<sup>88</sup> On the *Samuel Robertson*, the keeper of the "list of men flogged" referred to above simply added to his account, "Nearly all the Kanakas served the same sauce," without listing their names.<sup>89</sup>

African-Americans, Cape Verdeans, Pacific Islanders: individually and collectively, these three groups made an important contribution to the American whaling industry in the nineteenth century. Nearly always, they were assigned second-class status; it was the rule of racial priorities in a white-dominated industry. But when they served with white Americans and Europeans in multiethnic or "checkerboard" crews, color was not the sole or even the main dividing line. To that extent—and to that extent only—the whaling industry was "integrated." The mix in a whaler's forecabin might well be incredible. The *Minerva* in 1859 had thirty-three foremast hands: seven Cape Verdeans, two Azoreans, three Chamorros from Guam, three East Indians, two Malays, one Bengali, thirteen from the Hawaiian Islands, one from Tahiti, and one "Little Jack," from Wellington Island in the Kingsmill group.<sup>90</sup> It is little wonder that a log keeper might well jumble the men in his memory, as did Lyman Garde of New London reflecting on his 1860s voyage in the bark *J.D. Thompson*. He recalled that the second mate was "colored", while the third mate and his own boatsteerer were from Tristan

da Cunha in the South Atlantic; the cook was from St. Helena, and the cabin boy was Portuguese, as were other crewmen added at Corvo in the Cape Verdes. At the Chatham Islands in New Zealand waters, the "colored boatsteerer" while in command of the deck watch at night stole a whaleboat with a mixed lot of fellow deserters, including three Englishmen, a German, and another black foremast hand (probably Cape Verdean).<sup>91</sup>

In defense against brutality, or even desertion, self-interest dictated racial harmony, and the *Thompson's* stolen whaleboat was integrated enough until it made shore or foundered in the attempt. But the question remains whether this was more than a short-lived marriage of convenience. The general impression, to the contrary, is one of occasional success stories of individuals from all three groups, and even interracial cooperation toward a specific end, but overall a general tendency to discrimination, of the persistence of racial fears and stereotypes over time. That there were not more racial incidents does not prove integration but may only reflect the constraints of a closed and often brutally harsh system and the fact that racial bias was applied not simply to African-Americans but to other groups as well. Whether in the 1830s or in the 1870s and 1880s made little difference: aboard whaleships the main change was not in racial attitudes but in greater representation of both "gees" and Kanakas.

In a sense, whaling had experienced "racial displacement," in a way that has not been clearly remarked. Though African-Americans remained in the industry, they had been largely supplanted by Cape Verdeans and Kanakas. The two newer groups overlapped chronologically, but their several distinctions of language and culture kept them apart from each other and from African-Americans, making the likelihood of solidarity save in the most trying circumstances all the less likely, and, at the same time, facilitating the preservation of a system that remained harsh and exploitive, and under the control for the most part of white officers. Even a casual remark on a lazy Sunday in the Bering Sea in 1860 reinforces the distances, and the differences: "I wish there was three Sundays in one week, then I should not have to find work for a lot of Portugues and Kanackas when there is no work to be done."<sup>92</sup>

It is interesting that the true practice of integration could come as a great surprise for whalers, if Horace Palmer, a rare university graduate who joined a whaler as a foremast hand to see the world, is any indication. Palmer visited St. Helena in 1878, and he found the island—governed by Britain, but settled by a mixed white and black population—astonishing: "in St. Helena I have seen for the first time in my experience, a community living together where there exists absolutely no 'color line,' whites and blacks and all intermediate shades do business together, mingle in one soci-

ety, and inter marry without one thought of prejudice as to color." The vision did not necessarily alter any whaleman's attitudes, Palmer included; he could only express his relief that "the miserable Dago boat steerer of our boat" deserted at the same port.<sup>93</sup>

On whaleships, in short, enforced tolerance was a reality, but true integration was likely to be found, if at all, in another life. Melville put it in an intelligible if race-bound image in *Moby Dick*, when the *Pequod's* "little negro Pippin by nick-name, Pip by abbreviation," he of the "gloomy-jolly" tambourine, found it only when, at the end, his "drowned bones now show white, for all the blackness of his living skin."<sup>94</sup> Pip and Daggoo are, in the words of Sidney Kaplan, "heroic symbolic figures," and to Melville goes the credit for creating meaningful African-American characters that should not simply be written off as examples of African-Americans who made a place for themselves in the whaling industry.<sup>95</sup>

The addition of Cape Verdeans, Kanakas, and other less prominent groups did two important things for whaling: first, it provided hands willing to sign aboard where young American men declined to go, at least in significant numbers for the low pay that was offered. Second, the existence of varied elements within a crew—varied in language, habits, and color of skin—insofar as it bred racial animosity, or at least suspicion and mistrust, limited solidarity of the crew in the face of particularly difficult circumstances. Limited, but did not prevent, for in fact whaling crews were still quite capable of bringing the hunt for whales, even the voyage itself, to a complete halt.

## F O U R

# Work Stoppages

On July 16, 1835, Frederick Peabody, master of the ship *Georgia* of New London, Connecticut, returned to his vessel from the town of Praia on the Cape Verdean island of São Tiago. He brought supplies aboard, and, although there had been problems between some of his crew on liberty ashore and local inhabitants, his ship was ready for sea. While Peabody was at the rail in the process of paying some locals for their produce, a member of the crew named John Cook:

hove a large log into the boat the Captain enquired hoo hove it this said John Cook said he don it and asked the Capt what he had to say about it and gave him a slap across the mouth for which we flogged him and tied him and put him down in the steerage whear he on tied [untied] him self and came on deck with more abusive language than before and went forward in[to] the forecastle. By the Cap order I went forward and called them to brace forward and the answer that I received [was] brace and be damd they warnt going to do any more duty. With what we had left got ready to come to anchor at about 10 PM and the Cap went on shore to the Council [U.S. consul] and sent 7 soldiers for guard in the morning sent 4 of the ringleaders on shore and put in the calez boos and then the rest of them went to duty.

The *Georgia* sailed away; the four prisoners were eventually repatriated to the United States at a cost to taxpayers of forty dollars each.<sup>1</sup>

This incident is fairly typical of a work stoppage aboard a nineteenth-century American whaler, and such incidents were not at all uncommon. Yet though the literature on whaling is vast, little has been written on this or any other form of industrial action, with the exception of the more notor-

ious mutinies such as those upon the Nantucket ship *Globe* (1824) or the *Junior* of New Bedford (1857). In both of these cases, mutineers killed the sleeping officers in their cabins and then attempted to take the vessel to a remote shore.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately such events were rare indeed, and were hardly typical of industrial action aboard whaleships.

The phrase "industrial action," however, implies more in the way of labor organization, forethought, and planning than seems generally to have been the case aboard whale vessels. But exactly how often did the whaler "down tools" in a manner comparable to the sudden "wildcat strike" on the factory floor? The answer requires a statistical digression, and the summary that follows presents an overview of work stoppages in the era 1820-1920, based upon the study of 3,336 logbooks and journals in a number of New England libraries.<sup>3</sup> The logs were examined according to each library's cataloging system, i.e., alphabetically or numerically by order of acquisition; no attempt was made to select certain home ports, vessels, or eras, and to that extent the survey was random. Of these 3,336 logs, 230 included some form of action that involved either (a) collective work stoppage by three or more of the crew, or (b) industrial sabotage, either by setting the ship afire, damaging or destroying gear (cut lines, whalecraft thrown overboard, etc.), or holing the ship in some fashion.

In table 3 the results are given, together with percentages of work stoppages relative to logs examined. It should be stressed that these figures are approximate, in the sense that roughly 10 percent of logs examined did not produce a conclusive result (pages missing, etc.). On the other hand, since such incidents loomed large to the participants in a whaling voyage and might have important legal repercussions for masters or owners, it would be a very unusual log keeper who would not record it; this survey has not uncovered a single case where such a stoppage recorded in a U.S. consular report or a similar source went unrecorded in the relevant log. For purposes of comparison, table 3 also includes the number of whaling vessels returning to port by half-decade as summarized from standard reference works on American whaling voyages.<sup>4</sup> Again, the percentage of logs examined as a percentage of voyages noted is included for comparative purposes. Not surprisingly, more logs have survived from the last quarter of the century than from the first, hence the higher percentages for later years of column C, table 3.

In general, table 3 shows that the occurrence of industrial action was fairly limited before the mid-1830s. In 1820, when the study begins, the industry had recovered from its low point during the war era ending in 1815, and now underwent sustained growth to the late 1840s, as outlined in Chapter 1. By midcentury, though the number of voyages had fallen off only

Table 3. Work Stoppages on American Whaleships, 1820-1920

Years	A No. of logs examined (1st year of voyage)	B No. of vessels returning	C A as % of B	D No. of logs examined containing work stoppages	E D as % of A
1820-24	58	495	11.7	0	0
1825-29	62	394	15.7	0	0
1830-34	171	721	23.7	6	3.5
1835-39	263	1026	25.6	19	7.2
1840-44	337	1126	29.9	23	6.8
1845-49	295	1089	27.0	19	6.4
1850-54	372	1108	33.5	28	7.5
1855-59	367	1030	35.6	36	9.8
1860-64	248	814	30.5	17	6.8
1865-69	276	786	35.1	16	5.8
1870-74	153	585	26.1	14	9.1
1875-79	183	530	34.5	4	2.2
1880-84	111	370	30.0	16	14.4
1885-89	89	376	23.7	6	6.7
1890-94	92	275	33.5	10	10.8
1895-99	52	151	34.4	3	5.8
1900-4	66	137	48.1	2	3.0
1905-9	58	102	56.9	7	12.0
1910-14	47	77	61.0	2	4.2
1915-19	36	69	52.1	2	5.5
Total	3,336			230	

Sources of Column B: Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, (Secaucus, N.J.: Castle, 1989).

slightly, the time at sea had increased substantially—then the Civil War brought disaster of a magnitude such that the fleet never recovered. It should be noted in this context that the “number of vessels returning” in column B of table 3 is only a rough indicator of the volume of the industry, for it does not distinguish between short voyages on smaller vessels and longer voyages away from home ports; and depending upon the era concerned the ratio between long and short was quite variable.

In examining the frequency of work stoppages over the century, some increase is to be expected as the industry mushroomed in the late 1830s and

Table 4. Causes of Labor Unrest

	Number	% of 230 stoppages
1. Leave ashore	40	17.4
2. Object to punishment given crew	35	15.2
3. More or better food	31	13.4
4. Unusual or extra work	20	8.7
5. Condition of vessel	17	7.4
6. Not enough hands aboard	11	4.8
7. Refuse to sail under new master	10	4.3
8. Time expired; want discharge	6	2.6
9. Request to see American Consul	5	2.2
10. "Badly used," "abused," etc.	5	2.2
11. Multiple common motive	5	2.2
12. Refuse to work under mate	3	1.3
13. Varied: no common motive among crew	8	3.5
14. Unknown	<u>34</u>	<u>14.8</u>
Totals	230	100.0
Ship fired by crew	21	8.2 (of 256)
Sabotage to gear or vessel	6	2.3 (of 256)
Total number of incidents	<u>256</u>	

Note: Of 211 voyages on which a stoppage took place, eight had two occurrences, and three vessels had three. In addition, five incidents had two causes, bringing the total number of stoppages to 230.

If to the total of 211 voyages with stoppages is added 27 on which the ship was fired or sabotaged, the total of 238 represents 7.1 percent of the 3,336 voyages studied. (See table 3.)

Of the 256 total incidents listed, all but 44 (17.2 percent) took place either in port, lying "off and on" outside a port, or in sight of land on which was to be found a known port or roadstead. Of the 44, most were in reasonable proximity either to land or to another vessel.

into the 1840s, as marginal ships and crews were added. The figures appear to support this hypothesis, and, indeed, the frequency increases still further in the discouraging 1850s. That there were fewer labor troubles in the Civil War years, when voyages were short and nervous if made at all, is also predictable. The 1870s were years of partial recovery and readjustment. The rise of incidents before 1874 is understandable, though the next half-decade's low percentage (2.2 percent) is probably deceptive, reflecting merely the luck of the draw in logbooks examined. It may also result from the much wider use of Cape Verdean and Kanaka seamen in the industry—less likely, given their background, to make trouble without serious cause. In subsequent years the industry's contraction was steady; every year there were

a few incidents as the table shows, but such quantification becomes less meaningful as the sample dwindles. It is more important, overall, to note that steadily, year by year over the century, roughly 7 percent of all whaling voyages experienced some sort of labor action.

Table 4 outlines the causes. It is most striking that seldom (under 20 percent of occurrences) did an incident take place at sea, by which is meant at work on, or voyaging to or from, a deep-sea whaling ground. The vast majority occurred either in port, lying "off and on" a port, needing recruits but wishing to avoid both port charges and opportunities for crew desertion), or in sight of a landfall near which recruits and/or liberty were possible.

Sabotage was unusual (2.3 percent), but could occur at any time where damage to gear or holing the ship was involved. Setting the ship afire, on the other hand—a more common form of voyage disruption (8.2 percent)—was normally done in or near a harbor, since sailors had no great desire to go down with a burning ship. There were exceptions to this, as to most generalizations about whaling. The bark *Globe* of New Bedford (not the Nantucket *Globe* of mutiny fame) was set afire in mid-Atlantic in 1869, but the men responsible assumed that the crew would be rescued by the *Orray Taft*, which was sailing in concert.<sup>5</sup> There were occasions, as well, when firing the ship was simply an act of desperation when desertion was impossible. Aboard the *Eliza Adams* in Valparaiso in 1853, precautions were taken including the loading of muskets and the burning of multiple lanterns at night, in order to avoid a refusal of duty such as had just occurred aboard the *Awashtonks* anchored in the same harbor. The result of such close guard was a fire in the fore hold and the subsequent punishment of five men.<sup>6</sup>

As table 4 indicates, the desire for liberty ashore was the most common cause of work stoppage. Sometimes the demand was coupled with another complaint, at least at the outset. Aboard the New Bedford bark *Smyrna* anchored in Anjer roads (Java) in 1855, most of the crew, including boat-steerers and cooper, came aft when the captain ordered the anchor raised, asking "if I was going to sea with so small a quantity of refreshments and without giving them any liberty," recorded George Bliss, the master. Subsequent events proved that liberty was really the issue—and the stoppage caused the *Smyrna* about ten days' delay.<sup>7</sup>

Objection to punishment, either of the crew in general, or of an individual, also was a frequent cause. Not surprisingly, it is not always clear what happened from a logbook entry. The record of the ship *Milton* of New Bedford for 1853 is a prime example: "called all hands aft to see about a dog that was thrown over board and it was lade to the cook the captn threatened to put him in irons and he disibade orders and the capt shot at him the bawl

lodged in to his back." Fortunately, another journal of the same voyage exists, which includes a longer account of the incident. The cook, suspected of responsibility for the sudden disappearance of the captain's dog, denied any knowledge, and the captain ordered him placed in irons. The man walked away, refusing to cooperate, and the captain, after threatening to shoot him, did so—in the back. Then the crew was called aft and asked about the dog; they knew nothing. The captain, Benjamin Franklin Jones, took the cook down to his own cabin and extracted the ball, apparently regretting his hasty action.<sup>8</sup>

Pierce was fortunate that the incident did not escalate into a work stoppage, or worse. What could happen in similar circumstances is demonstrated by the log of the ship *Coral* of New Bedford in Paita in 1844, an affair that also began with punishment of the cook.

The cook was seized in the rigging in the first place for sum of his misconduct and the crew called aft to witness the punishment when they all got on the main deck the Capt. asked them what they had against the ship, which was amediateley answered by a number of voyces that they did not like to see flogging going on. John Ball alowed that he was not agoing to have it agoing in the ship upon which the Capt. ordered me to put him into the rigging upon which the young gentleman drew his sheath knife and swore dam his eyes he wood have the firs mans blood that put hands upon him and put himself in a poster of defence with his knife uplifed i went up to him and told him he had better not resist but he swore he would stab the firs man, but he got mistaken he was floged and several others for arming them selves with pikes and lances, the site of guns caused them to give up the rebellion.<sup>9</sup>

Complaints over food were common, regarding either quantity or quality or both. On the *Eliza* of New Bedford in 1870 the men would not eat their Friday duff, and the cook reported to the captain, who called all hands aft and asked them what the problem was. "They sayed that they did not get duff enough & never had had enough, the Captain asked them why they had not come to him like men & toald him that they had not had enough & then the Captain sent them forward & toald [them] they could not have eaney more than they had all of the voyage."<sup>10</sup>

In this case, no work seems to have been missed, and the incident passed off quickly. Even the officers could be involved in a confrontation of this sort. On the *Arnolda* in 1878 the mate asked for sugar at the captain's table, and when it was refused, all the officers "nocked off duty." Four days later: &"sugar for breakfast, and after breakfast, the Officers went on duty." This refusal was fairly serious, and no doubt was caused by the captain's parsimony when, according to the log, the vessel had four to five hundred pounds of sugar yet aboard. Fortunately for Isaac Howland, the master, the

boatsteerers had taken charge of the deck watches for the four days—but the captain was still forced to give in.<sup>11</sup>

The final commonly cited complaint was condition of the vessel, raised most often when the vessel was about to leave port, but also predictable after a struggle with a wrecked or badly leaking vessel. Aboard the *Perseverance* of Fayal, off the coast of Brazil in 1862, it was the crew that decided the vessel had had enough: "The men on board of the Bark refused to pump any longer, as they were all very much exhausted, and believing us to be unable to keep her afloat another day." The captain, officers, and boatsteerers were willing to stay aboard to try to get her to port, but without the crew's muscles at the pumps, it was impossible. "Not caring to sink with her, we all abandoned her at sunset, saving only our clothes, instruments and a little provisions."<sup>12</sup>

The category of "unusual work" in table 4 includes, above all, the off-loading of oil in a foreign port for reshipment home, a moment that to many foremast hands signified the end of the voyage but that to masters and owners only meant the vessel was now prepared to set forth again to fill her hold if possible. In some such cases, the demand was not to stop such work but to receive extra pay such as might be given to longshoremen for doing the job. Similarly, the refusal to sail without adding more hands was owing not so much to a fear that the voyage was thus made unsafe but rather to the conviction that with men enough only to lower three rather than four whaleboats, for example, each crewman should have a "shorter lay." While it might be thought that fewer men meant a larger ultimate share for each, in fact the vessel's efficiency declined, and the probable length of the voyage increased, with fewer boats at work.

The right not to do dockside labor was not the only privilege claimed by deep-sea whalers. It was common to refuse to sail under a master other than the original captain of the vessel—for example, when a captain became ill and was left ashore in some foreign port. An unpopular mate, put in charge and sent to sea by the master, owners, or perhaps the local American consul, to whale in nearby waters, might well find a recalcitrant crew on his hands. (The category "refuse to work under mate" refers only to those occasions when the captain was still on board.) A similar category of work stoppages concerns the demand for discharge by men who felt their time had expired. Normally whalers signed on for the duration of the voyage, but often at foreign ports men were added to the ship's articles on the understanding (more probably oral than written), that they would serve only for X-period or until Y-port was reached. In fact, unless a formal agreement to that end was drawn up, such seamen did not have much of a legal case—at least as far as whaling masters and U.S. consuls were concerned.

Table 5. Results of Work Stoppages

I. Punishment	Number	% of 230 stoppages
1. Ironed	97	42.2
2. Flogged	32	13.9
3. Sent ashore to prison	23	10.0
4. Locked below	10	4.3
5. Seized in rigging (no flogging)	6	2.6
6. One or more shot	5	2.2
7. Sent to United States for trial	3	1.3
8. Miscellaneous	4	1.7
Total	180	78.3
II. Objective gained		
1. Discharged	14	6.1
2. Survey or repairs ordered	8	3.5
3. Made for port	8	3.5
4. Work stopped; no whaling, etc.	7	3.0
5. Liberty given	6	2.6
6. Allowed to see U.S. consul (as objective)	5	2.2
7. Given more pay/larger lay	4	1.7
8. Given more or better food	2	.9
9. Captain or mate replaced	2	.9
10. Punishment stopped	1	.4
11. Miscellaneous	4	1.7
Total	61	26.5
III. Standoff		
(Returned to work after discussion, lecture, etc.; objective unobtained but no punishment recorded)	15	6.5
IV. Unknown		
(Result unrecorded in logbook or journal; culprits unknown, etc; pages missing from log [two cases] or result not clear from count given)	16	6.9

Note: The discrepancy in the total percentages given above (117.9 percent) results from the fact that in several cases (a) different forms of punishment were meted out to different groups of men and (b) the objective was gained but only after punishment.

Ironically, whalemens placed considerable faith in American consuls, as will be explained in Chapter 5. To see the consul was not an uncommon demand, though experienced whalemens knew that the ruling would be likely to go against them, whatever the cause. Finally, whalemens were not necessarily articulate, and "badly used" or some such general complaint, or multiple causation in various forms, is to be expected. Sometimes a case was unique, such as that aboard the bark *Clarice* at Timor in 1845 when the crew thought the captain had sold another crewman into slavery, as recounted above in Chapter 3. That confrontation led to a general melee involving crowbars, scrub brooms, and handspikes, but the captain in the end went ashore to get the man.<sup>13</sup> Of a grand total of 230 incidents, however, not including ships fired or otherwise sabotaged (where the cause of dissatisfaction is usually unspecified), 34 logs are unclear or silent on the origins of the protest or incident they record.

The results, shown in table 5, may come as a surprise, though not the fact that in 97 of 230 cases, one or more crewmen were put in irons. To repeat an important point, incidents involving only one or two men were not included in this study, though only one or two from a larger group protest might actually be the only men punished in the aftermath. The abolition of flogging in 1850, moreover, obviously did not end this form of punishment, though it was applied with decreasing frequency as the years passed. Flogging was the most severe punishment of choice for many masters, which probably explains why it was applied in only 14 percent of collective actions. The severity of this punishment is not always clear, but its effect is often evident. On the ship *Frances Henrietta* of New Bedford, in the Okhotsk Sea in 1857, the foremast hands complained that they had not meat enough. Their immediate punishment was to be locked in the forecabin over night. In the morning, Captain Francis D. Drew sent his wife and boy on board the *Barnstable*, cruising nearby; clearly he expected trouble. In order to extract the crew from their quarters, it was necessary to smoke them out: "so we made a fire with charcole & brimston at 11 they busted open the scuttle and sed they wanted to come up so we let them out put 15 in irons & Manual the Spanyard John the cook Theodore Mc . . . [rest of name illegible] put in the rigging and floged them & they sed they would go to duty & so did all the rest."<sup>14</sup>

In five cases, firearms were used; there may, of course, have been other instances in which this fact was not entered in the log. Even a terse entry can hint at the drama involved. The New Bedford bark *Gay Head* was at anchor at Panama in 1883. "At 6 p.m. the crew refused to work and in trying to put part of them in irons firearms were used. Geo. Gonsalves & John Baptiste each fired a number of shots from revolvers. The Mate fired and wounded Theopolus Melo. at the same time one of the crew stabled the Mate in the

back with a knife. he was taken below and a boat sent to the steamer San Blass for a doctor."<sup>15</sup> Far more common than to be shot—though less common than to be flogged—was to be tied in the rigging, locked in the forecabin, or sent ashore to the local "calaboose," which might be some bug-infested mud room, or a serious institution, such as the Hobart treadmill.<sup>16</sup> Only as a last resort, however, did a captain and/or consul conclude that a case was serious enough to warrant the difficulties and paperwork involved in remanding men accused of mutiny or other crimes to United States courts at home.

Some 6.5 percent of such incidents had no clear outcome ("standoff"), and life went on much as before, perhaps following a lecture or reading of the ship's articles by the master or consul. Approximately the same number of stoppages have an unknown outcome because the log is unclear or makes no record of the result. But in over a quarter of cases one or more objectives was obtained: the men were discharged, a survey was ordered, the vessel made for port, liberty or food or pay was given or the master replaced. That the results shown on table 5 total 272 rather than 230 results from the fact that punishment could be meted out in several forms, and, in addition, the objective might be gained only after punishment was rendered.

Finally, it is worth comparing tables 4 and 5. Clearly a protest of which the main concern was the condition of the vessel was the most likely of all such actions to succeed. Of seventeen such cases, eight resulted in repairs or a survey of the vessel, and three ships made for port (presumably with the same results); in other words, the object was gained in eleven of seventeen cases (64.7 percent). A close second in effectiveness was refusal to do extra work, or to lower for whales—a rare but very effective form of stoppage. One such refusal, probably unique, was that of the boatsteerers on the ship *Massachusetts* in the Sea Okhotsk in 1861; they wanted "cake and soft bread and butter," cabin food, in other words, but all they won was a spell in irons while for two days the whaleboats were steered by foremast hands.<sup>17</sup> In seven such cases the work was not done, while in four others additional pay was granted, the eleven making 55 percent of this category. Considerably less successful were protests demanding a new master (two of ten cases, or 20 percent), liberty (six of forty, or 15 percent), or food (two of thirty-one, or 8.3 percent). Least successful of all—and often the bloodiest incidents—were those attempting to undo or alleviate punishment. In all but one case, such interference resulted in more or wider distribution of punishment. The exceptional circumstances occurred aboard the ship *Clifford Wayne* of Fairhaven in 1844. The master, Edmund Crowell, put a man in irons for insolence; "the crew then denied Duty, however they came to a conclusion if he was let out, to do duty again, which they did," a logbook entry which at least implies that the man was released.<sup>18</sup>

It is difficult, on the other hand, to compare results to causes when extra hands were demanded, since crew composition was so often complicated by desertion or discharge of the original complainants. Similarly, while it appears that the wish to see the consul was granted in three out of four cases, consular involvement was common any time there was a disturbance aboard a vessel in a consular port. In at least 60 cases of the 230 (26 percent), but probably in a good many more, the consul was involved. Discharge ashore was the stated objective in only six cases; the peculiar fact that it was granted in fourteen is explained by a general inclination on the part of masters to get rid of troublesome crewmen wherever they could be replaced easily. It was sometimes the simplest way out for all concerned.

Overall it may be concluded that whaling vessels in the era considered were likely to suffer a work stoppage about 7 percent of the time, normally in port (nearly 89 percent), with the most likely cause the demand for liberty; whalers were well aware that the most dangerous moment was when the order was given to up anchor at a liberty port. Bad food, extra work, a leaking vessel, or a new master were all potential causes of trouble. It is interesting to note how rarely more than one incident occurred on a voyage (11 of 230 voyages, or 4.8 percent of those voyages experiencing labor difficulties), indicating perhaps that the main function of such action was less the obtaining of a specific goal than demonstrating the crew's potential for taking such action.

Whalers with experience, on the other hand, could not but realize that the result of disobedience, whatever the cause, was very probably going to be physical punishment or imprisonment or both—nearly 80 percent of the time. That such incidents continued to occur, nevertheless, is explained by the continued sense of injustice or sheer physical danger (an unseaworthy vessel, for example), beyond the normal expectation of an already dangerous industry. Always there was the hope that "this time" the result would be victory (26 percent) or at worst a standoff (6.5 percent), though seamen had no such statistics at hand to aid their assessment of chances. In many cases, a work stoppage was not the result of calculation, or the leadership of troublesome agitators, "sea lawyers" among the crew, but a sudden need to serve notice that the crew were not simply beasts of burden, automatons, disembodied "hands." Even more often, whalers suffered their fate without protest—obviously, more than 90 percent of the time.

When a protest did take place, however, in a great many cases no result was forthcoming until the local American consul was involved. That involvement is the subject of the next chapter.

# Whalemen and American Consuls Abroad

In February of 1865, forty-seven leading merchants in New Bedford, including such famous whaling names as Grinnell, Howland, Rotch, Taber, and Wing, took the trouble to sign a petition addressed to William H. Seward, American Secretary of State:

The undersigned, merchants of New Bedford, Mass., engaged in the whale-fishery, respectfully represent that American Consuls at foreign ports where our ships frequent for supplies and recruits have assumed the right to discharge the seamen of said ships upon a statement that said ships had taken a full cargo of oil, although the voyage for which the vessels were fitted and the period to which the voyage is limited in the Shipping Articles had not expired . . . We would further represent that many of our Consuls abroad compel our shipmasters to pay three months extra wages when unnaturalized foreigners are discharged, and likewise require the payment of said three months extra pay when seamen are discharged from one vessel to go immediately and on the same day into the service of another vessel, and when the discharge from the first vessel is obtained for this purpose.<sup>1</sup>

The mid-nineteenth century was an age of petitions and memorials, and the files of American consular posts are replete with complaints by masters against consuls, or their own men; by seamen against their officers, and more rarely against consuls; and even by consuls against masters or men, though charges of the latter type seldom went beyond private expression in correspondence. The document of 1865 is only one sample, as specifically detailed in content as most, though more broadly representative than many.

The role of the consul was prominent in this ceaseless interchange be-

cause his legal powers could determine whether a voyage would survive and continue in the aftermath of a wide variety of problems, from wreck to mutiny, and thus affect in important ways the financial interests of the owners. His power to discharge men and collect appropriate fees that in total might reach significant sums was a particularly sensitive issue. On the other hand, the consul was the only legal avenue of appeal, aside from generally unsympathetic local authorities, open to an American seaman on an American vessel in any foreign port. Not surprisingly, whaleship owners paid close attention to the manner in which this multifaceted role was executed by consular officers, as evidenced by the petition of 1865.

American legal requirements insured that whaleships had by necessity to make frequent reference to consuls overseas. Important legislation of the 1790s began legal protection of seamen and established consular offices abroad.<sup>2</sup> More significant for whalemen, however, was an act of 1803 that stipulated that a master was obliged to have recorded on his crew list certification of any man discharged abroad "with the consent of the consul, vice consul, commercial agent, or vice commercial agent there residing" (a commercial agent was an officer with consular powers appointed to the port of a nation not recognized by the United States or that would not formally approve a consular appointment at the port specified). The discharge of such a man, "being designated on such list as a citizen of the United States," obligated the master to payment of "three months' pay, over and above the wages which may then be due to such mariner or seamen." Of this sum, collected by the consul and not by the man, two-thirds would be paid to the seaman upon his engagement on board of any vessel to return to the United States, while the remaining third was kept by the consul, eventually to be added to a fund for the purpose of paying the passage of mariners desiring to return to the United States and their maintenance in the meantime in foreign ports. For his services, the consul was entitled to collect fifty cents per discharge from the vessel, and 2.5 percent of the value of the wages owed as payment for services in computing and handling the sums in question.

This absolute requirement was not always appropriate to every case, and shipowners regarded it as never appropriate. A supplemental act of 1840 therefore permitted the consul to waive the three-months' wages or any other sums owed "upon the application of both the master and any mariner of the vessel under his command." The same act confirmed the consul's responsibility regarding desertion or disobedience; it was simply the duty of consuls to reclaim deserters and discountenance insubordination by every means within their power, including the use of local authorities of the country to which they were accredited. If the consul, after investigation, decided that the vessel was insufficiently seaworthy, or manned, or supplied, he

could similarly discharge the crew and collect the wages and three months' supplement for each man.

This act also made clear at least the seaman's right to be heard: "The crew of any vessel shall have the fullest liberty to lay their complaints before the consul or commercial agent in any foreign port, and shall in no respect be restrained or hindered therein by the master of any officer, unless some sufficient and valid objection exist against their landing," in which case the consul was to be informed and invited on board, "whereupon it shall be the duty of said consul or commercial agent to repair on board and inquire into the causes of the complaint, and to proceed thereon as this act directs." Finally, if in the consul's opinion desertion of one or more men was caused "by unusual or cruel treatment," he could issue a formal discharge and collect the usual wages and fees.

Unfortunately, this legislation was easier to write than to apply in specific cases. That differing interpretations existed of what consuls could and should do is clear from documents such as the New Bedford merchants' petition of 1865. Whaling voyages were long—increasingly so as the decades passed—and the turnover of crews was high, whether through desertion (voluntary or forced), or discharge owing to sickness, accident, expiry of contractual obligation, or other cause. When the composition of a crew was thus altered, and replacements found, the consul normally was involved. Similarly, problems of collective indiscipline, particularly if they occurred while in port (as most did), were very likely to involve the consul's authority, whether the affair was a brief work stoppage or a serious challenge to the master's authority. At every stage, the consul's actions and interpretations of his responsibilities were likely to be objectionable to somebody—either master or man—with a resulting trail of consequences marked in consular records and whaleship logbooks.

The reputation of consuls in general has not escaped unscathed from their long history of collective dealings with the whaling industry. If turnover in whaleship crews was high, so too was that in many consular posts, and sometimes with amazing rapidity. Alexander Abell in Honolulu was astonished by his replacement in 1846, clearly not due to any fault of his own, "inasmuch as my successor appears to have been appointed before I had arrived at these islands, and at least six weeks previous to my occupation of the office."<sup>3</sup> The reason was simply that they were often political appointees, journeying out to some remote post with little to sustain them aside from their ignorance of local conditions and their hope of enrichment from fat fees. Some realized these hopes, some did not. Some were left to rot indefinitely, "despite recognized incapacity, questionable character, and immoral habits," as one critical observer put it. "Further, the periodical re-

moval of these officers merely to reward clamorous partisans, invites to all possible appropriations of forbidden pay and perquisites of office, and leads to a system of bribery on the part of subordinate employees, who can well afford to pay the wages of dishonesty from exorbitant receipts.”<sup>4</sup>

Those appointments that proved long-term in nature were generally of established local merchants selling supplies to whaling ships whose masters came before them in their legal capacity as consul.<sup>5</sup> Not surprisingly, there was little incentive to alienate such clientele by over-fastidious sensitivity to the complaints of seamen, though, as will be seen, there were important exceptions to this generalization.

An extreme example of an entrenched consular family is that of the Dabneys of Fayal in the Azores. John B. Dabney, originally of Boston, was appointed here in 1806, and after his death in 1826, his son Charles W. Dabney was consul until 1845 when an attempt was made to return control of the position to the State Department. No sooner did Samuel Haight, an appointee from New York, arrive at his post, however, than he resigned, finding that the value of the job “is so insignificant as to render it entirely unworthy of the consideration of anyone,” excepting, of course, Charles Dabney. Dabney, who was by Haight’s admission well-liked and hospitable, resumed his consulship, which was a useful appendage to his firm of Charles Dabney and Sons.<sup>6</sup> In 1870 another outsider was appointed, and once again the interregnum was short; Charles had remained deputy consul in any case. After 1872, Samuel W. Dabney in turn took over the office, now downgraded to the title of vice-consul, and held it until his departure to the United States in 1892 (Portuguese nationals then served as consuls until the post was abolished in 1918).<sup>7</sup>

For those officers and families fortunate enough to experience the Dabneys’ hospitality, apparently the experience was memorable. The log keeper of the New Bedford ship *Janus* (probably Ellery Taber, her master), for example, in 1835 “went ashore at Fayal rode out to the Counsels Country Seat and dined in great splendour in a fine shady grove.”<sup>8</sup> Three decades later, Clara Wheldon, whose husband was master of the *John Howland*, visited two Dabney mansions during her visit to Fayal, remarking particularly upon their handsome furnishings.<sup>9</sup> Samuel Tripp Braley, on the other hand, confided to his journal on the New Bedford bark *Benjamin Franklin*, of which he was master, that Charles Dabney had been less than helpful, since he had (quite legitimately, as it happened) discharged four of his crew. “I will not say that he hindered me from shipping men ‘tis enough to say that he had a vessel of his own for which he wanted a crew but I found friends as I allways have and with their help I made up my crew boatsteerers and all.”<sup>10</sup>

Few consuls were as well merged into their local environment as the

Dabneys. Even presumably well-informed appointments to other posts found that the rewards and honors likely in a major port such as Liverpool did not automatically arise in a lesser whaling port. Benjamin Lindsey of New Bedford, editor of the whaling industry's weekly newspaper, *The Whalemens' Shipping List and Merchant's Transcript*, accepted the consulate at St. Catherine's (Santa Catarina), Brazil in 1861, and continued to hold the post for a decade. He soon realized that the cost of living was "considerably higher than I had presupposed," particularly when the \$1,500 a year he was paid was not augmented by fees (the Civil War's effect upon whaling had something to do with that), but he had made the decision for Brazil as much for health as for other rewards.<sup>11</sup>

Lindsey at least stuck it out. The files of remoter consular posts include many refusals even to accept the appointment, doubtless from men who hoped they would be named to some attractive European port, not a desolate Chilean or Peruvian coastal settlement. Thomas Johnston of Washington, D.C., appointed commercial agent at Lauthala in the Fiji Islands in 1861, inquired of New York, Boston and New Bedford agents for a ship bound to that port, and found none. The \$800-1000 that passage by indirect route would cost would have made a sizable dent in the \$1000 per annum the job paid, and he quickly lost interest.<sup>12</sup>

Once on the spot, more than a few consuls found better-known ports to be very expensive. George Fairfield, consul in Port Louis, Mauritius, was paid \$2,500, a reasonable salary in 1857. But \$700 for rent of a house, another \$500 for cook, nurse, and washerman for his family, together with the high cost of food and other essentials (wood was \$20 a cord), left him with no surplus, and he found it necessary to ask for another \$250 to cover his office expenses.<sup>13</sup> Even Abner Pratt, at the normally profitable consulate of Honolulu, when taxed by his superiors for using unauthorized official forms and charging his department for the printing of blanks, responded with the countercomplaint that of the \$4,000 per year he received in 1859, \$2,600 went just for clerks to do the work of his very busy office.<sup>14</sup>

Sometimes a consul's problems bordered on the absurd. Charles Winslow, who assumed charge in Paita, Peru, in 1862 on the death of his predecessor, Fayette M. Ringgold, found that all the equipment of the office—stationery, official seal and flag, even flagstaff, had been appropriated by Ringgold's Peruvian widow as her personal property. She demanded such exorbitant compensation for its return that Winslow ordered locally made substitutes instead.<sup>15</sup> Capt. W.H. Smyley, on the other hand, commercial agent in the Falkland Islands ("I am almost out of the world & have but little communication") in 1853, collected no fees at all, not surprising since only one whaleship had called all year. Yet he had invested \$250 for an

official uniform and found that the local inhabitants eagerly expected him to host a dinner or other gala celebration on the fourth of July and Washington's birthday. He seems, however, to have had a sealing business on the Patagonian coast that kept him busy enough.<sup>16</sup>

Other tribulations were rather more serious, such as the slave revolt that caught up William Merrill in the Cape Verde Islands in 1836. The rebels, he reported, had planned to kill all white families except his (in the same letter he pleaded for "my liberty to leave this miserable place").<sup>17</sup> John H. Hawes in Hakodate, Japan, had the sad duty in 1874 of reporting to Washington that his German counterpart had been cut down on his way to the beach to bathe by an antforeign samurai, and all foreigners were under guard as a result.<sup>18</sup> More than one consul was assaulted by a disgruntled seaman—or master. It is no wonder that an occasional consul took to drink, though seldom with the determination demonstrated by E.M. Baron Timoney, appointed to Tumbes in Peru in 1869, only to have his commission revoked by the Peruvian government after an alcoholic confrontation with the local postmaster.<sup>19</sup>

Whatever their recreation, or the degree of their adjustment to their foreign surroundings, no consul could avoid problems arising from the discharge of his duties. For whaleships, the most common questions came in connection with the discharge of seamen (officers too, though with less frequency). Though owners and masters resented the fees involved, the normal practice was to discharge men who had signed for a specific term now expired, or who were too sick or injured to carry on. Even such seemingly clearcut cases could be problematic, as demonstrated by the 1865 petition against consuls giving discharges to men whose vessel, having filled her hold, transhipped the oil home and prepared once again to go whaling. A consul sympathetic to men who resisted setting forth again for a long voyage might declare the voyage over. Such a voyage, after all, might very well extend beyond the term stipulated on the mandatory shipping papers at the time of sailing; though this could vary with individual vessels, it was usually fairly long to begin with—for example, "fifty months" in midcentury shipping papers. Such shipping papers said nothing about the voyage terminating simply because the vessel had a cargo of oil. The voyage was over either when the stipulated term was over, or the vessel had returned to her home port and no other. Masters and owners resisted the need, and expense, of turning over a crew in midvoyage, particularly when shipping papers allowed the cost of freight of oil to the vessel's home port to be charged to the ship's expenses, and thus subtracted from the gross sum from which the lays, or shares, would ultimately be drawn: in other words, the crew paid a substantial share of the expense of shipping oil home.

A consul who interfered when men wished discharge because of transshipment could expect trouble. It was vastly easier to release a man wishing discharge who had been signed on, or perhaps not formally signed at all, at a port where no consular official resided; the proper form in such cases was for the men to be entered on the articles at the first consular port touched at. Similarly, a vessel that did not even go whaling, as stipulated in the ship's articles but rather put its men to killing elephant seals on some remote beach (a quite different and at least equally grim profession), were liable to be discharged if they could attract a consul's attention.<sup>20</sup> A disabled ship was another adequate cause, though a wise consul would insure against later legal responsibility by convening a formal ship's survey by local officials or competent ship's masters and carpenters.<sup>21</sup> Excessive or unusual punishment, as will be discussed below, justified discharge. So too, as stipulated in the laws, did insufficient food.

One rarer but important issue was a change in masters, owing to death or other cause. A master might leave the vessel from ill health, to be replaced by his first mate or another master named by owners or their agents. Or a captain might be removed for cause by a consul. Thus Dorance Atwater, consul in Tahiti in 1872, removed Charles Veedor, master of the bark *William Gifford* of New Bedford, and put another in his place with orders to proceed to San Francisco and there await instructions from the agents. The officers and crew had charged, and investigation had substantiated, that Veedor "had through lewd women and intoxicating liquors rendered himself incapable of conducting the remainder of the voyage." Veedor refused passage on the vessel, leaving Atwater with the belief "that he is so far lost in self respect and decency that he will remain at one of these Islands with the native woman whom he had on board the vessel as his mistress."<sup>22</sup>

Clearly there was disagreement, however, on seamen's rights when a master was replaced. Thomas Fitnam in St. Helena, for example, asked the crew for their approval of his appointment of the mate to command the *Sea Fox* of Westport, Massachusetts, in 1870; they were willing to do so only on the condition that he make straight for home.<sup>23</sup> Samuel Oakford in Tumbes, on the other hand, when a captain wished to yield his authority to the mate and the men refused to continue work, simply went aboard with the local police and read the ship's articles to the crew, pointing out to them their obligations to serve. They did so.<sup>24</sup>

Most consuls seem to have agreed with "sea lawyers" that the shipping articles were a contract between the particular master whose signature was appended and the crew, though complications could result from accepting this interpretation. For example, the men of the New Bedford bark *Marcella*, a troublesome lot to begin with, refused to continue service after the death

of her master, Pardon Winslow, in Mahé in the Seychelles in 1852. Although the officers were willing to continue under command of the mate, the crew would only work the vessel if she made for a port in which resided an American consul (there was none at Mahé at the time). Two weeks later the *Marcella* anchored at Zanzibar. "Took our noble fellows ashore before the Consul to make known their grievances," recorded the sarcastic mate. "The performance was very edifying indeed, on their part," meaning that all persuasion to return to work failed, and the only choice left was to make for home, which the *Marcella* now did.<sup>25</sup> Often it was simpler just to send the vessel home under the mate's command in the first place, as did the captain of the bark *Spartan* in 1872, going ashore at Barbados to obtain the consul's approval since he himself was too unwell to continue.<sup>26</sup>

It is little wonder that, faced with a complicated case of this sort, a timid consul was reluctant to interfere. Nicolas Pike at Port Louis, Mauritius, had a difficult man to deal with in John C. Pierce, master of the bark *Annie Ann* of New Bedford. Pike found cause to discharge the crew, but Pierce refused to pay them anything. Pierce in fact hoped for his profit not from taking whales but by collecting insurance after his vessel was condemned by survey as unseaworthy. The men had been treated brutally, often going unfed, and most had scurvy as a result. The case dragged on for months; meanwhile Pierce sold everything out of the vessel, and the men drifted away to other berths. Pike had plenty of opportunity to remove Pierce, but did nothing; "as I considered it a serious matter to remove a Captain I refrained from doing so." What Pike would have considered "serious" is hard to say. In the end, Pierce disappeared from sight, abandoning the *Annie Ann* to be sold for a pittance by the harbor authorities.<sup>27</sup>

But a signed discharge paper was only half the battle; there was also the question of wages. The law said a man was entitled to his pay owed to the date of his discharge, and after the law of 1840, two-thirds of an additional three months' wages. But whalemen were not paid wages as such but lays or shares, and the laws, couched in language meant to apply to the maritime industry generally, said nothing about their special application to whalemen. This was no academic issue, given the high turnover among whaling crews. In theory, a solution was possible: the master would report to the consul the precise amount of oil and bone so far taken, the consul could calculate their approximate value—but by what measure? Prices prevailing in Honolulu, for example, were often much lower than they might be in New Bedford—and assign a discharged man his percentage of that sum and any additional three months' share by dividing sums owed by time expired. But such calculations were both time-consuming and subject to too many variables such as prevailing prices, honesty in the amount of oil aboard

reported by the master, and so on. All such computation were further complicated by any advances made to the seaman before the ship sailed, or sums owed by the man's drawing on the "slop chest" for clothing or other essentials. It is little wonder that while the 2.5 percent fee offered some compensation (and some charged a good deal more),<sup>28</sup> there was still much grumbling by consuls, and a consul at a port such as Honolulu, which might see hundreds of whaleships call in a season, required a considerable staff to negotiate such complicated affairs.

Though a man's lay had to be calculated as noted above, the three months' supplement soon came to be standardized to the general agreement of seamen, masters, and consuls at twelve dollars per month, or thirty-six dollars though this varied from time to time according to Department of State circulars of instructions.<sup>29</sup> Thomas Miller at Hilo was unusual in that he tried to follow what he deemed the spirit of the law, assigning wages of twenty-five dollars per month for a first mate, twenty dollars for a second or third, fifteen dollars for a fourth mate or boatsteerer, and twelve dollars for foremast hands—but he could not long remain in competition with the Honolulu consulate, which simply required twelve dollars per man of any rank.<sup>30</sup> Masters never willingly paid this extra charge, basically intended to provide for a man's keep until he found another berth, but at least its purpose was understandable in distant ports such as the Sandwich Islands. In the Azores or Cape Verde Islands, on the other hand, a man might well have been aboard only a few weeks since leaving the vessel's home port and was now discharged because he was either sick, a hopelessly inept "green hand," or had made some prior agreement with the owner and/or master. The latter circumstance was not covered by the law but was explained by the fact that many an Atlantic islander was recruited at his home island, remained aboard until the vessel returned to a New England home port, then shipped out again on the condition that he be dropped at his home island, perhaps to be replaced by a friend or relative. Even the consuls realized that in such cases the three months' fee was unwarranted.<sup>31</sup>

The predictable result of the law was that masters simply dumped such men ashore out of sight of the consul, perhaps while the vessel lay "off and on" without anchoring at all, and then logged them as deserters. There was no regular means of punishing a master for this, though Charles Dabney instituted a system of agents throughout the Azores who reported such instances to him so that he in turn could inform the Collector of Customs in New Bedford.<sup>32</sup> The latter might take some action, but little was possible in most cases.

For early ports of call such as the Azores, a particular health problem for which masters could not really be held responsible was the seaman who

signed aboard with some chronic condition and then proved unable to perform his duties once at sea. As Thomas Hickling, vice-consul at São Miguel in the Azores put it to Charles Dabney, such a man was a serious liability, "having shipped with an incipient disease, being usually much indebted to the vessel [for advance of pay], becoming thus a severe tax on navigation. In many instances the master has not even the means to defray it and of course uses every shift to evade it, & it would be a happy thing were Government to revise those laws."<sup>33</sup>

Though the law was not repealed, many masters found ways to avoid the payment. Denison Card, consul in Tumbes, reported a tale that indicated the extent of such practices. The ship *Abigail* had put the cook, with whom the master was dissatisfied, on a native vessel bound away to Guayaquil to avoid paying his wages. Card had conclusive proof, and refused to release the vessel's clearance until the sum was paid (the cook had been sent back by the consul at Guayaquil and lodged in the hospital at Tumbes). "Capt. Nye took my action entirely in good part, acknowledging that he was fairly caught, but he said this was his sixth whaling voyage, as master, and he had never before paid a dollar for extra wages—always getting rid of his sick or useless men without Consular interference."<sup>34</sup>

Once "fairly caught," there yet remained the question of how to evaluate the oil and bone reported ("hailed") by the master. That was a problem in itself, for it was often the practice to "underhail," paying off for less than the quantity of oil actually taken. Thomas Adamson, Jr., consul in Honolulu in 1869-70, in response required masters to take an oath on their estimates, then allowing 4 percent for wastage of various types. Some captains agreed to this demand without objection, others grumbled or refused outright.<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, officers were normally paid off at the office of the owner's Honolulu agent, not the consul's; they were more likely to know the true amount aboard and thus be unwilling to accept any shortfall in the "hail" made at the consulate.

In Honolulu, a local regulation required that men be paid off before the harbor master, to avoid just such frauds (as of 1855, special officers for signing and discharging men were named in Honolulu, Lahaina, and Hilo).<sup>36</sup> Masters so abused their estimates that harbor masters came to require a note from the consul stipulating the amount of oil and bone on which wages should be paid before they would approve a discharge. Nor did officers always do much better. Daniel K. Ritchie, second mate of the *Israel* of New Bedford, wished for his discharge in Honolulu. Negotiations with the master broke down on the amount of pay owing. An appeal to the consul was unavailing (Ritchie had no real right to his discharge at the time), and Ritchie as a result of his refusal to go back to work for a master

who clearly was a tyrant, found himself in the fort that served as Honolulu's prison.<sup>37</sup>

One further means of avoiding payment, possible only when a man was discharged in a port without a consul, was simply for the master to give him a paper stating that he was discharged (necessary proof that he did not desert and thus completely forfeit any wages), and attaching an order for payment upon the owners of the vessel for the man's lay to that point—"a very imperfect way of doing business," as Thomas Larkin, American Consul at Monterey in California put it (Larkin was often on the receiving end of such men who arrived in his town destitute after being discharged in San Francisco where there was no consul).<sup>38</sup> The paper was worthless as a medium of exchange, since no value could be put upon it until the vessel reached her home port and was paid off, an event that was unlikely ever to be witnessed by any man discharged along the way.

All such regulations applied technically only to American citizens; non-citizens had little legal claim on consular assistance. Yet it was impossible to hold rigorously to this interpretation, since as the century passed so many Cape Verdeans and Kanakas came to serve on whaleships. The general custom seems to have been that a man discharged from an American vessel was usually provided the same services regarding discharge, pay, medical attention, and support given to destitute citizens. The costs, however, could be substantial as will be seen shortly, and more than one consul was concerned to know his obligations in such cases.<sup>39</sup>

It was precisely this humane interpretation of the laws that was one of the grievances of whaleship owners enunciated in the New Bedford petition of 1865. To this particular complaint, the *Friend*, a missionary paper aimed at seamen that was published in Honolulu, responded with determination, noting that there was "A Screw Loose Somewhere" if the laws were interpreted in such a way as to prevent relief to such seamen. Clearly this maneuver was aimed at Portuguese islanders and Polynesians, the paper remarked, who together provided at least half the whaling crews visiting Honolulu in 1866 and upon whom the industry's success was absolutely dependent.<sup>40</sup>

Just such an interpretation, however, was ordered by the State Department in 1883 regarding noncitizen deserters, by which time fortunately there was not much industry to regulate. The last Dabney consul in Fayal found that even applying this regulation to deserters made him subject to "endless annoyances for awhile, for years in fact, and my life was threatened," but in the end the collapse of the industry worked its own cure. "Had this distraction taken place when Fayal was visited during the summer months by 150 or more whalers the Consul's life would not have been worth living."<sup>41</sup>

Once discharged and paid off, seamen were still likely to be of concern to the consul, particularly if they were sick enough to require hospitalization. Even if not sick when discharged (and many were), it was entirely possible that they became sick once ashore, perhaps from malnutrition, alcoholism, or venereal disease. J.C. Cover, one of the brief non-Dabney Azorean appointments, even suggested that "it would pay the Government to keep a dozen or twenty women here—free from disease, for the use of these Seamen," an uncommon proposal for official American brothels overseas.<sup>42</sup>

Sick and destitute seamen were problems in every whaling port, but the greatest expense by far was incurred in the two Hawaiian consulates of Honolulu and Lahaina. In the 1850s, for example, Liverpool's consul spent in an average year some \$6,000 for seamen's relief, and that at Havana roughly \$2,600. Harbors frequented by whalemen cost a good deal more—Callao, for example, \$21,500. But Honolulu and Lahaina, each of which was unusual in that it maintained a seamen's hospital rather than relying on local facilities, spent \$350,000 for the five-year period 1855-59, or over \$35,000 per year for each. Such a scale of operations was a tempting opportunity for graft, and the records of both posts contain numerous complaints, investigative reports, and passionate defenses by doctors and consuls. The Treasury Department, uncertain of how to control such a serious drain upon U.S. funds, tended to focus upon per capita expenditure, which was significantly lower in Honolulu than in Lahaina (\$62 versus over \$110).<sup>43</sup> The subject falls beyond the scope of this work; in any case, the controversy dwindled as the fleet began to use San Francisco as a home port and consuls were therefore no longer involved.

A consul could reduce his costs if he could send the men under his charge back to the United States. Here another difficulty arose, for many whaling ports had little direct traffic home. A homeward bound whaling master, reluctant to take extra passengers who were sick in any case, was according to the 1803 law obliged to take on such "consul's men" (no more than two per hundred tons registry). To avoid such encumbrance, a master had only to claim that he intended to top off his cargo on the way home, and thus was cleared for a whaling cruise rather than a voyage to the vessel's home port.<sup>44</sup>

Left with numbers of destitute and perhaps dissolute men on his hands, a consul could find his days filled with the details of keeping them doctored, fed, clothed, and under control. A particularly bad year—a number of ships lost in the Arctic, for example—would mean even more men suffering from exposure. Such problems ended only when the men recovered and shipped out, or the consul found a way to send them homeward, a goal not made

easier by the fact that many men much preferred to stay on in the islands. It often happened that men died first, and thus incurring a final expense to the government of their burial. So large were the costs of this item at Honolulu that the consul was forced to defend his policy of providing a reasonable ceremony. His expenses, wrote Alfred Caldwell in 1862, were "as low as a sailor can *here be decently* interred. They could of course be buried in a rough box, but this would create almost a mutiny among the surviving comrades of this particularly sensitive but useful class of our people. Any one at all acquainted with the character of 'Jack' would see the effect it would have upon him." The costs would be reduced, he suggested, if a burial ground could be obtained from the Hawaiian government, and expenses be approved for a full-time grave digger and a consular hearse and horses.<sup>45</sup>

Consuls were not always honorable men, but their position was not an easy one. Sometimes particular circumstances could worsen the situation. Charles Winslow in Paita (1862-65) was also a doctor, and his reports are especially interesting on the medical side. For the last quarter of 1862, for example, twenty-four whaleships anchored at his port. From these he admitted to his hospital (he had reopened a closed facility for seamen) a total of thirty-four men, who remained there an average of just over forty-three days each, for a total cost of \$2,214, an average of \$65, which compared favorably with Honolulu. Winslow's conclusion: "The destitution and suffering of many seamen who have met with accidents, been broken down by disease, or worn out in one of the most important branches of our commercial industry, have been so great for the last year (1862), in this place, as to be a reproach upon the nation."<sup>46</sup>

Not all his patients admired Winslow, however. "As for me I hate to write much might as well tell you the truth at once," wrote one seaman to his parents; "I am sick in the U.S. Hospital at Paita, Peru of consumption. . . . I hope none of you will trouble or worry themselves about me as I am not worth . . . a second thought from anybody." In this letter he praised Winslow's medical expertise, but in another to his brother and sister, he remarked that the consul paid the doctor (i.e., himself) for medical charges. "So you see that the Consul and Doctor being one it is his interest to keep me here so long as he can as all this comes out of the Government in the end."<sup>47</sup> The parents passed these letters to their congressman, and he to the State Department, forcing Winslow to explain that he did *not* charge for his medical services. He had in fact pledged his own credit for medical expenses—and as for the complaining sailor, he had been too sick to send home, and had died only a few months after writing his letters. Winslow, for himself, regretted taking the appointment: "However I comforted myself with the usage, 'the greater the cross, the greater the crown.'"<sup>48</sup> Elisha Fisher, master of the ship *Trident*

of New Bedford, would not have agreed that Winslow deserved sympathy, since he believed Winslow's ministrations had nearly killed his sick wife. "After a long delay we have finally got clear of Paita and that detestable low ungentlemanly & mean man calling himself consul & Doctr. God save the Government from his dishonesty."<sup>49</sup>

Though some doubt remains regarding Winslow, there is no question that many consuls had sympathy for some at least of the seamen they saw, often desperate for release and reduced to very miserable circumstances. William Hogan, writing in Valparaiso in 1824 in a report on the bloody mutiny upon the whaleship *Globe* (she was "rose upon" by four of her crew who murdered the captain and three mates in their bunks; after arguing among themselves, some of the mutineers brought the vessel into Valparaiso), put it this way in a comment upon the entire mercantile industry:

It does not appear that there was cause to complain of the Captain of this Ship, which is uncommon, for in Justice to truth, my experience for upwards of three years in this port has proved to my conviction that the Masters of Merchant Ships trading here are oftener in error than the Sailors, who by severe inconsiderate and unfeeling treatment are driven to insubordination and desertion. They by a residence in the Heart of all Sorts of Vice become destitute of whatever good natural qualities they formerly possessed.

Masters promise much at home, in order to get a Crew, but never perform abroad. If a Consul insists on any thing in favour of a Sailor in obedience to the Laws laid down on the Articles, He is considered an enemy to the Captain, it is reported to all other Captains and Super Cargoes, and particularly if a Trading Consul his opponents magnify his interference into great errors. They become a posse against him and he suffers.<sup>50</sup>

John B. Williams, who had 150 men on his hands at the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, in 1844, was of the opinion that "many are talented men, and with a proper field for them would be shining lights in Society," though others of course "are addicted to drunkenness and vice. It is really heart rending in beholding American people in such condition." Many came to ask his aid: "Many of these calls are really touching. Young men and boys, and occasionally the man who has advanced beyond lifes meridian, implores assistance with streaming eyes; many whose condition has been hastened forward by desertion, shipwreck, sickness, and others who have come here, to do business and lost every thing but life."<sup>51</sup> Sometimes such attitudes were motivated as much by distaste for the masters as sympathy for the men. John Lovejoy at Callao in 1862: "It is useless to trust to the consciences of Masters, for I am satisfied that in nine cases out of ten they will perjure themselves to cheat the government and save money to their owners, and

think they have been wise in doing it. The only way to reach them is through the pockets of their owners."<sup>52</sup>

Gratuitous brutality drew particular attention. "It would horrify you could I relate all the sickening stories of oppression and barbarity brought daily to my notice," wrote Nicolas Pike, consul in Port Louis in 1872. "I think measures should be at once adopted to put a stop to brutalities worthy only of the darkest ages of the world, and a standing disgrace to our country," this in a letter enclosing depositions on a case in which a master had over the course of one hour given a man 123 lashes.<sup>53</sup>

More than one captain, moreover, undermined his own case by attempting to overawe a consul. George Soule, master of the *St. George* of New Bedford, was exceptionally brutal to a young seaman named George Prudent, beating him repeatedly over the head with a cane and tying him in the rigging with a belaying pin across his mouth for extended periods in Arctic conditions. The consul, Morgan L. Smith, found Prudent quite intelligent but rather timid when he came before him to make his complaint. While Prudent was talking in Smith's office, Soule stormed in "and in a blustering manner that would put a slave driver to the blush, ordered him on board." Smith made it clear who was master in that office, and after Soule left tried to reconcile Prudent—now in bitter tears—to return on board, but the seaman insisted he would be killed. Smith was wise enough to investigate, obtaining affidavits from Prudent's shipmates which supported his allegations. Prudent won his discharge—but he might just as easily have been returned to the vessel in irons by another consul.<sup>54</sup>

Even should he be well disposed, a consul was not always able to provide complete relief. Joseph Farrell, seaman on the bark *John Carver* of New Bedford in 1863, was beaten and flogged by the master. Reaching Honolulu, Farrell complained to the consul, at that time a less experienced Morgan Smith. Smith, after hearing testimony on Farrell's behalf, gave him his discharge (Smith would soon be complained against himself in a petition signed by twenty-eight whaling masters, addressed to President Andrew Johnson, protesting among other things Smith's overwillingness to discharge men). Farrell, while awaiting passage home on another berth, was arrested by local authorities on suspicion of being a deserter and beaten once again on the way to the police station. Having proven his discharge status, Farrell asked Smith to help him obtain damages from the Hawaiian government. Smith could do nothing; "This I consider very hard, as I was without means and friends," wrote Farrell in his petition to the Secretary of State in Washington, "and naturally looked to him as my protector and guardian against uninvited insult and injury."<sup>55</sup>

Smith might have had some justification for any impatience with Far-

rell; the consul had no powers over the police, and in any case (as will be seen in Chapter 10), there was a history of sailor-constable confrontation in Honolulu. Personal experience could, in fact, sour a consul otherwise basically well-disposed to sailors. A case in point is Elisha E. Rice, the first American consul appointed to Hakodate in Japan—one of the provisions of the “opening” of that country. The first two whaleships that called, the *Adeline* and *Rapid*, both of New Bedford, altered his viewpoint forever:

When I left home my sympathy were [sic] strongly in favor of the ‘much abused sailors’ but my experience with the crews of the two ships A. & R. changed my views greatly—for a more vicious, abandoned set of men I never saw; a few weeks after their arrival they commenced a regular system of plunder, rowdyism and drunkenness [sic]. The only way they could get liquor was by stealing, and they entered dwelling houses and stores, at pleasure and helped themselves, without offering to pay (for they had no money), and if any resistance was offered would beat the owner and otherwise illtreat them. The officers did not interfere but made complaints to me. I expostulated with the Capts. and men until I found it was of no use. They went so far as to deny my *authority to interfere* and defied me to arrest anyone.

Rice in fact managed to quiet the disturbances and have some of the culprits sent on board in irons, but his task, in a town totally unused to the appearance of any sort of foreigners, was not easy.<sup>56</sup>

Some consuls could be quite tough in individual cases while remaining sympathetic in the larger sense. Fayette Ringgold in Paita (1853-62) is a case in point, when faced with far too many men discharged by “mutual consent” to avoid the three months’ wages, only to reappear before the consul a few days later claiming to be sick or destitute. Ringgold insisted that they be examined by a doctor before discharge, and that they move on when a berth became available.<sup>57</sup> William Rose, one such trapped deserter, complained that as a result of his refusal to sign on the bark *Sea Breeze*, Ringgold saw to it that he spent over one hundred days in a twenty-by-twenty-eight-foot mud and stone jail cell (“The flees was so numeros that I had to wack [walk] my Prison every night untill two or three oclock . . . or the cool of the morning”). Eventually he did ship on the *Cape Horn Pigeon*, “for I see the consnel was determend to keep [me] in Prison untill I shipt on a whaler & I was forced to ship or die in Prison”—a rare protest written by a seaman in his own hand.<sup>58</sup>

Whether sympathetic or not—and seamen were unlikely in most cases to know in advance the attitude of the holder of any particular post—the consul was the only recourse for justice outside the U.S. court system. They could either use this avenue of appeal, or forget their appeal, so use it they did: “Capt. Simons. Sir we the foremast hands of the ship St Peter do take

this Opportunity to inform you that we wish before going on this Cruze to be caried before a counsel for the foloing reasons, first we donot like the useage we have reseived, second we hav seen one of our shipmates nocked down on the main deck with a ax, we do not feel our selfs saif, and unles you do comply we will do no more work on board this ship." Thirteen men had signed this rare document, but Capt. Nathan S. Simons, in the Indian Ocean in 1847, had already smashed one man on the side of his head with a hatchet, and was not about to be dictated to (though he did borrow a doctor from a British whaler to see to the man). After reading the articles he flogged the two remaining holdouts; there was no more question of being carried to a consul.<sup>59</sup>

A general reluctance to let their men visit or otherwise appeal to American consuls, despite the right to do so specifically set forth in the act of 1840, typified whaling masters. After all, to permit such an appeal at a minimum was likely to delay the voyage, and might have quite serious consequences if the consul sided with the men. A typical case, however, was more likely to end in inconvenience rather than disaster. On the bark *Endeavour*, at Honolulu in 1855, one of the foremast hands complained by letter to the consul, Abner Pratt, who sent for the ship's log. The following day, when the consul interviewed the mates, the master, Israel Horsley, allowed anyone who also wished to speak to Pratt to go ashore—an opportunity that was taken by the steward, two boatsteerers, the cooper, and ten hands. After a further two days' delay, the discharge of the first and second mates, and some jail time for the foremast hands, the ship finally went to sea, three days later than planned and with rather a different crew.<sup>60</sup>

There can be little question that while seamen's complaints often were real enough, there were also many instances in which a complaint to the consul was merely a means to delay sailing—and consuls often had trouble distinguishing a good case from a bad one. When in doubt, it was easier to side with a master, but many masters were unwilling to risk delay, and instead preferred to forestall consular intervention completely if they could do so. Thus John Dagggett, master of the bark *Globe* in 1850, tied three men in the rigging for wanting to see the consul at Lahaina. When in the end Dagggett decided to bring aboard Charles Bunker, the consul, Bunker simply ordered the men back to their duty after talking to them (Dagggett in further revenge persecuted the men through their homeward voyage).<sup>61</sup> The master of the bark *John P. West* preferred another form of retaliation. When four men complained to the consul at Honolulu, the master forced them to desert, threatening that if they did not, he would indeed punish them for having complained to the consul in the first place.<sup>62</sup>

Other captains simply responded as did the master of the Edgartown

bark *Louisa Sears* at St. Helena in 1857. When a substantial part of the crew refused duty and demanded to see the consul, Capt. L. Courtney soon flogged one man and ironed some others.<sup>63</sup> Lawrence C. Murray, master of the ship *James Edward* of New Bedford, flogged the cook in Port Louis, Mauritius, "for his handing a letter to some boatmen that was going on shore from the ship the day before the letter was said to be one that the ships crew had wrote to the American Consul at Isle of France."<sup>64</sup> In this case, at least, justice was served, for the consul, George H. Fairfield, investigated the complaints, found them justified, and discharged all the officers and crew, sending a bill for \$1,116 to the owners for wages due, and explaining to Murray that he had been "found guilty of cruel & unusual treatment toward said officers & crew unsafe under your command." Fairfield kept control of the ship's papers, and eventually the ship was sold at auction.<sup>65</sup>

Unfortunately, matters did not always work out in this fashion. On the *Elisa Adams*, Capt. F.C. Smith, headed north for Arctic waters after a trouble-filled voyage, including a suspicious fire (and resulting punishment), showed the log-keeping mate an unsigned letter that someone had sent to the consul at Lahaina. Charles Bunker, the consul, far from looking into the complaint, had simply turned the letter over to Smith.<sup>66</sup> This particular issue of allowing access to consular officials lasted as long as there were whaleships reaching foreign ports of call. Almon Stickney, master of the bark *Mattapoisett* in 1882, no doubt knew full well at that late date that he was acting illegally in punishing a man who wished to put his case to the consul at St. Helena (months later the man had his chance, and did win his discharge).<sup>67</sup>

The most intractable problems for a consul were likely to involve collective work stoppages such as have been discussed in Chapter 4. Once a dispute had reached the stage of refusal to work and the consul was notified, he had several options. Generally a visit to the ship was essential, for understandably most masters were reluctant to let their men loose in any port in such circumstances. In any case the crew might be confined, or have confined themselves, in the forecastle, or perhaps be in irons or otherwise restrained following a confrontation. At this point a simple visit might be enough once the consul, having heard out the men's grievances, explained that—as was usually the situation—the men had no legal right to the liberty or whatever else was desired. Often a reading of the ship's articles was persuasive. Many men had not actually read them, or had forgotten their restrictive contents, now persuaded by some among them perhaps of this or that nonexistent right (liberty after six months at sea was a favorite such myth).

Logbook and consular reports leave the clear impression that there were

many occasions when the men simply wanted a hearing, sympathetic or otherwise. On the bark *Sea Ranger* of New Bedford in 1874, the foremast hands and one boatsteerer refused duty in Talcahuano, demanding fresh meat instead of "salt horse" when in port—a common substitution, but no legal entitlement. After a typical scuffle, with the captain threatening to do serious damage with a capstan bar, several men were put in irons. When the consul came on board the next day and the men told their story, they went willingly to duty, though there is no evidence that they won their fresh meat or anything else—indeed, six weeks later as they rounded the Horn on their homeward voyage the crew complained that there was not enough meat, salt, or otherwise.<sup>68</sup>

Once aboard, some consuls might venture to the forecabin to hear out the men in their own quarters, but most showed their attitude immediately by calling the men aft in the manner of the captain, to space reserved for officers or men on some specific duty, in order to hear out their tale in front of the officers. Such procedure was likely to increase, not decrease, tension. But much depended upon the consul's next action. When the men complained that the vessel was unseaworthy, for example, the standard recourse was to order a survey, and that would often calm matters, whatever the decision resulting. Sometimes it was merely a matter of the discharge or reprimand of one man, or finding another officer who could navigate, or something of the sort. It did not always work: "At Twelve AM the Meracan Counsell came off to see the Cook told him to behave and go to his duty he said he would not. So ends this day," recorded the log of the bark *President* lying in Gibraltar harbor in 1869, and that was often all there was to it.<sup>69</sup>

A very typical case is that of the bark *Smyrna* lying at Cape Town in 1855. The men refused duty while the captain was ashore, and when he learned of the trouble he returned to the vessel bringing the American consul: "come on board the men wer all called aft to make their complaint the men wanted to know the Law and the Counsel told them that unless they went to duty he should have them put in Irons and fed on Brad and Water so they Concluded to go in Irons so I had to put the darbes [darbies: handcuffs] on the Seven this is pleasant work for me so ends."<sup>70</sup> In such circumstances it would take an extraordinary consul to persuade the men that he was an intermediary, not reinforced authority.

Rather a rare being, at least from logbook and journal evidence, was a consul who advised a master simply to let the men have some liberty or other concession. One such was William Carroll, the vice commercial agent at St. Helena in 1857. In investigating a work stoppage on the bark *Alto* of New Bedford, Carroll found that there was some disagreement whether the captain had or had not struck a man or two, and what sort of language was

used—but no real justification for the refusal to work. Still as the master put it in his log, in the end “I was fineley advised by the counsel to let them tak their own way restrain the ship from going to sea and enter a protest against them a part of them went on shore against my will.” In other words, the crew had the liberty they had demanded in the first place.<sup>71</sup>

If there existed no legitimate grievance to be satisfied, and persuasion did not work, the consul's difficulties were in all likelihood just beginning. A sample of the complications which could ensue is provided by the New Bedford ship *Junior* in Hilo in 1856. The bulk of the crew left the vessel without permission, going to interview the consul, Thomas Miller. Their basic complaint was that they had already been to the Arctic two seasons in succession, and had been promised that would be all. When the consul pointed out that the articles said nothing to that effect, they then charged the captain with cruel treatment and bad food. When they persisted in their refusal to work, the captain, Samuel Andrews, sent for the sheriff who hauled them off to jail. Consul Miller, in his report, admitted that the law said that the men should now be sent home for trial, but without witnesses to accompany them home, such effort would be useless—and the witnesses, the officers, were essential to the continued operation of the vessel. Moreover, the cost in time and money would be substantial before any decision would be forthcoming. Miller thus decided it was best to discharge them all, and Captain Andrews agreed—but the consul did not request, nor did Andrews pay, the three months' extra wages. “To have exacted it for their benefit would have been equivaent to offering a premium for insubordination.” The men did agree to ship out at once on other vessels, and thus became no charge upon the consulate. The *Junior*, with another crew obtained at Honolulu, went off to cruise “on the Northwest.”<sup>72</sup>

In many similar cases consuls were troubled by the witness requirement. Fayette Ringgold, serving in Arica, Chile, in 1852 (he transferred to Paita the following year), had a boat's crew of deserters on his hands from the bark *Eugenia* of New Bedford. The vessel had called at the port after the deserters had been apprehended, and the master had promised to return in a month or so after further whaling and “he would give me the necessary witnesses, to have them sent to the United States and punished,” without which pledge Ringgold would not have taken responsibility for the men in the first place. When two months had passed and still there was no sight of the *Eugenia*, Ringgold discharged the men and sold the whaleboat they had taken in order to cover his expenses.<sup>73</sup>

When the awkward decision was made to send mutineers home, the consul now had to find a ship's captain willing to take aboard seamen charged with mutiny, and perhaps desperate. This chore often proved diffi-

cult. The law of 1803 only said that masters had to take destitute seamen at the consul's request; fortunately, mutineers often fit this description as well. Masters would demand at a minimum that prisoners be adequately supplied. Thus Paul Froberville, commercial agent at Port Louis in 1837, had to pay out \$182 for food and clothing for six men sent home from the *Clifford Wayne* of Fairhaven aboard a merchant ship, and could only hope that the expense would be authorized.<sup>74</sup>

Clearly it was neater to find some local way to settle any issue, and many consuls were fully willing to use a dose of jail time as a means of persuasion, assuming local authorities would cooperate, as often was the case. Thus Lemuel Wells at St. Catherine's, when asked for aid by the master of the *John and Edward* of New London, faced with a crew complaining of the vessel's condition, obtained an order from the president of the province to the commander of the fort to send enough soldiers to establish order, and thus sixteen men found themselves in prison. The vessel, with only half her crew aboard and unable to find replacements at St. Catherine's, made for her home port.<sup>75</sup> James R. Clendon, consul at the Bay of Islands, used a different technique. He obtained a commission from the newly established British lieutenant-governor to issue warrants and order the immediate arrest of deserters—the authority of a justice of the peace, in other words.<sup>76</sup>

Jails in whaling ports around the world were likely to be unpleasant lodging for even the most hardened whalers. Hollier Griffith, the commercial agent in Port Louis, sent eight men from the *Hibernia* of New Bedford to the local jail in 1843; four very soon changed their minds and petitioned him "that we have not only acted rashly but foolishly in what we have done, having been misled by our own opinions and acting on the spur of the moment, not thinking of consequences, for which we are now seriously sorry, & humbly beg of you to relieve us from our present miserable condition."<sup>77</sup>

Nor were consuls above ordering, or at least agreeing to, punishment on board the vessel. Thomas Fitnam in St. Helena, according to the log of the bark *Palmetto* in 1873, ordered the crew that had refused to raise anchor to be put in irons, with a chain through their arms and made fast to each side of the deck. In such confinement, they were to be put on a ration of one cake of bread and one quart of water daily, "and not any alteration until they agreed to return to duty." In fact they continued to refuse, and a week later were sent on shore to be discharged. The anchor was at last raised with a gang from the shore, and the bark sailed off to fill her crew elsewhere.<sup>78</sup> The consul in Albany, Western Australia, sent sixteen men ashore from the bark *Bartholomew Gosnold* in 1883 to be placed in jail but not before he had

assessed each a fine of from \$2.50 to \$5.00 each, presumably to be docked from their wages (it was unclear if this sum was to be paid to him or to the master). Further refusal to work, declared before the local magistrate, brought them a sentence of twelve weeks imprisonment at hard labor. The vessel, unable to make up her crew, like the *Palmetto* made off elsewhere but could not find replacements at either Hobart or Norfolk Island, in the end signing "16 green Kanakas that cant speak a word [of English] to break in to do sailors duty," grumbled the mate.<sup>79</sup>

Consuls, like masters, could order flogging at least as long as it was legal. At Tahiti in 1846, the consul sentenced a man who had encouraged the crew of the New Bedford ship *Charles* to desert to two dozen lashes, which the master administered.<sup>80</sup> In a particularly severe sentence, Charles Ward, consul at Zanzibar, had eleven men from the bark *Emma* each given twenty-four lashes with a twelve-thread ratline rope, and ordered that if they continued to refuse duty, they were to be confined in the fort and given the same punishment every day. This harshness was probably inspired by the recalcitrance of the men in the first place. They had refused to go ashore to see the consul, demanding that he come aboard to interview them. When, threatened with force, they actually appeared in his office ashore, they went out of their way to insult him, at least in his view.<sup>81</sup>

Only occasionally was a voice raised against such treatment, but with little visible effect: the consuls were often a law unto themselves. The *Friend* in Honolulu at least protested in print, in commenting upon a local case in which a crew had resisted transshipping oil and continuing the voyage, and wound up in jail for their efforts. It was that fate of which the *Friend* complained in particular. "The idea so commonly entertained, and so generally practiced at these islands, that a Captain of a ship may throw his crew into our miserable jail for the slightest offenses, is a most erroneous one; and it is high time that Masters should understand that they cannot thus abuse their authority with impunity"—an article that, interestingly enough, the whaling industry's newspaper, *The Whalemen's Shipping List*, reprinted.<sup>82</sup>

Only occasionally, as well, did a consul regret—officially—his actions. Thomas Shankland, consul at Port Louis, interviewed the men of the bark *Thomas Pope* of New Bedford, who had refused to work on the grounds that there was brutal punishment aboard. Shankland explained the law to the men and then put eight in irons who said they would rather go to jail than work the vessel. The next day, however, the consul revisited the ship and interviewed a number of men, including those who had not refused duty. He now concluded that indeed the crew had been abused and kept short of provisions; he regretted placing the men in irons, and ordered their release, to the dismay of the captain. Shankland had the grace to make good his

change of heart and agree to the discharge, with three months' wages, of those who wished it. Unfortunately for Shankland, however, the case was not over. The vessel's local agents wrote to their New London correspondent, Williams and Haven (a firm very active in Indian Ocean elephant sealing), to complain of the consul, "who in our opinion can only be shielded from the charge of being an habitual drunkard by charitably calling him insane." The letter, citing a number of cases, including that of the *Thomas Pope*, urged Williams and Haven to have their vessels bypass Port Louis for the time being. For their part, the New London firm passed the letter on to the State Department.<sup>83</sup>

In coming to grips with a recalcitrant crew, by imprisonment, punishment, or some other method, consuls could not always rely upon the support of local authorities. Similarly, the master and officers on a whaleship might not have enough men still obeying orders with which to enforce discipline. In such circumstances, consuls and masters alike were not above looking to other vessels, or to the United States Navy. Indeed, consular files are full of requests that this port or that island be visited, or visited more often, by American warships. In Honolulu in 1851, Elisha Allen obtained the aid of officers and men from the U.S. Sloop-of-War *Vandalia* to put in irons fourteen men from the New Bedford bark *Cossack* (even the irons were borrowed).<sup>84</sup> The Consul in Singapore, on the other hand, needing help in confining the crew of the Edgartown bark *Ellen*, turned to the British naval brig *Grecian*, which was glad to lend an armed boat's crew in a spirit of international cooperation.<sup>85</sup>

In their work with whaleships, such disciplinary problems were the most traumatic for consuls of all shipboard problems. One could never be sure, after all, what might be discovered aboard a troubled vessel. As has been seen, some consuls had sympathy for the complaints of seamen; it is nevertheless clear, as shown in the chapter on work stoppages, that in the majority of cases the protesters lost their argument. In many instances the master found he had the consul's authority and power to back his own, if only because the law was reasonably clear on the consul's responsibility to give just that service if he found no cause to provide relief for the men. Much the same conclusion is to be drawn on the less traumatic, but far more numerous, instances of difficulty over the right to be discharged. These two questions, together with the problem of providing for sick and destitute seamen, formed the bulk of a consul's work in a whaling port.

But there were other matters that involved consuls and whalers from time to time, whether normal mercantile business or unusual individual cases, and these too deserve brief remark. A consul, for example, was expected to provide essential support in case of a wreck, beginning with find-

ing the necessary transportation from the site to a port of refuge. On the mercantile side, consuls had to report, and fight, local legislation that prohibited whalers from selling or trading enough oil to allow them to recruit for further whaling (Thomas Larkin in California had much trouble with local Mexican authorities over just this issue).<sup>86</sup> This captain arrested for smuggling, that vessel detained for one or another of a myriad of local regulations, had to be assisted. The prevalence of "fever," some local epidemic that closed a port or at least made it unwise to visit (and to live in), the damage of a hurricane, the dangers of a local war or nest of pirates all required attention that in the larger sense was of important benefit to the industry.

Where individuals were concerned, a consul might receive a request for information from parents seeking a long-lost son, or wrestle with the special problems presented by a bereaved widow. W.R.G. Mellen in Port Louis in 1863 had on his hands a young woman who had shipped on a whaler in disguise, "but whose sex was at length discovered, and of whose presence, the Master on arriving at this port, demanded to be delivered." (She was removed, denied her three months' wages, since she was in debt to the vessel and had caused the master, upon whom she had practiced fraud, much annoyance, and shipped out on an American vessel as a female steward.)<sup>87</sup> Jonathan Jenkins at Apia briefly had charge of the young daughter (age unspecified) of the steward of the bark *George Washington*. The master had shipped the man at Sydney; an American who had lost his wife and two children, he wished to take his remaining daughter to his home in the United States, and the master had taken pity on him. Sadly, the steward died eleven weeks out, leaving his daughter among strangers. Jenkins somehow persuaded the bark's master to take the girl on to the United States, though he had to supply her needs, leaving in his records a poignant receipt for \$47.70 worth of calico and the like, which Jenkins only hoped somebody would repay to him.<sup>88</sup>

Whalemen probably believed that they suffered more than they gained at the hands of American consuls abroad, at least when they served before the mast. It would be difficult to amass a statistical calculation of the overall effects that would fairly balance the general against the particular. In the one area where such figures can be computed, that of work stoppages, it is clear that whalemen lost more often than they won, even with the consuls' mediation. But on this, as on the acceptable justifications allowed for discharge, the regulations, though open to some interpretation, were fairly clear. Many consuls, with or without their own particular mercantile advantage to consider, found their hands tied in many instances. But consuls, for all their faults, were also human, and they too deserve some sympathy,

marooned—as was William Miles in 1857 in Callao, now mainly a guano port rather than a whaling center, “in this expensive, uneducated, uncivilized country, where . . . nearly one third of the days of the year are holidays. Nothing can be cheap or safe or merit a blessing in a country without labour or industry—having a system of corrupt administration, conducted by a semi-Spanish race, which rests upon the waste of its great gifts of guano bestowed in lieu of Rain, and its small Custom House revenues, without progress, or aim, or improvement.”<sup>89</sup>

Nor could it be said that the problems of the wider world could be escaped at such ends of the earth. Denison Card in Tumbes was in the late summer of 1863 answering an auditor’s inquiry of his expenditures. He concluded with an apology for the length of his response. “Though far away from the scenes of fraternal strife in which evil men have embroiled our country, that strife leaves me not unscathed. I received yesterday the intelligence that my son, a Lieutenant in Col. Palmer’s regiment of N.Y. Volunteers, had fallen in one of the terrible battles at Gettysburg. I have written, therefore, under much mental depression.”<sup>90</sup>

For better or worse, American consuls were the main, often the only, legal recourse to whalers abroad. But what if there was no legal escape? To many the obvious answer was desertion.

## Desertion

“I just begin to find out that whaling will never do for me and have determined to leave the ship here if possible. Several of my shipmates are of the same mind and are willing to attempt anything.” W.R. Bailey, the author of these words, was a foremast hand aboard the ship *Caroline* of New Bedford, anchored in San Francisco Bay in 1843. In dead calm on a clear moonlight night, Bailey and five companions, one of whom was a boatsteerer, took a boat that lay moored alongside, stowed in bread and fresh beef (it had been hanging in the rigging), compass and lantern key, and made for the shore, along which they pulled for the rest of the night. Though pursued, Bailey eventually made his escape to Monterey (“a miserable hole”) and subsequently shipped out as ordinary seaman on the U.S. sloop-of-war *Cyane*.<sup>1</sup>

Whaling was never to everyone’s taste. But if a man signed aboard and subsequently wished to escape, then what? He had not earned his legal discharge, and no shoreside authority was likely to interfere without good cause. To the trapped mariner, the parallel was clear: “The time is coming when I shall get out of this floating prison,” wrote the determined mate of the *Ann Alexander* in 1848.<sup>2</sup> Nor was this the only analogy available. As Justin Martin put it in a letter to his brother in 1844, “it would be better . . . to be painted black and sold to a southern planter rather than be doomed to the forecandle of a whale ship . . . it is the most dogish life that ever fell to the lot of mortal man to follow and the way that [I] happen to know is just this for four years I tasted its sweets in a manner that fully satisfied me.”<sup>3</sup> Some of the “sweets” have been explored in the preceding chapters. Arbitrary and brutal discipline; forecandle conditions; quantity and

quality of food; state of the vessel—all these were issues that could inspire both individual unrest and collective crew protest.

To these often-stated causes should be added the sheer danger of the profession. The captain of the *Anaconda* in 1857, for example, believed that his deserters ran after their courage was severely tested by a whale that stove two boats and killed a man.<sup>4</sup> The business of whaling, from taking the whale to trying it out, was full of undesirable dangers to be avoided. Actual sailing of the vessel was less of an issue, on the other hand, since whaling masters were seldom eager to crowd on all sail, and were overmanned in any case compared to merchantmen. Men did fall from aloft or were lost overboard, but this was the sort of jeopardy any sailor risked. More to be feared were the conditions of life in Arctic or other storm-tossed waters. Burr Osborn, for example, in 1844 ran from the *Tenedos* at Stewart Island in Bass Strait, having learned that the master intended next to make for the Crozet Islands in the remote South Indian Ocean. "Bill and I had surveyed that grounds once, and we did not propose to go over it again."<sup>5</sup> By midcentury the severity of this profession had increased dramatically over what it had been when whales were to be found in plenty. Orrick Smalley, master of the bark *Isabella*, put it well, writing in the Okhotsk ice in 1854:

I hardly know of any other business than whaling that so taxes [sic] the mind of man. Once it were not so. When there were no ice nor hiding places for whales or rather when they (the whales) did not seeke them (hiding places). But now, it is absolutely necessary to visit every crook & corner, whether formed by ice, land, or rocks. Once when night overtook us, we could retire to rest, and in the morning rise refreshed, ready for a contention with the Monster of the deep, now it requires a vigilant exertion day and night, and wherever & whenever a whale shows himself pursue him. Once we could whale in an abundance of whale room, or rather sea room, at night take in sail and rest easy, now it requires a constant moving of the vessel to escape the dangers of ice, land & rocks both known & unknown. So ends with thick fog.<sup>6</sup>

But there were other motives. Sheer boredom was an important one, again the more so as voyages lengthened in pursuit of scarce whales. Joseph Clifford, on the *Pocahontas* in 1834, bemoaned his four hours a day at the main top gallant masthead, "busy as grave diggers" with nothing at all to make life agreeable as the vessel meandered about, "nothing at Sea but a continued round of the same thing over and over again."<sup>7</sup> Charles Frederick Allen, on the bark *Globe* in 1869-72, kept careful note of the raw statistics: 1,173 days (i.e., three years and 78 days), with 64 sightings of whales, many of which came in spurts. A whale was seen—seen, not necessarily taken—once every eighteen days on average, in other words.<sup>8</sup> "By the time we had gotten a month's experience of the cruising ground," wrote Charles Nord-

hoff of his whaling experience in *Life on the Ocean*, "I no longer wondered at the wandering, lack-luster look, the shuffling walk, and awkward appearance generally, of your regular old whaleman. His mind has been gradually killed out by lack of use."<sup>9</sup> Nordhoff added that no whaling master would willingly ship an old salt with merchantman experience—he was too restless, too accustomed to making a passage to somewhere in particular.

Pay was never high for the foremast whaling hand, but he might make a living from a good voyage. But if the ship clearly was unsuccessful, ennui might be intensified by the prospect of little eventual reward, particularly if the man had taken a substantial advance, or owed the vessel for a large slop chest account, or both. More than one man deserted for such a reason, though of course causes could be multiple.<sup>10</sup> Far more unusual was the collective letter signed by sixteen of the crew aboard the New Bedford ship *Young Phenix* in 1850. The men petitioned Isaac Brownell Tompkins, the master, to

take the ship into some port where you can discharge those who are dissatisfied and ship a new Crew that will take some interest in your voyage we have done our best thus far and every thing has worked against us till we are fairly discouraged and are all young men and do not feel able to lose four years therefore we beg of you Sir to grant this request as it will be useless for you to take us to sea again we may some of us be in debt a little to the ship but 20 months labor ought to satisfy you and your Owners we take this means Sir to inform you as we dont wish to distress the Ship in a port where you cannot get men.<sup>11</sup>

Once ashore on liberty, the temptations only increased. A bored hand free for a few hours in some port from an empty whaleship was most likely to meet a streetwise "crimp" or his runner, full of stories of vast wealth to be obtained in gold rush California or Australia or Alaska, or simply promising that hands were scarce, the pay high, and the workload light on homeward-bound vessels: the temptation to leave might be too great to resist. Crimps were natural enemies of masters wishing to keep their crews; a wise master kept clear of a port where crimps were known to have the upper hand.<sup>12</sup> But liberty, grog, and crimps were a fearsome triad, very difficult to avoid. An infamous trap was the Valparaiso grog shops built on wheels so that they could be moved with the tide and thus always be at water's edge when poor Jack stepped ashore.<sup>13</sup> Others, too, recruited whalemens. Local naval service paid—or at least promised—well, notably in the Peru-Chile wars of the 1820s and 1830s.<sup>14</sup> Even another whaling vessel might be the culprit, as was for example the *Mercator*, which stole eight Kanakas from the *Nonpareil* at Atacama in Chile in 1855.<sup>15</sup>

Paradise, of course, will always be a hope of man, and the South Pacific

called to European and American society from the time of Cook's first reports of unspoiled Eden; the "noble savage" concept has with justice been called the first nonreligious philosophical concept to be widely discussed by all classes of western society.<sup>16</sup> The promise was well captured by Mark Twain in the opening paragraphs of an unfinished novel about Hawaii: "The date is 1840. Scene the true isles of the Blest; that is to say, the Sandwich Islands—to this day the peaceullest, restfullest, suniest, balmiest, dreamiest haven of refuge for a worn and weary spirit . . . Away out there in the mid-solitudes of the vast Pacific, and far down to the edge of the tropics, they lie asleep on the waves, perpetually green and beautiful, remote from the work-day world and its frets and worries, a bloomy, fragrant paradise, where the troubled may go and find peace, and the sick and tired find strength and rest."<sup>17</sup>

But a vision of Paradise was hardly essential. A simple spirit of adventure might drive a man to run when faced with the excitement of a frontier—and the Pacific in the first half of the nineteenth century was a frontier, for all that it was divided into a myriad of small points on a vast sea.<sup>18</sup> To African-Americans, who often served as whaling cooks and stewards, it seems to have had special appeal; the society which had sent them forth, after all, presented small prospect of a warm welcome home.<sup>19</sup> It was always the "most worthless portion of the crews" who deserted, wrote the disgruntled master of the *Nathaniel P. Tallmadge* in 1836, but it was not necessarily true at all, unless "worthless" is taken to mean restless or dissatisfied with one's lot.<sup>20</sup> "It was not because I was ill used for I always had the best of treatment," wrote James Caswell, "but like many others [I] thought that I could do better at something else."<sup>21</sup> Caswell ran at Tumbes but became lost in the woods and was recaptured by locals; he tried again and failed again at the Chatham Islands, but finally succeeded when his Nantucket sperm whaler *Franklin* put into Talcahuano in 1846. John Warner, in an interesting memoir of his voyage on the *Cassander* in 1844-46 made it clear that he intended to run from the first, and tried at both Pohnpei and Kamchatka before succeeding at Maui; there he joined another vessel, but ran from it at Rarotonga: some men seemed incapable of staying with any vessel.<sup>22</sup> In short, there were reasons in plenty for a man to take his clothes and tobacco ashore (if he could) or aboard another vessel to try his luck. Mary Chapman Lawrence, in her record of her 1856-60 voyage on the *Addison*, apparently a reasonably happy ship, found this out from experience when several men deserted at Oahu: "I was foolish enough to believe that everyone would stay by us, not one leave voluntarily."<sup>23</sup>

But not all who left did so voluntarily. Readers of logbooks and journals know well that more than one whaling captain marooned a crewman who

was troublesome, or, more commonly, sick or injured. A man might be encouraged, indeed forced, to desert in order to avoid paying him his lay. He might simply be left ashore, perhaps given a few dollars in settlement to encourage him not to be caught, though this was more likely behavior in isolated spots where there were no port authorities or American consuls to interfere then or later. Greed for a man's pay, particularly if he were deemed to be of little value; dissatisfaction with recalcitrant or homesick green hands; even race might force a man off a vessel.<sup>24</sup>

For a man wishing to escape, discharge was always possible. A reasonable master would let a man go rather than risk his making trouble, especially if he could be replaced conveniently, which is why it was easier to dismiss green hands than skilled artisans like coopers or blacksmiths. But as has been seen American law discouraged the discharge of sailors in foreign ports, not least by the 1803 requirement of an extra three months' wages.<sup>25</sup> Paying a man created special problems for whaling vessels for which accounts were only finally settled when the oil reached home, its current price calculated, costs subtracted, and shares distributed. Formal discharge, in other words, in addition to a man's consent required considerable paperwork and financial obligation, usually coupled with the need to find a replacement. It was thus an outlet that was not always so readily available.

Exchange was also possible, whereby a man in one vessel traded places with another in a different ship, usually with the same rank and status. This was not uncommon, but did require at a minimum like-minded men, amenable captains, and the leisure to effect the change. If discharge or exchange were impossible, a man might force the captain to leave him ashore by self-mutilation, and this too happened—as did the ultimate escape, suicide, but they were hardly everyday occurrences. Collective dissatisfaction, as has been discussed above, could be mobilized into collective action.<sup>26</sup> The result, however, was less likely to be successful than handcuffs, prison, flogging, or some other punishment. Action could be taken less openly, through sabotage of the vessel or its gear, or setting fire to the ship. Even open mutiny occurred through the attempt to seize a vessel. All of these happened with greater or lesser frequency, but none was common in a quantitative sense. Sailors knew the cards were stacked against them in favor of officers, who had access to firearms on most vessels (though there were always plenty of edged weapons about whaleships) and the legal power, generally, to use them: the courts, after all, tried mutiny acts, not causes.<sup>27</sup> With these various options discarded for whatever reasons, it is not surprising that simple physical escape, either singly or in small groups, was the most frequent recourse.

It is not easy to quantify, even to define, desertion. When a man

jumped overboard, or several stole a boat, with the obvious intent of leaving the vessel forever, clearly desertion was the goal. But "deserter" is a category used in logbooks to include men left ashore deliberately, or those too happily drunk in some shoreside den to think of returning until they ran out of funds—"absent without leave" a later age would call it. Interestingly, the eighteenth century British navy recognized that men might simply be delayed by wine, or women, or family, and had categories of infractions known as "stragging" (AWOL) and "rambling" (drunk and disorderly but findable), all naturally subject to penalty, but not to the savage retribution meted out to true deserters.<sup>28</sup> Nor will numerical counts of beachcombers serve either. Studied from the shoreside approach, there were multiple sources for such men: in the Pacific, for example, they had hunted sandalwood, or *bêche-de-mer*, or seals, or run from merchantmen or as convicts escaped from Australia, or Tasmania, or Norfolk Island.

From the standpoint of the vessel, the problem is no easier. Any sampling of logbooks soon shows that virtually every vessel making a whaling voyage, long or short, was prone to desertion; any voyage lasting over a single season could expect to turn over a substantial percentage of its crew before it reached home. Perhaps some scholar may do a detailed quantified study that will provide a more clear-cut conclusion, but such a task is both daunting and unnecessary: daunting because of the problem of counting AWOL or recaptured men, and unnecessary because it clearly was perceived as a problem of major proportions. Elmo Hohman in his epic study *The American Whaleman* (and others) would rather set the figure at two-thirds of the crew gone missing in the average voyage, and I do not mean to quarrel with Hohman, but I will give one sample of the problem (a rather late sample, as it happens). The *Morning Star* had just begun its voyage of 1898-1901 when, in October 1898, eight men swam ashore while it was anchored at Fayal. On the thirty-first, four more ran, and on the first of November, two more—fourteen in all, leaving only nine men in the fore-castle, but the ship was able to recruit seven in Pico. A year later, it lost five at St. Helena on the first of December, then four more three days later, but of the nine, seven were recaptured, and so on.<sup>29</sup> Assuming a figure of 50 percent for the moment, the question of *how* they deserted needs also to be discussed.

The most common means was simply to fail to return while on liberty. This was not as easy as it sounded, for captains, well aware of the dangers, supported port regulations designed to discourage desertion, often going into harbours where such regulations were strictly enforced for just that reason. Any established state could be expected to have such laws, and they were beginning to be common even in remote Pacific harbors as early as the

1820s, strongly encouraged by the Christian missionaries who were an increasingly powerful voice in that part of the world. But whaling vessels commonly recruited in many lesser known corners, in part due to their far-flung chase of whales, but also because the same settled port that limited desertion was prone to have substantial pilot and harbor fees, together with elaborate regulations limiting access to grog and women. One compromise was to lay "off and on" a regularized port, and thus avoid such impositions while at the same time making it harder for any man to run. Another answer was to visit small islands where recruits were available (one of the limitations of remote spots was the uncertainty of supply), but where concealment was difficult, such as Tristan da Cunha, St. Helena, Guam (where Spanish authorities long had controlled local society), Lord Howe Island, or the Chatham or Bonin groups. Some islands, however, were to be avoided like the plague, such as Truk in the Marianas, known to have little surplus produce, strict restrictions upon the womenfolk, and incessant local warfare in which a visiting vessel all too easily could become embroiled.<sup>30</sup>

Each distant sea had its favored anchorages and its danger spots. Nuku Hiva, for example, for many years was to be avoided because of the presence there of a most dangerous crimp, one Jimmy (or Jemmy) Fitz, who lured many men to desert.<sup>31</sup> Johanna in the Comoro Islands, on the other hand, had beef and water, and Muslim sensibilities about drink and women that made it more desirable for masters than for men. The Sea of Okhotsk, the Sunda Strait: each had its favored refuge. An experienced captain chose his ports with care, lay off and on when he could, limited liberty as much as possible and sailed as soon as he had recruited—nervously, perhaps, since the moment of sailing was the most likely for a collective crew protest.

If a man could not step ashore, swimming was a frequent alternative, perhaps with a bit of wood to help him along. This was always risky, since there were often reefs, and sharks, and currents, and surf once the shore was reached. It should be remembered that nineteenth-century Western societies did not normally practice actual swimming for pleasure, nor had the overhand stroke been invented. Deepwater sailors commonly disdained swimming, for it was of little utility and only likely to prolong the agony of a man lost overboard in deep water—though here whaling was an interesting exception, for a whaleboat upset by a whale might be near enough to another to be rescued if her men could swim a few strokes and reach a bit of wreckage to cling to.

Some swimming deserters reached safety, some did not, and just disappeared without a trace, drowned or lost to sharks. It is the unusual case that catches the eye: the three men from the *Helen Mar* who, as she was running along the island of Pico in a squall in 1876, attempted to go overboard with

a four-foot "pease of spar." Two, taking fright, refused to jump at the last minute, but Alexander Bean paddled off, never to be seen again. "The ship has been drifting over the same place all day but we have not seen any thing of him and i think that it is imposible for him to git on shore as there is a very strong current running and a very heavy surf all a long the shore."<sup>32</sup> On the *Hope On* in 1882, working down into Panama Bay, two men put overboard a flimsy trypot platform used to stand on while trying out oil, two boards about ten feet long nailed together by two cross pieces, "the whole not able to sustain a small boy, much less two heavy men"; they were discovered, a boat lowered, and men and platform recovered. The men were put in irons to prevent a recurrence, and it might be added to save their lives, for both tide and wind were setting out of the bay.<sup>33</sup> At Manganui in New Zealand's Bay of Islands in 1842, the cook of the *Tuscaloosa* put his clothes in a washtub and swam ashore; off St. Jago in the Cape Verdes in 1871, four men went over the side of the bark *Clarice* with their clothes in a chest lashed to a plank (all seem to have reached shore safely).<sup>34</sup> From the New Bedford bark *Hadley* in 1872, five Kanakas swam ashore at Tutuila, Samoa, but three others who jumped overboard some ten miles off Apia were not heard of again despite a search of the island organized by the American commercial agent (the ship was a brutal one, and all eight islanders had been lured aboard at the Solomon Islands but never entered on the ship's articles).<sup>35</sup>

Sometimes men were caught in the act. On the ship *Martha* of Fairhaven, anchored in the Bay of Islands in 1839, the captain was informed by a foremast hand that others were intending to run. When ordered below, the men threatened to get ashore anyway; possessing himself of a musket, the master forced them below, striking one on the head with the butt of his gun. For three days the men refused to do any work, and John Taber, the master, retaliated by keeping them nailed below. Finally with the help of the captains of two other vessels Taber brought them up and flogged the ring-leaders, after which the rest went to duty.<sup>36</sup> On the ship *Montreal*, on the other hand, in 1860 in Shantar Bay (Okhotsk Sea), officers and men combined to force the captain below at pistol point, and kept him in irons while some deserted. Interestingly, one boatload, launched in a thick fog, returned to the vessel, more fearful of being lost perhaps than of the captain's eventual wrath—though in actual fact there was a little he could do against such a combination of officers and men.<sup>37</sup>

As in the case of the *Montreal*, a deserter's chances improved if he and a few comrades could obtain a boat. Whaleships had boats in plenty, though lowering was noisy and successful theft required that the officer in charge of the deck be cooperative or disabled. For that reason, unless violence was

contemplated from the first, and usually it was not, escapes by whaleboat commonly involved at least one boatsteerer, though even mates might desert given cause enough (a gold rush, for example). Boatsteerers were often involved, since they frequently were in charge of a watch, either in port or at sea. Escapes by whaleboat did indeed take place well out at sea when the opportunity arose; after all, the chance of successful pursuit was small, and the whaleman's faith in his ability to make a landfall or be picked up by another vessel overgreat—especially considering the fact that the average seaman or boatsteerer, even many mates, had little or no knowledge of navigation beyond the ability to follow a compass heading. It was best, of course, to have a coast in view and a port in mind, as did the boatsteerer and crew who lowered from the *J.D. Thompson* off the Chatham Islands in 1868, or the boatsteerer and crew from the *White Oak* who made for St. Catharine's in 1844.<sup>38</sup> From the *Mt. Vernon*, in the Marianas in 1850, the fourth mate, two boatsteerers, and several men stole a boat to make for Manila, and thence, as all aboard knew, for California's gold fields.<sup>39</sup> A vessel could lose a considerable share of her skilled manpower in this fashion, as in the case of the *Minerva* in 1869, when the first and second mates, three boatsteerers, and the cooper departed with a whaleboat.<sup>40</sup>

It did not always go well. A boat's crew from the Fairhaven schooner *Ellen Rodman* deserted off Bravo, making for Fogo, a nearby Cape Verde Island, but miscalculations and inclement weather brought them up finally near the African coast of Sierra Leone, where they were rescued by a British troopship.<sup>41</sup> Charles Francis Hall, who went to the Arctic as a special passenger aboard the whaling bark *George Henry* in 1860, recalled an encounter with a whaleboat and crew that had run from the *Ansel Gibbs*, on account, they said, of bad food and bad treatment. They were 250 miles west of Northumberland Inlet in the high Arctic, their goal American territory 1,500 miles away—with only a compass to guide them. The *George Henry's* master gave them supplies and a course to sail, but only three survived on the coast of Labrador, and that only thanks to the help of the local missionaries with whom they wintered.<sup>42</sup>

This incident only points up an obvious conclusion: whalers could desert anywhere, no matter how remote and how problematic the possibility of survival. Northumberland Inlet, Hudson Bay (a long way indeed from civilization), the remoter shores of western Australia, the tip of Patagonia, the Sea of Okhotsk, the mouth of the Congo River . . . it seemed to matter not at all, but ignorance of geography and anthropology alike made light of dangers and aroused false hopes, such as those which must have been held by a boatload of "Guam Spaniards," "Kema Malays," and Western Island Portuguese who off the coast of New Guinea slipped away from the *Java* in

1868, or the man from the *William Baylies*, anchored off Nome, Alaska, who in 1906 leaped into the water though the shore was two and a half miles away and the water temperature thirty-four degrees (he made one hundred yards before crying for help).<sup>43</sup>

Sometimes, however, the remoteness is deceptive, as for example in the case of the Galapagos Islands, where a good many men ran in the first half of the century, despite their waterless and inhospitable environment. But many whaleships stopped here for tortoises, an excellent "recruit" since they were good eating, in plentiful free supply at least until their population was savagely reduced by this cause, and stayed alive for long periods with little care. Any man who ran from a shore party here might expect to find another vessel to give him aid before long—if the lack of fresh water did not get him first.<sup>44</sup>

But when a man got ashore, freedom was hardly guaranteed. Captains in general frowned on desertion when they perceived no social or pecuniary benefit from it. Fortunately masters such as that described by Howard Hartman in his memoirs were rare: in the *Marquesas* his captain sold men rum from his own stock, sent them ashore to get drunk, encouraged them to run, insured that they would be recaptured, and then docked their lays a substantial sum in penalty for their desertion.<sup>45</sup> More frequently, a master wished to avoid the general unrest, and loss of manpower, skills, and valuable property that desertion often entailed. (Men from the *Louisa* in 1871, for example, made away not only with a whaleboat and gear valued at \$125 but also "a nice pair of oppree glasses.")<sup>46</sup> Indeed, desertion might well be compounded by a general refusal of the remaining crew to sail shorthanded.

Masters were thus likely to be unforgiving. When Edward Harding, master of the New Bedford ship *Courier* walked out in Honolulu one morning in 1840 and happened across a man who had deserted his vessel a year earlier, there was no question of congratulations on his successful escape: "sent a constable after him and put him in the fort where i could find him."<sup>47</sup> Nor was a man safe simply because he found employment on another whaleship. From the log of the ship *Fabius* in the Pacific in 1859: "to day the Moctezuma[s] boats attacked the starbourd boat with revolvers and knives to take a man that they said runaway from said ship in San Francisco."<sup>48</sup> John Jones in his memoirs of 1861 tells an interesting tale of the bark *Alfred Tyler* of Edgartown, "spoken" while in pursuit of a deserting boat and crew supposedly steering for Sydenham Island. Captain Luce, the *Tyler's* master, having transformed the bark into a ship and disguised the paint scheme, had every confidence that he would catch his men through this lure.<sup>49</sup> Abraham Tucker, on the other hand, master of the ship *Hope* at Peel Island in 1846, seized three local islanders and kept them in irons until three deserters were

returned to him. Ironically another crewman freed them in the night and then swam ashore with them, so the net loss was four men.<sup>50</sup>

Port authorities, predictably, were more accommodating to masters than to men. Remote islands, on the other hand, were chancy for recruiting, and local chiefs might have their own ideas of how to make use of deserters or blackmail masters for their return. Long coastlines were no guarantee of safety either; in New Zealand, for example, Maori warriors were delighted to hunt down deserters for relatively small sums, willing even to set afire dry hillsides to smoke them out, and then to bring them back swinging from a pole by wrists and ankles.<sup>51</sup> In such places a few muskets or a keg of powder were enough to bring back even the most determined men, for after all they did not know the land, the language, or the basic skills needed to survive in a generally hostile environment.

A man might get away simply because pursuit was too expensive for a captain minding his pennies,<sup>52</sup> but generally a happy balance was reached between supply and demand; numerous logbook entries show a few dollars paid here or there for recapturing deserters.<sup>53</sup> Nor was such payment always necessary as incentive, for in regularized societies from Indonesia and the Philippines to South America or the Cape Colony, deserters were likely to find themselves hunted by local vigilantes and perhaps lucky to end up in the local calaboose rather than the chain gang or something even more severe. Deserters in Copang on the island of Timor from the *London Packet* in 1839 found themselves sentenced to a disabling one hundred lashes each by a local administrator (an alarmed master managed to have the sentence reduced to three dozen).<sup>54</sup>

Once retaken, a deserter's fate was uncertain. A vengeful master had virtually unlimited power to extract nearly any revenge for his trouble and expenses. A man might be flogged, even after flogging was abolished, or confined in irons, perhaps with a stick through his arms or legs, or kept on deck for weeks or even months.<sup>55</sup> A master had always to think of the general effects of punishment, of course, and such thoughts might have influenced the master of the *Belle* who in 1860 wished to flog some men who had run but let them off after an impassioned appeal, or that of the *Amazon* in 1848 who consulted his crew after a fashion before flogging deserters.<sup>56</sup> On the *Roscoe* in 1847, on the other hand, the crew attempted unsuccessfully to prevent just such a flogging. Punishment for desertion might easily lead to a major confrontation between officers and crew.<sup>57</sup> Clifford Ashley remarks that whaleship officers had a certain sympathy toward deserters, having felt the temptation to run themselves on the way up the ladder.<sup>58</sup> To the contrary, generosity and humanity do not appear from logbook and other records to have been the determining characteristics of offi-

cers though they might well possess such qualities. Severity in order to discourage further desertion seems more often the rule than the exception. Even a kindhearted officer might bear a grudge, after all. The log keeper of the *Saratoga*, in Honolulu harbor in 1857, was probably not disposed to treat in a fatherly manner the deserters from his ship when they were recaptured: "They have evidently deserted without cause and should they follow the sea for the next half century, they will never again find themselves on board a ship where such constant and uniform good treatment will be extended toward them as they have invariably received from the Captain & Officers of the good ship *Saratoga*."<sup>59</sup>

Once well away from the vessel, a deserter looked for safety in numbers, hence the tendency to make for some sailortown, if such was available, where the law was reluctant to follow. Even if no such warren was at hand, deserters could resist pursuers on land in a manner difficult to emulate at sea. The master of the *Adeline* in 1870, for example, who went after some of his men ashore at Lord Howe Island, was beaten up by a gang of deserters for his troubles.<sup>60</sup> But captains too could unite, as for example at the Bay of Islands when several masters together with assorted officers pulled down the roof and walls of a grogshop on the beach that they found particularly troublesome.<sup>61</sup>

If shoreside authorities were hostile to deserters, and local residents more attracted by tangible rewards for runaways or fearful of fines for helping them, the officers and men of another vessel might, in the proper circumstances, offer refuge. For this reason deserters often made quickly for another whaleship or other handy vessel, though it was sometimes a case of from the frying pan into the fire. Much depended upon circumstances. A captain in need of men could be receptive; on the other hand, he might well dispute the seaman's right to desert and stow away altogether, perhaps regretfully contemplating the consumption of extra stores. Thus when Humphrey Shearman, master of the New Bedford bark *Canton Packet*, found on sailing from Sydney harbor in 1848 that he had three deserters stowed away from the whaler *Mercator*, "the capt'n told them he would keep them untill he saw the *Mercator* to put them on board or he should put them on shore on the first land he made."<sup>62</sup> The captain of the Salem bark *Palestine* in 1842 was even harder on a stowaway from the *Cassander*, with which the *Palestine* was sailing in company after leaving Johanna; "took him up and flogged him, and sent him out of the ship."<sup>63</sup> Nor were masters favorably disposed toward their own crewmen found on other vessels. The captain of the *Favorite* of Fairhaven flogged two men he found on the *Ontario* in 1835; Roswell Brown, master of the *Belle*, with three of his officers and a boat's crew searched the *Walter Scott*—and when the *Belle*'s cook and carpenter were

found aboard, claimed them for his own. Both men spent the next month in irons in the after house, "fast to a eye bolt."<sup>64</sup>

On the other hand, deserters might be exchanged in an informal way. On the *Martha* in 1852, the third mate, with three boatsteerers, the cook, and a foremast hand as crew, greased the blocks and falls of a whaleboat and slipped over the side in the Line Islands (Kirbati). Ransom of a keg of tobacco recovered the boat from the inhabitants, but the men could not be found. It took only three days, however, for Samuel Meader, the *Martha's* master, to discover that the third officer, two boatsteerers, and two hands from the *Hector*, all deserters, were ashore at the same island and willing to sign on the *Martha*—an unusual wholesale exchange.<sup>65</sup> However much he might oppose desertion in principle, a master's needs might override that principle.

Once committed to taking deserters aboard, a master was obviously reluctant to allow his ship to be searched, let alone "smoked," a process often used to kill rats by which burning charcoal was placed in the hold and the hatches closed—guaranteed to bring out any deserter from his hiding place, if he survived. In St. Augustine Bay, Madagascar, in 1837 for example, the crew of the Bristol, Rhode Island ship *Golconda* were issued arms in preparation to resist the men of another vessel whose master was quite insistent that the *Golconda* should be smoked in this fashion.<sup>66</sup> Burr Osborn in a possibly apocryphal tale relates his desertion from the *Tenedos* in 1843 or 1844 in Sydney. After various adventures and service on another vessel or two he was spotted by someone from the *Tenedos* on Maui, and took refuge on the *Magnolia*. The *Tenedos's* men knew he was aboard, and searched the ship, even to the point of unrolling furled sails in which he might be hiding, but he was safely concealed in a cask on the deck, which the cooper ostensibly was in the act of repairing. Even then the *Magnolia's* master was all for surrendering him. Though he did not do so, he did put Osborn ashore at Honolulu.<sup>67</sup>

Even if a man did get away, and pursuit died down, then what? Disillusionment might quickly follow, such as surely struck the man who swam one hundred yards in the direction of Nome. It was this way for Joseph Faulkner, on an unnamed whaler in the early 1870s. Faulkner had already run at Talcahuano, but he was taken by vigilantes. "Thinking me a little timid, perhaps, they showed me some nice revolvers and some cutlery, and in this manner persuaded me to accompany them to town. . . . The thoughts of their attention to me during my stay with them is still fresh in my memory." Next he ran while watering at an offshore island in the Gulf of Panama. An encounter with a large boa constrictor quickly changed his mind, and he made signals to the ship even then getting under way, later claiming that he

had become lost. Faulkner did in the end manage to leave his vessel without trouble but for another typical cause; a fall from aloft injured him seriously, and he was left ashore in the American hospital at Talcahuano, though the word "hospital" gives a misleading impression of the nature of the institution in question. Faulkner contracted smallpox here, and moved on to an indescribable pest house. He lived, but blinded and totally broken in health.<sup>68</sup>

This story is not untypical. There was little real refuge to be found in sailortown, whether Talcahuano or Tumbes, Coquimbo or Callao, aside from seedy dens serving aguardiente ("teeth water") or fiery pisco, a crude brandy that came in burnt brick jars. The camaraderie of fellow outcasts might satisfy some, but not all, and once the money or trade goods ran dry, charity was likely to prove minimal at best. He might of course find a place for himself in local society, even rise to prominence as did David Fornander who ran in Honolulu from a whaler, and stayed to become a leading editor and judge. More typical was Ben-Ezra Ely's comment upon his experience at Port Louis, Isle of France. The inhabitants, he wrote, "all look down upon mariners as a low and degraded set of beings; as indeed very many of them in former times were; and poor Jack Tar could find no companionship except in some tavern or grog-shop." Ely's vessel, the *Emigrant*, took on two recruits, deserters who had lived in the mountains on roots and fruit, and then spent six weeks in prison. When released one had worked his way on a lateen trader to the Seychelles, but no employment was to be had there, so he slept under the markethouse, surviving mainly on raw fish.<sup>69</sup> Such a man might be rescued by an American consul, if the port had one, and if the consul proved sympathetic and willing to be helpful. As noted in Chapter 5, not all were.

Much depended upon where and when a man deserted. Apia on Samoa, for example, in midcentury offered much to tempt a man to run. William Victory and several other men deserted from the Cold Spring Harbor ship *Splendid* in 1846. The men took refuge in a deserted native hut made of banana leaves. Frank Withers, one of Victory's companions, in a later disposition before the American Consul at Apia, reported that the first thing he knew they were all being dragged out by natives, and he himself was struck repeatedly with a war club, "and then when I passed Victory, who was leaning on two natives with his face covered with blood, I wished to speak with him but they prevented me . . . I did not see Victory again until they carried him past on a litter." Victory was dead, at age twenty-six. John Williams, the consul, had complained for some time that while settling differences between masters and crews was not easy, it was far more difficult to settle those between deserters and natives.<sup>70</sup> Victory's fate was not that unique.

Deserters taking refuge with native societies were not always so unfortunate. Stories abound of men whose novelty, or more likely skills, made them useful accessories—as gunsmiths, for example. They might well survive the encounter, and adapting to local society and language become valued interpreters on the “beach,” a term used by anthropologist Greg Dening to signify the zone of cultural exchange, a subject upon which there is substantial literature.<sup>71</sup> Scholars seem now to be agreed that the negative qualities of the nineteenth-century Western impact have been overexaggerated, in the sense that small Pacific societies were not simply overwhelmed, despite the impact of both diseases and technologies, but rather adapted that impact in ways that yet preserved the essentials of their own societies. Outsiders, whether from whalships or other sources, could be influential, but very seldom would become “king of the cannibal isles” as romantic literature would have it. Such societies were bound by intricate systems of geneological associations and cultural restrictions, or tapus, which in addition to being largely unfathomable to Europeans, were hard to penetrate even by marriage connections, at least in the first generation or two. As Marshall Sahlins has put it, change was “externally induced yet indigenously orchestrated.”<sup>72</sup> Assimilation was often possible, but it might be at the cost of submergence, marked off psychologically as well as physically by the tattoos that advertised socioreligious status in many such societies, and ironically served also to mark off Western sailor communities from their fellows. The question of whaling’s impact upon indigenous societies, however, is a subject that cannot be discussed here, aside from noting that it deserves further study.

How many men lived happy or fulfilling lives in such circumstances is impossible to calculate. But for many, Paradise proved to be an unexpected Hell. Whalemens could expect hardship if they ran in the Siberian Arctic, for example, doomed to live on the ripe decomposed walrus meat favored by the Kamchatkan peoples.<sup>73</sup> But the South Seas were a greater disappointment, since more was likely to be expected of them. Ernest Dodge put it well in his book *New England and the South Seas*: “except for an occasional dish and the fresh fruit, the food is appalling; one can throw a saddle on the cockroaches; the scorpions, centipedes, and spiders are either dangerous or revolting.” The beaches were not soft, and poisoned barbed fish lurk in the sand along with deadly shellfish. Higher culture was either confusing and unacceptable religious superstitions or ribald humor, or some mixture of the two, and life “a haze of native beer, rum, taro, fish, roast suckling pig, and amiable people. For most Yankees, accustomed to stimulating climate, activities, and interests, it becomes after a while a living death of a dreary, lotus-eating sort; only a few adjust and remain.”<sup>74</sup>

On a small atoll, it could be even worse. Bengt Danielsson, another anthropologist, spent eighteen months on Raroi in the Tuamotu group, an island upon which he had many friends and expected to stay another year to write up his fieldwork. It was not easy: "Day after day, week after week, month after month, we ate fish, coconuts and preserves [needless to say whalers deserters would not have had the latter]. There was no fruit on the island, no vegetables, no milk, no eggs, no fresh meat. Our energy disappeared, our stomachs gave us trouble and we had constant headaches. How the Raroians themselves stood it I do not know. For that matter many did not, but were as ill as we were."<sup>75</sup> This was from a man who, although more used to a modern diet than the average whaler of the last century, still had a fair idea of what he was in for—and little fear of cannibals. If a man had indeed run due to restlessness, as many did, he was no more likely to be happy than Melville was during his month on Nuku Hiva. Thus "imparadised," the refugee in Eden was driven to sign on again, and start the cycle once more.

What then is to be made of all this aside from some good individual yarns? Desertion was a major socioeconomic issue aboard whaleships, fear of which certainly influenced the conduct of masters, in both the rules they enforced and the overall plan of their voyages and ports of call. Whaleships were total societies and, though their purpose was commercial gain and not the incarceration of prisoners, the system aboard was designed to discourage easy escape. Yet because they were commercial enterprises, not prisons, it was not possible to prevent it entirely, to lock all the doors, so to speak. Similarly, since the taking of whales was an important goal, work stoppages were persuasive enough sometimes to win concessions, though their results could also be harsher discipline than before. Elmo Hohman believed that desertion was ruinous to the industry, particularly from a morale standpoint among the crewmen who remained.<sup>76</sup> The point is well taken, yet there was an important social utility to desertion that some masters, however unconsciously, knew well, that is, to let off steam, to release the sort of pressure that if permitted to build might well provoke a serious incident, perhaps even a mutiny such as occurred on the *Globe*.

As pointed out in the preceding chapters, as the nineteenth century progressed, whales were scarcer, voyages longer, and, for a variety of reasons, the quality of crews less attractive, judged from the perspective of health, sense of responsibility, and willingness to work in a dangerous profession for small reward. But desertion was less, not more, easy to accomplish. Whalers no longer came to uncharted Pacific isles, and more likely recruited at Honolulu or Hilo or Lahaina in the Sandwich Isles, or Hokodate in Japan, San Francisco, or the usual South American ports, in a procedure now

regularized to a high degree. Further study may well show that the incidence of serious confrontations increased in direct ratio to the difficulty of desertion. It was no accident, for example, that both the *Pacific* in 1855 and the *President* in 1867 were set afire by their own crews at Hilo; in both cases deserters had just been recaptured and brought aboard.<sup>77</sup> Sabotage, work stoppages, severe punishments: all, I would argue, increased as this escape valve was more tightly screwed down, checked only slightly by the midcentury prohibition of flogging, the traditional extreme penalty.

Some sociologists, it is true, have seen the problem somewhat differently. Richard Nelson, in his study of *Workers on the Waterfront*, notes that in general in labor action including desertion the seaman was acting "to enlarge the area of his freedom within the cultural and institutional confines available to him."<sup>78</sup> Eric Sager, similarly, in a prize-winning book on seafaring labor, adds that in the context of the North Atlantic merchant seaman's world, desertion was another form of labor action, "a consequence not of the personal characteristics of the sailor but of the relationship between worker and employer and between worker and workplace."<sup>79</sup> Both are correct, but desertion was more than a means of labor protest and economic or cultural adjustment. To the consul at Tahiti in 1836, it was liable to come as a result of the "least misunderstanding," or else, as the consul at Talcahuano put it in 1849, from no cause at all.<sup>80</sup> This opinion was shared by an editorial comment in *The Whaleman's Shipping List* in 1852: "The crews of our ships are well treated, well fed, and their duties may be called comparatively light. It seems to be the result in most cases of mere whim on the part of the men."<sup>81</sup>

Such remarks should not be dismissed out of hand. Sometimes desertion was indeed the result of mere whim. It is particularly hard not to reach this conclusion when boatsteerers, the noncommissioned officers of whaling, were involved, for they had more to lose generally than foremast hands. Desertion had in a sense become a necessary experience, comparable to that described by Douglas Porch in his history of the French Foreign Legion: by the end of the nineteenth century, "desertion had become such an integral part of the Legion experience that it was considered almost a rite of passage for a new recruit," an unofficial requirement for full acceptance by older comrades.<sup>82</sup> It is in this context that Clifford Ashley's remark that officers had deserted at one time or another themselves makes sense.

But consuls and *Shipping List* were wrong in making whim the sole cause. Desertion sprang from multiple sources, some correctable evils, some not. Harsh discipline could be legislated against and made actionable in the courts, though clearly it could not be controlled entirely on distant vessels where the master's word was the real law. Even there, according to the same

*Shipping List* editorial, "Discipline has already received a death-blow at the hands of the land-lubber legislators and judges who had meddled, in a spirit of false philanthropy with things they did not understand, and a system they could not improve." But the restlessness of sailors was not to be cured by either philanthropy or laws, certainly not on a far-traveled whaleship under penny-pinching management, with little oil in the hold and scant prospect of more to come. That sort of desertion had to be tolerated; it might cause problems, but so too could the serious confrontation that was all the more likely if men were condemned to remain aboard year after year. Many a short-sighted whaling master would probably have disagreed, but desertion, rather than undermining the morale of his crew, may well have preserved his command.

In any case, given the nature of nineteenth-century American whaling and the men who served the industry, desertion was going to stop only when the industry was finished. As the master of the ship *Florida* put it in a disgruntled comment of 1859, "if a ship were bound for heaven and should stop at Hell for wood and water some of the crew would run away."<sup>83</sup> Run they would, only to sign up again in many cases, and run yet again. In the end, if he survived, the whaleman was likely to end his days in some sailortown. Robert Louis Stevenson in his book *In the South Seas* (1896), put it well after meeting an aged woman on Hiva Oa. She gave him some red flowers and spoke some English, learned from a whaler-man, a "plenty good chap." It seemed some memories of her youth had prompted her attentions to Stevenson, and he reflected on her past. "Nor could I refrain from wondering what had befallen her lover; in the rain and mire of what seaports he had tramped since then; in what close and garish drinking-dens had found his pleasure; and in the ward of what infirmary dreamed his last of the Marquesas."<sup>84</sup>

## S E V E N

# The Practice of Religion

Physical escape from a whaleship was not always possible, as has been seen. But there were other forms of escape in an internal sense. One such was religion, though it is not a subject often associated with whalem— and certainly not the concern of such standard works as those of Hohman or Ashley. Yet it is not unimportant, for several reasons. First, pious devotions offered to the apparently rare believer aboard a whaleship a means of solace—at least from time to time, as will be seen. Second, the practice of religion, particularly in the Pacific Ocean, acted in important ways to govern conditions ashore for the whaleman who arrived as libertyman or as deserter. Particularly in the more remote islands, a resident missionary might be the salvation, or the doom, of a transient beachcombing ex-whaleman. Finally, the interaction of professional missionaries and whalem— was yet another boundary of the whaleman's world, acting in much the way that association with consuls did to show him the generally low esteem in which he was held by such small but powerful elements of western society. In this manner religion might be a solace but also one of the walls of whaling's total institution.

Obviously whalem— could encounter religion, and men of the cloth, in their hometowns. This chapter will focus, however, upon a more distant area in which evidence permits some assessment of relationships. That means above all the Pacific Ocean in the nineteenth century. Seldom, indeed, has there been so lengthy a quarrel between natural enemies, extending as it did from the arrival of both whalem— and missionaries to the virtual extinction of the former species. The missionaries, British and American, commonly feared and loathed whalem— for their determined attempt to undermine the

triumphs of Christian civilization among their charges. Their arrival, and even worse the deposit of deserters in their wake, was cause for serious alarm. As Charles Pitman of the London Missionary Society wrote at Raratonga (Cook Islands) in 1837: "What I have long dreaded is come upon us, that is, the landing of run away seamen. Several of these have lately left their ships & being kindly treated by this unsuspecting people, they intend taking up their abode on this island. They have already proved very troublesome, & I fear will do much mischief. . . . I have several times been over to the people & warned them of the danger."<sup>1</sup>

Whalemen, on the other hand, often shared the loathing—and, in a rather different sense, the fear—of the missionaries' potential power to deny them their rightful legal pursuits. George Pratt's station on Savai'i (Samoa), was visited in 1842 by a whaler: "Before she dropped anchor, she sent a boat ashore to enquire of the natives if there was missionary in the land. On their answering in the affirmative and pointing to our house the steersman said 'no no' and directly rowed off to the vessel, on reaching which, they tacked about and stood off to sea. From this strange conduct I have no doubt that they came for some wicked purpose and finding a missionary in the land, feared it might be an obstacle to the gratification of their lusts."<sup>2</sup>

As the years passed, finding an island without its resident missionary was increasingly difficult, and expectations were all the less likely to be fulfilled. As the keeper of the log of the New Bedford bark *Avola* put it after looking in at Mcaskill's Island (Pingelap, Pohnpei) in 1873, the men on liberty "got greatly dissappointed," since the missionaries "had got glory pumped into the natives good and at both ends."<sup>3</sup>

Each side could be most determined. Missionaries, if they survived, were likely to spend long years at their posts, perhaps never to return to their homeland. "Providence has placed me in the ends of the earth," wrote David Hazelwood from Fiji to his brother in London in 1849, "and I shall never see my dear friends again in this world."<sup>4</sup> If their zeal did not falter and their self-doubts not prevail, they might be fanatic in the pursuit of their religious and moral principles. But whalemen too were on lengthy voyages. On such voyages, recruiting was essential, and so too was release for fore-castle hands from the ceaseless discipline. For whalemen, liberty was a dream, to be realized at some remote point and usually including drink and women, or women and drink, depending. Such dreams, put into practice, precisely undercut missionary efforts to regulate behavior according to rather different missionary standards.

The traditional image of upright, godly servants of the Lord battling depraved, immoral whalemen is not entirely or perhaps even mainly wrong. But it does require qualification in several respects. Missionary and whale-

man alike shared important cultural constraints, and, despite their antipathy, they interacted in significant if sometimes unanticipated ways. Devout or irreligious, they shared the same Christian religious heritage and a general hostility to, or at least disrespect for, pagan practices. That heritage was inclined to give to both groups a clear-cut sense of superiority toward native races, though again this varied in specifics, and both could experience the awesome might of an indigenous ruler. They shared economic attitudes as well, including belief in the exchange of commodities and labor for value; neither whaler nor missionary was likely to find appealing the attitude that their goods of whatever sort were community property in the most literal sense. In short, though they may have loathed each other, disdaining either piety or the lack thereof, it was a familiar enmity, different from that which might be experienced from a particular Pacific society.

Unfortunately, evidence of this relationship is generally rather one-sided. Missionaries were articulate enough in letters to superiors, families, and each other, but whalers were less so. Logbooks and journals abound, but they were normally kept by officers whose viewpoint usually differed from that of fore-castle hands, particularly when it was a matter of off-duty activities ashore. When whalers for whatever reason deserted on some beach, their presence as potentially permanent beachcombers presented a serious danger to the missionary's self-appointed role of model and reform leader, but logbooks, while remarking commonly enough on desertions, seldom chronicle later effects. In fact, written traces of the foremost view of whaler-missionary interaction are rare. One exceptional letter was written by two ordinary seamen, James Chase and Thomas Turner (though the latter could only sign with his mark), to the London Missionary Society from Tahiti in 1841. Despite its incoherence, it is a catalog of complaints against the LMS's servant, Aaron Buzacott:

The missionaries here represent Europeans that comes here in Whale Ships to be thieves and Robbers that cannot get a living at home here was a man run away from his ship and went into the mountains and the constables went over him but Mr. Busacott [sic] told them not to go near him but to stone him with stones untill he was down and here was another that was an unfortunate sailor caught in adultery and made his way to the Boat when the natives said let him go but Mr. Busacott told them to get him at any rate the[y] pushed on him and with clubs broke his arm. . . . every farthing of money that arrives on the Island goes to them the island is governed by them the natives are ignorant and they do just as the Miss.s tells them. . . . there are all afraid to let their own country man stop here Europeans because the[y] tell the Natives how they extort from them.<sup>5</sup>

By the 1840s, such quarrels were as commonplace as this complaint was unusual, for they had begun with the roughly simultaneous arrival of whale-

men and missionary in the Pacific a half-century earlier. British whalers were operating in the Pacific in the end of the eighteenth century, while at the same time Americans after the same quarry were rounding the Horn. Fur traders and sandalwooders bound for China also left their tracks. By 1819, when the first American whale vessel arrived at Hawaii, perhaps as many as two hundred European and American merchants, seamen, and wanderers were resident in the "Sandwich Islands."<sup>6</sup> Australian and New Zealand waters were exploited at first by British efforts, but the first American whalers and sealers had called at Port Jackson (Sydney) in the 1790s. American contacts with the southwest Pacific increased steadily, though fear of Maori hostility in New Zealand and burdensome colonial regulations in Australia kept some from these waters.<sup>7</sup>

Missionaries were close behind. Post-revolutionary religious revivalism in Europe and America, tinged with a hint of escapist romanticism, brought waves of eager toilers in the vineyard in the early nineteenth century. The London Missionary Society (LMS), interdenominational but nonconformist, was founded in 1795; the Church Missionary Society (Church of England) in 1799; the Wesleyan mission organization, a merger of existing Wesleyan groups, in 1817. In 1797 the LMS chartered the *Duff* to carry out thirty missionaries and their wives, and though by no means every early station was successful, a permanent foothold was established on Tahiti. Meanwhile the CMS pioneered in New Zealand from 1814 onward. To the eastward, in the spring of 1820, the brig *Thaddeus* landed fourteen American men and women in Hawaii, where American mission efforts were to be concentrated for the next thirty years. They were sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Presbyterian and Congregationalist-supported, headquartered in Boston where its staff, in the words of Charles Foster, was busy "meticulously plotting the strategy and tactics of world conquest. . . . Here, very probably for the first time in history, was the application of geopolitical thought on a global scale."<sup>8</sup>

Protestant missionaries were never unanimous on doctrinal issues, including whether Christian conversion should precede or follow training in the practical arts of civilization as defined in the west. Doctrine might make no difference at all, of course, where for whatever cause contact brought conflict with indigenous populations. Over time, however, it mattered; in particular, the Calvinist stress on salvation and on the saved as an elect who obeyed godly law and urged its application to others differed markedly from the Wesleyan stress on the spirit of revivalist enthusiasm. The reception given to a particular whaling master, in other words, might depend upon variables other than the behavior of his crew. But between whaleman and missionary, as between whaleman and native, there was not always the

chance to explore relationships. Distrust was more likely to be the common denominator, and even when lessons were well learned on either side, battles hard fought in Hawaii might have scant relevance in Fiji or the Solomons. Whalers and missionaries both came in different guises, and so did the Pacific societies that formed the final link of this triad.

Where indigenous authorities were cooperative with missionary objectives—for whatever reasons—whalers could find themselves suddenly faced with denial of the free use of women and “grog,” which were common features of whaler-native interaction. In Hawaii, the first liquor laws were promulgated in 1818, and legislation to control sailors’ behavior ashore was passed in 1822.<sup>9</sup> In 1825, the enforcement of the recent prohibition of females visiting aboard whaleships led to what is probably the best-known such confrontation in this island group. At Lahaina on Maui, an anchorage that from the late 1820s into the 1840s was the preferred stopover for whalers (Honolulu on Oahu was both more difficult of access and costly in fees), Captain Buckle of the British whaler *Daniel IV* encouraged his men to take reprisals against the local missionary, William Richards, who was blamed for the edict (Buckle was accused of having paid ten doubloons—\$160—for a young girl, a mission school student, for himself). Richards and his wife were threatened by a mob of sailors; they stood firm through some anxious moments and were not injured. When three months later Captain John Percival of the U.S.S. *Dolphin* intervened in Honolulu against similar legislation, just when the missionary community had hoped for his support, it appeared that reform in the Hawaiian Islands was in dire jeopardy. Hiram Bingham, the only ABCFM ordained minister on the scene, was roughed up by another mob that surrounded his house and was saved only by an angry group of supporting parishioners. Tempers were calmed with the arrival in October of the U.S. sloop-of-war *Peacock*, whose master, Thomas ap Catsby Jones, was more supportive of Hawaiian kingdom authority. Alas, the issue flared again when in December of 1827 the British whaler *John Palmer* lobbed a few nine-pound balls into the town of Lahaina in order to influence the local authorities in yet another disagreement of a similar sort. Memories of these events were long-lived; Bingham, who over time came to have considerable influence in Hawaiian affairs, was still writing angrily about it all years later. “The enemy,” he reported in a collegial letter to the LMS in 1830, “claimed the right of unrestricted and privileged licentiousness and was not ashamed to fight for it.”<sup>10</sup>

The *Daniel* and *John Palmer* affairs were very public. In most cases the struggle left fewer records, until the results chanced to work their way into high-level correspondence. Samuel Marsden, missionary, businessman, and early organizer of New Zealand colonization, wrote to Ralph Darling, gover-

nor of New South Wales (1824-31), more than once to complain of the depredations of whalers on the Maori. In 1830, the presence of women aboard the *Toward Castle*, a whaler commanded by a master of considerable fame (or infamy) by the name of Brind, touched off a small but sanguinary local struggle known as the "girls war," which cost the lives of at least thirty Maori. Marsden urged the presence of an armed vessel, and Darling made the matter a question of high policy, though with little immediate effect.<sup>11</sup>

The occasional visit of a government vessel could do little, particularly as the frequency of visiting whalships increased. As Joseph Orton reported from the Bay of Islands, the most frequented North Island shelter for whalers, to his Methodist superiors in 1833: "Nothing can be more grievous to the Missionaries or cruel on the part of *Masters of Vessels* than to have the arduous labours of years marred in a day, by the allowance and encouragement of illicit intercourse between the female natives and seamen of vessels putting in for the professed object of refitting and obtaining provisions. It is much to be regretted that many *Captains of Vessels*, particularly *British Whaling Vessels* are highly culpable in this respect."<sup>12</sup> Henry Williams at the same Bay of Islands some years before had already found that the only recourse was to keep at arm's length from the whalers. "It has cost me many serious moments, but their moral conduct has been so glaringly bad that it has been considered dangerous to hold any intercourse with them to the peculiar work of the Mission, for while we condemned their conduct to the Natives, they would ask—'Why, then do you allow them to come to your houses?' I hope that by extreme care, such communication may be preserved which shall keep them in their places and allow us to speak unto them the word of the Lord."<sup>13</sup> Direct appeal to the women seemed to have little effect, as his 1831 journal shows. "In the afternoon went to a party of girls who were congregated together on the beach rolling about in the sun, having come from the vessel. I spoke to them for some time on the danger of their situation. Some ran away, the rest remained quiet, but none spoke."<sup>14</sup>

Conditions on the South Island were little better, though settlement was slower to develop. James Watkin was stationed at Waikouaiti (near Otago Harbor) in 1840, where, as was fairly typical of South Island, a small shore whaling station developed. That settlement, Watkin reported, was

rivalling in proportion to its population the Bay of Islands in wickedness than which the sun shines not on a worse in the whole world. . . . The white men almost generally are living with native women, and my coming here is looked upon rather suspiciously by them, for they know enough of XY [Christianity] to be aware that if it prevails, they must either marry the women or lose them. Another objection to the Missionary is that he will make the natives too knowing, i.e., in matters of trade, but from the specimens I have had already I think my duty would be to make

them less knowing. If they increase their knowledge of this kind this will be a very expensive Mission indeed.<sup>15</sup>

Watkin's worries were not untypical. Similar views were expressed in the world of islands that lay between New Zealand and Hawaii and that became a vast field of conflict between godliness and immorality, or free enterprise and intolerance, depending upon point of view. Polynesia, Micronesia, even less comprehensible and more dangerous Melanesia, in turn became battlefields. Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa, the Carolines, the Marshalls: only the Marianas, where Spanish bureaucracy was too long on the ground, had a rather different history, though whalers could also disrupt the peace and quiet of Guam at times. Successful missionaries left converted societies, but whalers too left their imprint, not least in their dregs, "the hedonistic low-cultured beachcomber, skilled in the use of iron tools and weapons but otherwise deficient in communicating the advantages of western civilization," in Niel Gunson's characterization.<sup>16</sup>

Trouble was hard to avoid. George Pritchard on Tahiti, exasperated at the third escape of a quarrelsome deserter from native captors, showed them how to secure him properly with irons. "I have no desire to interfere in such cases; but the natives are as so many overgrown children," and as a missionary he held himself bound to counteract the conduct of the beachcombers. "It has been said that Tahiti is like a Paradise. I can say from experience that in Wilk's [Wilke's] Harbour is now more like Sodom than a Paradise," at least in 1827.<sup>17</sup>

Sometimes violence prevention brought involvement. John Williams on Raiatea (Society Islands) in 1825 worked to stop the local ruler from attempting to seize the whaler *Tuscan*, whose master had failed to return several native women to a chief who feared the vessel would sail with them still aboard. When Williams warned the captain of the very real danger he was in, the whaleman was rightly grateful for the missionary's aid in settlement of the matter.<sup>18</sup> Such intervention was not entirely altruistic, as its absence was very likely to prove. George Turner's station in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) was visited by an unidentified whaler in 1842. When the vessel sent her boats to obtain fresh water, a quarrel broke out, apparently over a woman or women: "we heard a great hooting and yelling at the head of the bay where the boats were, and on running down to the beach, saw in the distance the white men rushing through the surf to their boats, and the natives at their heels striking out after them with clubs. In a few seconds the boats were clear of the beach, and off to the ship."

Turner hoped the captain would ask missionary aid to interpret and sort it all out, and in the process thus "guard against anything which endangers

the lives of the small party of defenceless missionaries, who had braved, and were still braving, all the perils arising from their position among such a savage people." Instead, the vessel turned her guns upon the village about five hundred yards from Turner's house—a village whose inhabitants had not been involved in the disagreement in the first place.<sup>19</sup>

Missionaries could not prevent the visit of whalers, and until whaling vessels no longer carried cannon a disgruntled captain could always fire off a few rounds. Buzacott in Raratonga reported in 1839 that the London bark *Rifleman* reacted in just this fashion when a Raratongan seaman, who had shipped aboard in New Zealand, now having reached home refused to continue the voyage. Local chiefs provided a replacement sailor along with yams, ducks, and turkeys, but full satisfaction of Captain Davis apparently required two twelve-inch cannonballs to be fired into the settlement (one hit a coconut tree, the other was dug out of a hillside).<sup>20</sup>

The balance of power might be the other way. The master of the Fairhaven, Massachusetts ship *Stanton* at Rimatara (Austral Islands) in 1829 was told he could not sail, indeed not return to his vessel, unless he waited until two deserters from his ship were recaptured. The captain persuaded the missionary to relent, since the weather was working up to a gale; he returned for the men, however, and they suffered a flogging each for thus endangering the vessel.<sup>21</sup> It was not always that easy, and attempting to prevent the residence of seamen deserters was a common tactic. Buzacott and Pitman worked for just this goal at Raratonga until in 1839 the four main chiefs of the island drew up regulations to prohibit landing on the island, "since which period," they reported, "we have scarcely known a sailor to leave clandestinely his ship . . . so that at present we are not aware that a single individual of the above description is to be found in the Harvey group."<sup>22</sup>

Issues arising between the two groups did not always involve licentious behavior, regulations to counter it, and cannon fire delivered in retaliation. The economic effects of both whaling and missions could be substantial and complex. As mission work produced a change in lifestyle in a particular society, it was likely also to generate demand for western-style clothing or the cloth with which to make it, Bibles, tracts, printing presses and paper to produce them, and so on. Whaling, on the other hand, created a very considerable demand for surplus agricultural commodities, and then when surpluses proved inadequate, organized commercial production evolved to supply its needs. In Hawaii, several hundred whaling ships might call in season, each with twenty to thirty men aboard, and each desiring to resupply with enough food for another tour "on Japan," "on the Northwest," or into the Arctic. The effect upon Hawaii's economy, particularly in areas in reach of Honolulu, Lahaina, and Hilo, the main whaling ports, was drama-

tic and of considerable importance in the islands' history. Lorrin Andrews, missionary and (in 1844) seaman's chaplain at Lahaina, was clear on the immediate effects of the three hundred ships that recruited there in 1843-44: "It has been ascertained that on average they have \$300 each. Ships 300 x dollars 300 = \$90,000. Here is nearly a dollar a piece for every man woman & child on the islands. A great deal of it goes into the hands of church members at Lahaina. Whatever the people have been, I cannot now call the people poor on Maui."<sup>23</sup> A year later, Cochran Forbes at the same port was somewhat more cautious, at least regarding the distribution of benefits. "Though the standard of living had gone up, most of the wealth, however, of all this trafic [sic] goes into the hands of foreigners."<sup>24</sup>

In the late 1840s, many more than Andrews's three hundred ships might call at Lahaina, and hogs, goats, yams, bananas, fresh fruit, and above all the Irish potatoes that grew well on Maui were collectively a major industry. But in a small island or shore station in the Pacific even the arrival of one hungry vessel could disrupt the local economy. In such places, like Methodist missionary Watkin's South Island station, prices were likely to become severely inflated, while mission salaries were generally small and likely to increase, if at all, only in small increments.<sup>25</sup>

Whalemen had their own complaints, particularly when they found that "a large nail or a piece of hoop iron"<sup>26</sup> was no longer enough to pay for a fine hog or other commodity the value of which had now been carefully explained by the resident missionary. Whalemen were always disinclined to pay cash money, even assuming they had it aboard and that it was acceptable locally (equally improbable). They preferred to trade for "recruits," especially when they could pay in trade items that originally cost little in New Bedford. Clothing, tools, and other materials might be useful, as could whale oil itself for illumination. Tobacco remained a staple throughout the whaling era. But the demand for such goods was finite (tobacco excepted), and other commodities, such as the hardtack and molasses so popular among Arctic Inuit, were unwanted in Paradise. Firearms were often in demand; the supply of muskets to New Zealand and other island societies is a complex subject in its own, however, impinging upon the nature of warfare and the evolution of political authority under the impact of western technology, and it cannot be considered here.

One favored item, strongly in demand, was alcohol. Trade in spirits was of particular interest to missionaries, for the distribution of cheap rum too easily dissipated the inhibitions so laboriously cultivated by their endeavours. So widespread was this trade that a true temperance ship, one that not only prohibited drinking aboard but also carried no liquor for trade, was at a serious disadvantage. When the *Nathaniel P. Tallmadge* of

Poughkeepsie visited Pylstaert’s Island (‘Ata, an outlier of Tonga) in 1838, rum was the first thing native visitors asked for. “It was in vain we protested that ours was a temperance ship, for they could not, or would not believe that a ship would come from a land where this care-killing nectar could be procured without being amply stored therewith—and they accordingly distrusted our hospitality.”<sup>27</sup>

Missionaries certainly opposed trade with whalers where it undercut their own influence. On the other hand, where exchange could be regulated and controlled to the point of forbidding trade in alcohol, the growth of trade might prove the missionary’s promise of the material rewards of godly labor. Conversion produced the demand for Christian comforts; the demand for comforts influenced the rate of conversion, in what Greg Dening has termed the “economic determinism of divine grace.”<sup>28</sup> The same whaling vessel that so rapidly departed George Pratt’s station was not desperate for fresh food (and scurvy could create desperation), or it probably would have lingered. And while cheap rum might not be traded in an area under missionary influence, the very presence of missionaries implied to whalers the probability of regularized trade, and, indeed, the very availability of the supplies they required. At Samoa, for example, whalers commonly traded along the coast with natives who came out to them, until missionary-induced stability tempted the vessels into the harbors of Apia, Upolu, and Pago Pago.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, missionaries perforce settled where local peoples lived, and where they lived, there too in many cases were the first beachcombers and the first grogshops; escape of each from the other was fated always to be difficult.

The problem could quickly get out of hand. The many American whalers visiting Tahiti, George Pritchard reported in 1832,

have purchased almost every thing they wanted with rum. One ship brought out 60 barrels another 40 and many others large quantities. This has caused a great degree of intoxication among the natives. Another cause of so much intoxication is, many foreigners, of the worst description of character, are now keeping grog shops and selling rum to the natives to a very great extent. We know not how to prevent this evil, for the royal family & most of the principal chiefs, not only drink it but are in the habit of selling it to a considerable degree.<sup>30</sup>

John Davies reported eighteen months later from Papara on the same island that liquor was not only sold in the main harbors but boats carried it to all quarters, and the “pernicious stuff” was hawked from door to door.<sup>31</sup> That same year, however, a missionary-organized temperance network across the island inspired royal proclamations prohibiting the sale or use of spirits by

islanders on pain of transportation off the island. "This was the dawn of a glorious day for Tahiti," reported Alexander Simpson from nearby Moorea.<sup>32</sup>

Beachcombers and fore-castle hands on liberty might be much disappointed, but many a whaling master was not really displeased at such a turn of events, insofar as sobriety was a partial counter to either absence without leave or actual desertion, though the same master might well bemoan the end of a very profitable form of exchange for his resupply. Though sober seamen might not appreciate the fact, it was also the case that crimes such as robbery were less likely to be perpetrated upon them where temperance ruled. The thirty-nine masters and forty-three other officers who with their signatures backed the foundation of the Honolulu "Marine Association for the Suppression of Intemperance at the Sandwich Islands" in 1834, indicate that the influence of the temperance movement, which was one feature of antebellum America, was felt well beyond continental limits.<sup>33</sup> The attack upon drink was slower to develop than that upon other forms of immorality (missionaries too in the early days liked their alcoholic ration, and it took some time before criticism of intemperance turned to advocacy of total prohibition), but it was no less significant.

The issue of alcohol, though one of the most important, was not the only aspect of economic and social relationships that created difficulties. Another was the employment of Pacific islanders. The flow of Kanakas away from their homes began in the eighteenth century with a few transported to Europe or New England as curiosities, but soon enough considerable numbers served in the fur and sandalwood trades. With this background, and a general cultural familiarity with the sea, it did not require vast effort to induce Kanakas to serve aboard whaleships. They proved capable and useful, but it was not their technical whaling and sailing experience to which missionaries objected. Rather it was their close association with the whalemen and with their vices, inducing in them on their return "depraved and vicious conduct," as George Gill at Mangaia (Hervey Islands) reported in 1846. Often in the course of a two- or three-year voyage they had lived ashore in Hawaii (a source of depravity itself when viewed from more remote islands) or even Sydney. Two such Sydney veterans were just then terrorizing Gill's community, "& since their return have been the source of much evil to the whole land, encouraging the vicious, and despising and defying the laws of man and of God."<sup>34</sup>

Pitman on Rarotonga believed that of the men of his island who signed on whalers, "not one in twenty return." The chiefs had prohibited such employment, but it was useless; recruits simply secreted small canoes and paddled off to meet vessels, or just swam out beyond the reef despite the dangers. It was not simply a question of depopulation. Those who did return

were a pernicious influence, sometimes in surprising ways. Pitman found, for example, that islander whalers had imported from Tahiti a technique for distilling an intoxicating liquor from oranges, a work of evil that "has made a bold stroke to convert some quiet and peaceable districts into scenes of drunkenness and debauchery," he reported in 1851.<sup>35</sup>

Temperance would triumph after a fashion at Tahiti, but restricting the employment of Pacific seamen was not really possible so long as whaling vessels continued to call. The numbers involved were substantial. The Hawaiian Ministry of Interior reported to the King in mid-1846 that 651 natives had officially left the island over the past year, and doubtless some left unofficially. An estimated 3,000 islanders were then at sea, and there was no port visited by whalers that had not its contingent of Hawaiians, many with little hope of ever returning. If the Ministry's estimate of 15,000 male Hawaiian islanders between the ages of fifteen and thirty was correct, some one-fifth were then in foreign waters. Despite this substantial depopulation, the only recourse attempted was to require registration of seamen, and that only after midcentury. As the Ministry concluded, "Many of the whaling ships are in want of men and could they not obtain them here, they would not come here, but would go to some other place. It is well known that the whaling ships lay the foundation for nearly all our foreign commerce and it is from them we receive our money."<sup>36</sup>

The impression left by missionary and official records is one of helplessness while the young males of the islands went off to lives of sin and eventual death in foreign lands, if they survived the brutality of the shipboard environment in which they labored. This impression is not inaccurate, but it is not the full story. Kanakas were often the best whalers, and their contribution was appreciated. One example, in some ways unique, will have to suffice. On the ship *Orion* of Nantucket, homeward bound in 1832, there died a seaman named William Brown. Islanders with unfathomable and unpronounceable names were commonly renamed as noted in Chapter 3; Brown was actually from the Fiji island of Rotuma and was probably the first of his island to sign aboard a whaler, or so the *Orion's* master recorded in his journal. Taken by some disease, he had wasted away in a few short weeks. He was missed: "it is rarely that we find so many good qualities combined in one person, especially in a native who but a few years ago left his country where Christian people have had but little intercourse."<sup>37</sup>

It is clear then that the missionary-whaler contest was fought out on several fronts. It is also clear that the relationship was not hostility alone. There was little common ground on liquor or women, but economic relationships were often of mutual advantage, and while each side criticized the behavior of the other, each was not unaware of reciprocal benefits. In many

ways each made life easier for the other. Though Hiram Bingham may have altered his opinion later when the presence of whalers in Hawaii became much more intrusive, in 1822 he was clear on the positive side of the relationship:

in addition [to] the friends whom we have found in the merchant service several gentlemen engaged in the whale fishery have also repeatedly called on us & treated us with great civility & kinship & have very obligingly offered to forward to us from Nantucket in future voyages, any supplies, or letters, free of expense, which our friends or Patrons may choose to commit to their care. The newly discovered fishing ground off the coast of Japan, will doubtless lead many of the respectable citizens of New England from Nantucket & New Bedford to pass by our door, taking at this island water & fresh provisions, & greatly administering to our comfort & security, and not a little, we hope to the good of this nation.<sup>38</sup>

No doubt missionary efforts would have continued without such “administering to our comfort and security,” but they would have been made far more difficult. Whaling vessels commonly carried missionaries and their families and goods out to their stations and home again as well. They were a principal conduit of correspondence, indeed often the only such link, as at Pohnpei until missionaries raised a subscription to obtain their own vessel, the *Morning Star*, in 1856.<sup>39</sup> Whalers provided needed supplies, large or small. Methodist William White was most happy to buy a ton of good whale oil for use and for barter from a whaler at New Zealand in 1830, by a bill for twenty pounds drawn on Mission headquarters.<sup>40</sup> On the other end of the spectrum, Maria Sartwell Loomis in Hawaii in 1821 was equally pleased to be supplied by a whaler with common soap, for she had none nor the ashes with which to make it. That same year she was similarly grateful to be provided with beef, molasses, pork and butter. “We reckon these Nantucket men among the most substantial of our friends. All who had visited this place since our arrival, have appeared truly friendly.”<sup>41</sup>

Instances abound of similar courtesies, all the more important in the case of emergency. When Captain David Upham of the New Bedford ship *Euphrates* carried Cochran Forbes’s sick wife from Kealakekua on Hawaii to Lahaina on Maui without charge in 1844, Forbes nevertheless did his best to repay him with “a cord of wood and 8 turkeys.”<sup>42</sup> Twenty years later, such favors were still being exchanged. The *Three Brothers* of Nantucket not only provided free passage for missionary P. Gould Bird and his family from Samoa to Savage Island (Niue) in 1864, but the captain also gave up his cabin to them and in addition took along a cow and calf to provide milk for their infant.<sup>43</sup>

Such assistance was important. So too was support, active or merely

moral, for efforts to control sin in its several more public forms. By the 1840s, when Pacific whaling was at its height, crews were less likely to be composed only of solid citizens of Nantucket or New Bedford, and more often to be formed of noncitizens, or unwilling volunteers placed aboard by waterfront crimps, as explained in Chapter 2. That many masters cooperated in a renewed attempt to restrict grogshops was encouraging,<sup>44</sup> however, as was the economic argument, presented in a petition signed by fifteen masters against the granting of a liquor license, that when the whaling fleet came to understand such licenses were not allowed, "a much larger number of ships would resort here for supplies, increasing to a great extent the business of the place, and the revenue of the government."<sup>45</sup>

Friendly and supportive whaling masters were welcome at the homes of most missionaries. "Many of the masters & even the sailors are now our old acquaintance—numbers call daily—are at our table. We like to associate with them—hope to do them good—but what an amount of time does all this consume!" commented Dwight Baldwin at Lahaina.<sup>46</sup> In their table talk at such meetings, more than one common interest surfaced. Missionaries hungered for news from home, naturally, but the whalers' own activities were worthy of attention. Evidence of this may be seen in the *Friend*, a temperance and revivalist journal established in Honolulu in 1843 to improve contacts with the maritime profession generally and to watch developments in the whaling profession with an eye to their potential benefits for religion. When whalers reported success in the hunt off the Carolines of the far western Pacific in 1854, the *Friend* happily editorialized that now "the Islands of the Caroline range will be frequently visited by them and become better known; and that our facilities for sending missionaries upon almost all of them will be unlimited."<sup>47</sup>

Such enthusiasm was not always well-advised. In the early days of the Marquesan mission, the first arrivals found that the local situation was not nearly as receptive as had been portrayed to them. In addition to reports of enthusiastic fellow workers who had organized the project, complained a disillusioned ABCFM servant, "the erroneous statements of sea captain at Lahaina turned the scale, so we came in darkness & we now sit down in darkness not knowing whether we ought to remain or return."<sup>48</sup> But as Denig has remarked, missionaries tended to select from among "the advice of whaling captains to suit their desire."<sup>49</sup> Still, the larger possibilities were great, and with this fact in mind, Henry Nott at Tahiti was only being practical when, having urged a friendly captain to call at LMS headquarters, he urged his superiors at home that "it would be well for the Directors to pay him some attention. These gentlemen as they are *well* or *ill* disposed towards us, have it in their power to do us service, or the reverse."<sup>50</sup>

Interactions of this sort, once again, were two-sided. Not only could missionaries help in the exchange of commodities through their organizational and interpretative abilities, but they might mean the difference between life and death in organizing rescue efforts in the case of a wreck, though not always with the thanks they merited. When the *Tacitus* was wrecked in 1845 on Rarotonga, the cargo was saved by the crew and natives in the night at considerable risk. Aaron Buzacott's parishioners stood guard over the property, only to be accused of theft in the light of day (a search proved that crewmen were the culprits), and then to find that the thirty-man crew had very little religion among them.<sup>51</sup> On the same island two years later the crew of the large new French whaler *Lemartine* of Havre de Grace was rescued along with a considerable quantity of wine and brandy. The parishioners assumed that they would be safe from harassment, having pulled the men from a dangerous surf, but it was not to be; local native police were beaten up, and the crew, armed with guns and knives, did as they pleased with the local inhabitants. The captain himself was caught raping a woman, and the ship's surgeon, a prominent offender, came to Henry Royle's mission school to make an obscene address to the pupils. Royle, however, by his own account, saved his unwanted visitors from "summary chastisement" at the hands of the population only through the respect in which the natives held his own advice and council.<sup>52</sup>

Saving individuals was less traumatic and more rewarding. A wise missionary avoided encouraging men to desert, though their aid was often requested. Levi Chamberlain, a secular employee of the mission in Honolulu, was thus approached more than once, but commonly advised return to the vessel, in one case sending back a prospective deserter from the *Globe* of Nantucket who had been recaptured and escaped again, and came to Chamberlain at night to ask concealment. The date was November 1823; the *Globe* was soon to be involved in one of the grimmest mutinies on record among whaleships.<sup>53</sup>

Where conflict with whaling masters could be avoided by some arrangement, however, a mutually beneficial result might ensue, as in the case of a sick young man from the *Pacific* who in 1829 was left in the hands of Gerrit Judd in Honolulu. The contract was very specific; the man was a carpenter and a watchmaker, and was to work for Judd in return for his room and board. "I shall allow him a little leisure to repair watches in order that he may procure some clothes, &c.," recorded Judd, but the man's main utility was to help Judd in the construction of a new dwelling. He was not discharged from his ship but was to receive his share of oil at the end of the voyage, and meanwhile Judd was to pay ten dollars a month for a substitute to work aboard. "He promises," added Judd, "to avoid the Oahu company

refrain from liquor & be faithful to me."<sup>54</sup> Some came never to depart. Captain Peck of the ship *Hamilton* died in Baldwin's house at Lahaina in 1845, "& though thronged with misy [missionary] & other visitors, yet we could not deny to a sick man such accommodation as we had."<sup>55</sup>

More common were short-lived contacts when a seaman or officer stopped by to attend a service, or request a Bible, and not only in English. The Lahaina mission diary in 1840 regretted that there were only enough Portuguese language Bibles to provide one per ship when requested, as they often were by the many Cape Verdean and Azorean whalers.<sup>56</sup> Religious tracts and Bibles were important bridges. Ebenezer Buchanan in Upolu, Samoa, was visited at his infant school by a black whaler attracted by the noise. He had escaped southern slavery and made his way to New Jersey, where he had been taken in and given some schooling before going to sea. He now wanted a Bible, and Buchanan rejoiced that he was thus able to help another soul on the way to salvation.<sup>57</sup> But it was not always so rewarding. "I fear I am rather too old to learn to deal prudently with white faced heathen," regretted Lorrin Andrews in 1844. "I am now visiting two seamen sick with the consumption both more ignorant of the principles of religion than any common native I know of."<sup>58</sup>

Some encounters were unique. Forbes at Lahaina found himself in 1847 dealing with the repercussions of the arrival of the *Bingham* of Mystic, Connecticut, whose Captain Schovel had "a spanish strumpet in his cabin from St. Carlos [Chile]." The good captain, who was said to have a wife at home (the social world of whaling masters was not large, nor their affairs necessarily private), took a room ashore for himself and his consort. Forbes became involved when two of the vessel's officers visited him, "said they felt perplexed about their captain having a strumpet." Schovel had said he would leave her at the islands, but they did not trust his word. Forbes could do little but put the men up for the night; the next day the vessel sailed for Oahu, where it was hoped that the "strumpet" would be abandoned to her fate.<sup>59</sup>

Such accounts demonstrate that, while whalers might not all have been friends of missionaries, many were, certainly among the officer class. Even among those who were not, many remained pious, as the evidence of logbooks shows. "Employed as usual on the Sabbath [sic] reading and meditating on the Goodness of God to us poor miserable worms of the dust," recorded Benjamin Bradford, master of the *Canton Packet* in 1833 in a typical entry of this type.<sup>60</sup> Some masters held prayer meetings in their cabin for any who wished to attend; others offered Sunday sermons to those inclined to listen, though very few if any forced religious services upon their crews in the formal sense, aside from burials.<sup>61</sup> Foremast hands had religion too.

"Duff for dinner read a chapter in the bible and begun to think of home," wrote Leonard Fairbanks on the *Catharine* of New London, only a few days out in 1843.<sup>62</sup> Such a man might be horrified by events of his voyage, as was Charles Perkins, who shipped under a pseudonym on the *Frances* of New Bedford (1850-52). Perkins often recorded gloomy fears for his own salvation; his account of child prostitution at the Bay of Islands is quoted in Chapter 8 of this book.<sup>63</sup>

Somewhat ironically, all seamen, whether pious or otherwise, were concerned to preserve their perceived right to leisure time of a sort on Sundays. Tradition said that only essential work was done on shipboard on the sabbath, but on most whalers essential work included the taking and rendering ("trying out") of whales. Normal leisure patterns might include washing clothes, scrimshawing, overhauling personal possessions in one's sea chest, or simply relaxing. "Our 1st Officer cannot find no other time but Sunday to break out water," complained John Stivers on the *Eliza Adams* in 1873; "the day before doing nothing, but must break it out on the Sabbath day. He expects to go to Heaven."<sup>64</sup> When opportunity arose, however—often in port—a recalcitrant crew would make known its viewpoint on Sunday labor. The *Siren Queen's* men in Honolulu in 1854, when faced with a mate who on a Sabbath wished them to stow anchor chain and dispose of rubbish from the ship's hold, simply told him (the captain being ashore) that they were not accustomed to shoveling dirt on Sundays. "We have a pretty stout crew," recorded the seaman log keeper, "nearly all shipped in this port. They are good sailors & know what good usage is (so look out Mr. Mate)."<sup>65</sup>

Whaling on the Sabbath was an issue that often excited comment. To the religious community interested in whaling matters, the taking of whales on the Lord's day simply meant that there was no Sabbath at sea—a conclusion that, from the sailor's point of view, was not necessarily correct, for barring the appearance of whales, the routine was different enough in small but significant ways to be important to whalers. The point was easily lost on land. As the *Friend* explained in 1854, "The indications now are, that if the native race is to be blotted from existance, one of the leading agencies in effecting it will be Sabbath whaling. For it is as true in the Pacific as elsewhere, that where there is no Sabbath there will be little religion, either among the white or the colored races." Lorrin Andrews pushed the attack even more directly through his 1844 authorship of a tract to be handed out entitled *Sabbath Whaling, or, Is It Right to Take Whales on the Sabbath?*<sup>66</sup>

On this matter, however, owners and masters made the decision. Custom, insofar as it applied at all, dictated that whalers whaled when they found whales, whatever the day. Melville's Captain Bildad, speaking for the *Pequod's* owners in *Moby Dick*, put it squarely: "Don't whale it too much a'

Lord's days, men; but don't miss a fair chance either, that's rejecting Heaven's good gifts." The actual owner's instructions for the *Condor's* 1844 sailing were very similar. "I put on board a number of useful books & a large quantity of papers & tracts which you will loan to them [the crew] at all proper times & tho I do not wish whaling to be neglected on Sunday, I wish the men sh'd on that day, clean & dress themselves & perform no more duty than is necessary."<sup>67</sup>

Whalemen who did not take whales on Sunday were rare enough to be exceptions to a general rule, but they did exist. William Scoresby, Jr., who made many successful voyages to Greenland as a whaling mate and master out of Whitby in England, not only did not take whales on Sunday, but also did his best to persuade other masters to follow his example—but then he ended his career as an ordained minister. The master of the *Commodore Preble* was persuaded in Hawaii that whaling on the Sabbath was wrong, and according to the missionary who sailed with him, took no more whales on the Sabbath.<sup>68</sup> Captain Wilbur of the *Magnet* of Warren, Rhode Island, kept a strict Sabbath in the 1840s, even refusing to cut in a whale though it might be lost by such restraint.<sup>69</sup>

Some captains had doubts about Sabbath whaling but took whales anyway. Edmund Jennings of the Providence schooner *E. Nickerson* knew in his own mind that it was sinful to send men off to liberty on a Sabbath in order to pollute it with drink, but he had no choice in the matter. Similarly, he questioned his own sober Sunday activities: "I do not like to work on the Sabbath. But I thought that we should loose considerable oil if I did not boil it until Monday. If by doing it I have sined [sic] may God forgive me, for [I] meant it not."<sup>70</sup>

Others began with pure intentions but succumbed to temptation. On the bark *Brunette* of Falmouth, the captain, who had handed out religious tracts at the start of the voyage, "concluded not to stand mast heads on Sunday," and without lookouts at the mastheads, the chance of seeing whales to chase was much diminished. The crew passed the time singing hymns. "I hope," remarked the anonymous log keeper, "that we shall get a large [whale] tomorrow which will give Capt. Luce new encouragement to hold on to this resolution." Alas, two Sundays later, two large sperm whales nearby tested the captain's resolve to the breaking point, and he lowered away. Neither was taken; "I imput [it] to Capt Luce breaking the resolution that he formed to keep the Sabbath." The captain returned to his pledge, though for how long is not clear from the log.<sup>71</sup> Doubts of this sort were not unusual. When the *Napoleon* lowered three Sundays in a row without success, suffering three whaleboats stove and having lost five whales, the keeper had good cause for reflection: "now who will say that Sabbath work is a

benefit in this life. The more I see of it the more am I persuaded that the Sabbath ought to be holy unto the Lord.”<sup>72</sup>

Pressure to conform to the norm was substantial, despite the argument by sabbatarians like Andrews that God would do well by those who observed His day. Owners were less likely to be devoutly certain, and masters feared the scorn of their peers. The captain of the *Martha* of Fairhaven in 1859, as a struggling sinner would have liked to avoid Sunday whaling, or so he confided to his log, but he had mated with the whaler *Minerva Smyth* (i.e., they were whaling in company, with the proceeds to be distributed equally), and her master whaled on Sundays; he was constrained to follow suit.<sup>73</sup> Even before the very eyes of a mission station, a whaler might find a misdirected whale too great a temptation. The men of the *Omega*, lying off Lahaina on a Sunday in 1856, lowered her boats to take a humpback without ever loosing a sail on the vessel. The captain, invalided on shore, apologized for Sabbath-breaking but invited the local missionary population to the cutting in the next day. “We went, and had a full share of the pleasure and excitement. Perhaps the most enthusiastic were the natives in their canoes, reaping a harvest of beef and blubber, for food and light.”<sup>74</sup>

If a captain found it hard to avoid whaling on Sundays, it was all the more difficult for a lesser being to follow his convictions. Bradford Martin of Fairhaven, mate of the *Phenix*, was, or became, deeply pious on his 1840 voyage, and wanted no part of Sunday whaling. The captain proved devout enough to respect his wishes, and according to the missionary to whom he related this tale, allowed him to remain in his cabin on Sunday, “let come what wd. except taking care of the ship.” Equally from conviction, but perhaps also from a sense of fairness, the mate declined to take any share of profit from whales taken on the Sabbath. As the same missionary well knew, however, while such a view might be tolerated in a mate, it made his future promotion less likely, for owners who favored sabbatarian masters were simply not common.<sup>75</sup> For the crew, while personal religious devotions were possible, the capacity to affect vessel policy for religious reasons was minimal, and there are few traces of any attempt to do so.

The position of missionaries was not surprisingly on the side of the sabbatarians, particularly among denominations strict in their own observance, and perhaps stricter still on some Pacific stations than their fellows at home. New England captains were familiar with quiet Sundays but still might be surprised at the extent of regulation in a society where virtually no activities were permitted on the Sabbath aside from religious observances, and certainly not such suspect pagan traditional practices as dancing. That trade on Sunday might be prohibited was no surprise; stores were not open at home either. But other aspects excited comment: “the natives are forbid-

[sic] to do any thing not as much as to cook their victuels," recorded Shadrack Freeman of the *Orion* at Oahu in 1831.<sup>76</sup>

It was in such shoreside situations, of course, that whalers were most affected by missionaries, and vice versa. But once the struggle over liquor and women was resolved in a specific community, the effect upon New England whaling officers at least might be only to reinforce their own heritage as they mingled with missionaries now secure in their influence. Ironically, as has been pointed out above, crews were less homogeneous as midcentury approached, and such officer-missionary association was likely only to widen the gap between officers and fore-castle hands. Whaleman's wives, too, were a factor; there had always been a hardy few who sailed with their husbands, but the number increased as the century wore on and conditions in ports to be visited were more stable. The lifestyle and role of whaling wives has received considerable attention and will be discussed further in the following chapter, but it may still be noted that substantial interaction occurred between these women and wives of missionaries, above all when the former stayed on for a significant period in the case of illness, small children, or simply a preference not to accompany the vessel on its standard Arctic circuit (though many wives went there as well).

As Patricia Grimshaw has shown, missionary wives had roles of considerable importance well beyond the needs of their families and their own teaching or other mission; this was particularly true in societies such as Hawaii where native women held chiefly status. A passing visit for a day or two from a whaling captain's wife would have made little difference beyond creation of a "fragile bridge," and Grimshaw rightly stresses the general isolation of most mission wives.<sup>77</sup> But in a port such as Honolulu, where there was a substantial expatriate society, the addition of whaling wives, generally from the same middle-class New England background as their missionary counterparts, must have had the effect of renewing and reinforcing that home culture for both. And the bonds created could be close. As Mariana Sherman put it on joining her husband aboard the *Nimrod* there in 1849, she was most sad to part with many acquaintances "whom I may never see again this side of the eternal world. I shall ever feel interested to hear of Honolulu as I have passed seven long months very happily here."<sup>78</sup>

Mary Brewster, whose husband was master of the Stonington ship *Tiger*, was a regular visitor at the house of Titus Coan at Hilo over several years. Her relations with the Coan family clearly were most cordial.<sup>79</sup> Coan in his memoirs shared appreciation of the contacts. "Many of the masters brought cultivated and pious wives, and from time to time they, with their little children, would be left with us for months while the ships were absent on their cruises in the north, the south-east, and west. Not a few sailors' boys and

girls have been born in Hilo, and several have been born in our house.”<sup>80</sup> They were in his mind lasting friendships, often maintained over the years by continuing correspondence. But there is always another side: Alonzo Sampson, whose book *Three Times Around the World* chronicles his experience as a boatsteerer, adds the gloss that Coan’s associations were always with officers only: “these humble servants [it is clear from the context that he means Coan] of the meek and lowly master would not speak to the petty officers of a whale ship, much less to a common sailor.”<sup>81</sup>

Though occasionally a captain’s wife might distribute tracts and the like (Mary Chapman Lawrence let her daughter go forward with tracts in a baby carriage to hand out),<sup>82</sup> they very seldom did more than encourage their husbands in their own piety or study the Bible with their children. Clara Kingman Wheldon in a letter written home from on board the *John Howland* in 1869 explains why:

I have been asked why I do not exercise a missionary spirit among those just about me. My answer has been that I do not consider it the part of wisdom for one in my place to attempt to much. The dignity of reserve seems to be better understood than any kind of freedom beyond civility. Cold civility and reserve, treating them always the same, is the only way to keep them in place. Our sailors are obedient and kind, and it is seldom I hear cross word[s] from any one of them. I often think of many sermons I have heard about ‘poor sailors who never have a kind word spoken to them,’ when I so seldom hear anything but kind words. There are, however, times when sailors need harsh sounding words of command, and the sternest of treatment, without which they would soon be unmanageable.<sup>83</sup>

Only occasionally did missionaries have the opportunity directly to influence a whaler’s crew by traveling aboard her, or by a visit while at sea. William Richards with a group of missionaries on their voyage out to the Pacific fell in with the New Bedford whaler *Winslow* on a Sabbath, and two went aboard to distribute tracts. “This was a mission which we never anticipated, but it was one which animated all our hearts.”<sup>84</sup> A religious captain might permit sermons every Sunday from missionary passengers, as did Abraham Gardner homeward bound on the *Zephyr* of New Bedford in 1842-43.<sup>85</sup> Rev. Thomas Douglas, traveling on the New London ship *Morrison* for his health in 1844, ventured into the forecabin to read aloud to the crew the exemplary tract *Tom Starboard and Jack Halyard; A Nautical Temperance Dialogue* (Tom was the ruined drunken hulk, Jack the jaunty teetotaler), as well as giving them various materials to read.<sup>86</sup> Such encounters and attempts to spread “personal evangelism” might have a striking effect on the missionaries themselves.<sup>87</sup> John Geddie, the first missionary to the New Hebrides, on his way to the Pacific on the Newburyport brig *Eveline*, put it

clearly: "I regret to observe that our seamen lightly regard the sanctity of the Lord's Day, and make but little distinction between it and the other days of the week. I begin to feel a deep interest in this long-neglected class of men."<sup>88</sup>

Ashore, missionaries had more leverage upon vessels seeking crewmen or supplies, though how often it was used cannot be determined. Fidelia Coan acting for her absent husband at Hilo in 1839, is an example. She permitted the signing of two church members as crewmen only on condition that the vessel would not whale on the Sabbath.<sup>89</sup> The effectiveness of this particular prohibition is unknown, but Titus Coan generally did his best at enforcement: "Our young men often shipped for whaling voyages. Noting these cases, I would watch for their return, and then visit them, inquiring whether they chased whales on the Lord's day, used intoxicants, or violated other Christian rules or morality; and I dealt with them as each case demanded."<sup>90</sup>

A more common religious association was the attendance of whalers at services ashore, as testified to by both mission correspondence and whaling journals. Some missionaries might begrudge the time spent with whalers, since their primary objective was indigenous inhabitants. Still others enjoyed at least short-term triumphs. Reuben Tinker at Lahaina in 1832 preached in English between his native language services and was pleased when a London captain invited him to preach aboard his vessel. "Pious captains are rare," he noted, "and few are the christians among the crews. Their views on the subject of religion are often obscure. I hope the advice we give them will not be lost. I conversed with one this evening, who said he had been to meeting but once in 14 years, and that was a few years since on the beach by this house in Lahaina. And in all that time no one had given him good counsel. I gave him mine and invited him to call again."<sup>91</sup>

When a master appeared receptive, missionaries might well take the initiative. William Richards and Ephraim Spaulding asked to be allowed to hold services on the Salem ship *Bengal* at Lahaina in 1833; it was given, and "a general attendance among our own ship's company" occurred as the log recorded. "An unusual number of officers and seaman here this season who appear to be on the side of Christ," noted Dwight Baldwin in 1835. But it was not always so satisfying; as Lorrin Andrews put it eight years later, "I sometimes have a full house on the sabbath but I fear it is all lost before another sabbath."<sup>92</sup> Even where there was no general desire to attend services ashore, whaling vessels often still set out their flags and bunting on the sabbath, whether at New Bedford or some remote foreign port.<sup>93</sup>

In larger ports, the irreligion of seamen might be attacked directly through the bethel movement, providing chapels, chaplains, and reading

rooms specifically for sailors. This movement had begun in Europe with the late eighteenth-century Methodist "discovery" of seamen and their needs; in 1818 *The Ark*, a former naval vessel, was dedicated in the Thames as the first floating chapel for this "pariah caste."<sup>94</sup> Conventional wisdom had said that religious sailors would somehow be softer, less able to withstand the hardships of the profession; in any case their religious meetings might be mere cover for seditious activity. In time, this view came to be replaced by one that said that seamen should be given specific attention, though this might be conceived only as a different road to the pacification of an underclass.

In any case, the first American efforts specifically directed toward whalemens seem to have originated in New Bedford, where legendary "Father Taylor" pioneered a whalerman's mission. In 1825 a Marine Bible Society was founded here (the first such was established in Philadelphia in 1808) and in 1830 a comprehensive ministry.<sup>95</sup> A quarter century later, it was a famous church, as it is today, and attendance by whalemens bound outward or inward was not uncommon. Edwin Pulver, a restless third mate waiting for his vessel to depart attended services on a Sunday in 1851: "the discourse was verry [sic] good and the signing [singing] beautiful."<sup>96</sup> Devout whalemens required no shore facility, of course, for the holding of religious meetings in common where chance permitted. "Had a gloryous meeting on board of the ship Nantastick [*Nantasket*] of New London Capt Smith," noted the master of the New Bedford ship *Roman* at Maui in 1844; "latter part the fore mentioned Bethel ship sailed so ends." Similarly, whalemens afloat not uncommonly founded temperance or antiswearing societies among forecandle hands and offices alike.<sup>97</sup>

But such good intentions easily vanished once the men were ashore, and the bethel movement was one answer to landbound temptation. Its evolution in the Pacific was not far behind that in Europe and America. By 1829, missionaries were recommending that particular attention be given to whalemens in Honolulu in the form of a chapel for their benefit and in this way to combat vice.<sup>98</sup> The more seamen might be persuaded to turn to the Lord, of course, the less likely they would be to make trouble ashore or corrupt islanders who had gone to sea. The call was answered within three years by the American Seaman's Friend Society, which sent out to Hawaii the Reverend John Diell as chaplain to American seamen in the Sandwich Islands. Diell arrived in May 1833 via the whaler *Mentor*, and began at once to plan construction of his prefabricated chapel. To Diell was now consigned the responsibility for English services in Honolulu for foreigners and visiting seamen. Though supported by the local ABCFM establishment, Diell found it necessary to sever formal links with that association in 1837.<sup>99</sup> ABCFM

missionaries such as Hiram Bingham did not cease on that account to urge the chapel's support from New England contributors. Bingham was particularly incensed when the SFS cut back its operations as a result of financial stringency. To Bingham, the responsibility for funding such efforts should fall squarely on owners and masters. "The shipping community, like parishes, would doubtless thrive better by paying than by starving preachers or employing some. It is possible however for men to think that catching whales on the sabbath is a much surer way to prosperity than to provide the means of reformation and sobriety for seamen."<sup>100</sup>

Diell departed next year on a sea voyage designed to improve his failing health. It did not, and after returning briefly in 1840 he left again the same year and died at sea in 1841. William Davis, in a book of memoirs published in 1874, has left a portrait of Diell at work on a whaler. The chaplain boarded every ship as soon as possible, often ahead of the land sharks and crimps' runners,

and extended the welcome of a brother to the humblest and worst. Sitting on a chest in the fore-castle, he would inquire about the voyage and the men's needs, informing that a good library and a quiet, comfortable reading-room, with facilities for writing home, were provided ashore. He not only invited the men to these privileges, but also to his home, where he said he would be glad to see them, and he generally left a Bible for each man desiring one. And let me here alarm the Christian hearts of the American people by informing them that in no other Christian port on the west coast of America was there a door to welcome or a roof to shelter the sixteen thousand souls engaged in whaling, other than that of a gaming-house, a grog-shop, or a brothel. The influence of this good shepherd was remarkable, and gave me an opportunity to contrast the partial decency to the extremes of wickedness in other Pacific ports.<sup>101</sup>

Diell's replacement, Rev. Samuel C. Damon, fresh from Andover Seminary, was appointed chaplain in 1841, and took up his post late in 1842, to serve a remarkable mission of more than forty years. Once established, Damon continued the tradition of going aboard incoming whalers to offer his services and those of the facilities ashore. "I think [the sailor's chapel] is a very fine place," recorded one mate in 1856; "they have a large reading room with newspapers from most all parts of the world." Underneath was the office of chaplain, for the poor sailors. "Many of our crew got several books from Father Damon all of a religious nature."<sup>102</sup>

Damon's influence was substantial precisely because he went beyond formal services and the distribution of tracts, acting as counselor, advocate, even mailman for his charges. In 1843, it was Damon who founded *The Friend* (originally the *Temperance Advocate and Seaman's Friend*); he used its pages not only to urge piety and righteousness but to offer news and infor-

mation relating to whalemens. Damon made many friends.<sup>103</sup> As one, George Blanchard on the bark *Solomon Saltus* put it in a letter to Dwight Baldwin at Lahaina, the wandering sailor “feels every little act of kindness and treasures it up in his heart for years of care and toil—some people think that sailors have no feeling, and that it is not worth their while to regard them as anything but a kind of *marine animal* that isn’t exactly fit to be on shore, and intirly [entirely] beneath their notice.”<sup>104</sup> Damon, however, was an important exception.

Nor was Damon alone in his efforts. In 1834 a similar chapel was begun at Lahaina, built by subscriptions from whaling officers and men; there were also reading rooms for both groups. Meanwhile Baldwin worked to support the foundation of a temperance boarding house as well, “so that sailors who wish to keep clear of groggy eating houses will be able to do so.”<sup>105</sup> Coan and others tried the same at Hilo,<sup>106</sup> and soon the movement spread into several Pacific island groups, but with less speed; other centers, aside from Australian and continental American ports, lacked the same substantial itinerant sailor population to make the effort feasible. Sometimes it did not work. In 1849, for example, subscribers to a seaman’s chapel in Apia, Samoa, handed over its deed to the LMS, which was to run it jointly with the British and Foreign Sailors Society, but it did not long survive.<sup>107</sup> In Honolulu, however, Damon was tirelessly successful, and by the mid-1850s had gone on to the construction of a seaman’s home, for which he drummed up support in numerous ways, including that of ladies’ sewing circles in coastal New England towns.<sup>108</sup>

To what did this effort for whalemens avail? Certainly individual whalemens benefited, even if only by having a temperance refuge to which to retreat while on liberty. But at midcentury, many missionaries still bemoaned the impiety and general depravity of whalemens; the movement, in short, had not accomplished all it intended. Separate reading rooms for officers and men were one problem; while they enabled both groups to attend (and neither would have gone to a space dominated by the other), such separation did not promote the brotherhood of man. Many probably would have agreed with a chaplain at Valparaiso in Chile who gave regular meetings for seamen but found attendance most sporadic and seamen uninterested in religion ashore or afloat. “Now & then a pious captain comes and brings his men with him. But most do not come themselves, and the few who do are often too proud to walk up with the Sailors.”<sup>109</sup>

The appeal “To Captains and Owners of Whale Ships” that L.H. Gulick on Ascension (Pohnpei) published in the *Friend* in 1858 is indicative of persistent attitudes. Though he welcomed the arrival of vessels with moral men aboard, few really fit that category. Struck from his draft was the

thought that even those few ships "must necessarily bring great evil with them." "I have been surprised by the kind consideration & friendly politeness which I have often received from those whose life among us I deeply deplored & reprobated," he admitted, but in six years some seventy-four vessels had visited the two harbors controlled by the tribe with which he lived. "Ten only of these vessels have not been the public residences of native females during the whole of their stay in port, some of them always having their homes in the cabin, while others live in the steerage [with the boatsteerers] & forecastle." Masters had only to say no, he argued, and they would receive the same supplies as the others, as the experience of the ten vessels proved. Surely, he pleaded, owners who probably contributed to the missionary society that paid his salary would not knowingly approve of the resulting licentiousness—to say nothing of temporal and eternal damnation.<sup>110</sup> Alas, there exists no data with which to demonstrate that there would have been more or fewer than ten such ships had there been no mission station at that island, or no bethel movement.

Distribution of tracts, reading rooms, and bethel services were unlikely in themselves to reform the world, but even these efforts had their critics.<sup>111</sup> Albert Peck was a rare seaman who commented on such matters, and he spent some time in 1859 in the seaman's hospital at Honolulu (not a missionary enterprise, it was funded by the whalemens themselves through consular charges and congressional legislation).

There was a Bethel preacher stationed here by the name of Damon, but although here nearly three months, yet I only saw him at the hospital but once or twice, except to officiate at funerals, and once or twice on a Sunday he delivered a discourse. If he had been so disposed, he had quite a field for exercise, for at the time I was there the inmates numbered over one hundred some going out and others coming in all the time, and it would have been singular if among such a number of sick and dying, no one could have been found anxious and concerned as to the future welfare of their soul.

These charges seem unfounded; Damon worked hard at his job, as evidenced by many testimonials, and he had after all visited the hospital in the three months concerned. Less easy to explain away is Peck's comment on the Bethel facilities:

the reading room is unknown to the majority of seamen, being located in a little cross street up a flight of stairs, in the second story of a building erected by the Seamen's Friend Society. On a visit being made to it there will seldom be found more than one person in it and often none. I cannot help thinking that if half the pains were taken to attract seamen to these rooms as there is to induce them to enter public houses, the result would be different. I paid a visit to it a number of times,

and always with the same result. In fact there was no temptation to repeat a visit, for there was nothing readable on the table but a few pamphlets containing reports of societies, etc., with a few old papers, and an odd volume of Chambers Edinburgh Journal with no beginning or end. The library is kept under lock and key, and in case of a book being wanted it is next to impossible to obtain it, there being no visible librarian, and the key transferred to regions unknown.<sup>112</sup>

Even the free religious literature placed aboard was not always well received. William Davis, whose warm evaluation of Diell is quoted above, had some thoughts on the matter.

We have on board a scant ship's library of uninteresting religious books, provided by some Seaman's Friend Society with kindly intent, and an inexhaustible store of tracts entirely too childish for men famishing for intellectual food. We turn unsatisfied from these dying experiences of some good souls as they descend to the dark stream of death, as we live habitually so close to the brink of the sombre river that we are not impressed by them. Pardon me for speaking plainly, but the picture of our life would be incomplete if I withheld expression of the thoughts of the forecabin on such subjects. The comments of the men on these tracts, if heard by the givers, would not encourage their distribution. Seamen see so little difference between the partial and capricious Deity pictured by the dyspeptic fancies of presumptuous writers and their own officers, that they mix up in a disrespectful jumble captain, gods, and mates. Half mutinously they answer "Ay, ay, sir," alike to the order to "scrape topmasts" from the one, and "Stand by to keep the Sabbath-day holy" from the other.<sup>113</sup>

Despite this criticism, religious tracts did serve some purpose, if only as spelling primers for those who would practice their ABC's in a frequently bookless world.<sup>114</sup>

Far more damning is the way in which the entire Bethel movement was likely to be perceived by the men themselves, as expressed by Cyrene Clarke in a memoir published in 1854. Clarke had sailed aboard the Sag Harbor, New York brig *Parana* on an Antarctic sea elephanting voyage (they were taken for their oil). In the eyes of this devout but cynical sailor, shore Christians really wanted no contact with sailors, though they might extend a charitable hand in the case of illness or shipwreck. "Many express a wish to see them brought under the influence of the Bible, and of the religion of Christ, and go so far as to erect some outside shanty, in the vicinity of the wharves, where if they will, they may meet to worship God; that God who is no respecter of persons. The very idea conveyed to the mind by such partial and restrained Christian sympathy, is at once understood by honest Jack." In other words, he was a pariah, and this form of religion was designed only to insure his quiescence. Jack, well aware of this attitude, responded: "and if they should invite us to church, they would shove us into the nigger's pew,

by the threshold, saying 'That will do for you; wait there while I go up yonder and worship.'" <sup>115</sup>

It would be satisfying to claim that Clarke was wrong, but of course he was not. Even close individual relationships between the whalers and missionaries were still likely to leave the best-intentioned of the latter ready to condemn the former in a general way. Good intentions yet concealed a sense of alienation. Rev. Sheldon Dibble in his 1839 history of the Sandwich Islands mission is a good representative: "Let us never name the ungodly conduct of seamen without deep self-reproach for our neglect of them. *Why are they, as a class, wicked and degraded?* Who of us would have possessed a better character if we had been left to grow up under the same neglect and abuse?" To Dibble, the struggle that he chronicled, and in which Captain Buckle, his vessel *Daniel IV*, and his riotous crew figure prominently, was clearly between good and evil. "Open licentiousness once abounded. Society was a dead sea of pollution; and many ships visiting the islands, were floating exhibitions of Sodom and Gomorrah. Now all such immorality is frowned upon by public sentiment and every gross act is punished by law. The odious sin is driven back as in this land into deep concealment and midnight darkness." <sup>116</sup>

So long as whalers were outcasts, then so long efforts to reform them would bear little fruit. But sailors had long occupied a special, alien niche in western society, as Marcus Rediker has recently reminded us in his important study of Anglo-American merchant seamen in the eighteenth century. <sup>117</sup> This chapter has attempted to demonstrate not that whalers were significantly altered by their contact with missionaries, or vice versa, but only that the relationship was more complex than a picture of unqualified hostility represents. Some of each group knew this, but the final echoes of the confrontation ended only when, in the second half of the century, the last whales then available for the taking were to be found only in the Arctic Ocean, and the few remnants of the once vast whaling fleet sailed out of San Francisco when they sailed at all.

What then is the legacy of this relationship? Aside from the effects of each upon the other as outlined above, the greatest impact came from an aspect not discussed here at all, that is, the presentation of a multifaceted western society to those Pacific islanders visited over time by representatives of the two groups. Whalers came in the greatest numbers, but aside from the odd long-lived beachcomber, missionaries had the longest influence, and thus in a general way perhaps the two elements balanced each other. Missionaries were inclined to blame whalers and other sailors and convicts for their own failures—a useful scapegoat, a known devil to combat, and thus perhaps they could screw up their zeal to continue. <sup>118</sup> That blame

was not always misplaced. But was the whaling impact a "bad" thing? Insofar as they did not come intending to alter the lifestyle of their hosts, whalemens were after all more culturally relativistic. Sex was a case in point. As John Garret in his study of missionaries put it: "To the mission, sex meant monogamous life-long marriage; to many sailors and Hawaiians it was a form of boisterous play."<sup>119</sup> That such "play" further distributed venereal disease does not alter the fact that islanders were brought to see by the whalemens that Western society was not the ironbound system that the missionary alone would have them believe. Sione Latukefu, historian of the Wesleyan mission in Tonga, has concluded that at least in some of the outer islands in his area, conversion itself was delayed by whalemens;<sup>120</sup> it seems fair to surmise that the same might be said of other island groups.

It is hard to argue that depravity and drunkenness and other such benefits of Western civilization (though neither were the exclusive property of the West) made a positive contribution to Pacific civilizations, but insofar as they led those civilizations to question the nature of the West, to play off competing elements of invader society, and thus the better to preserve over time elements of their own precontact culture however disguised, then perhaps just such a perverse conclusion is justified. Its proof, however, must be left to those who study such civilizations. It is enough here simply to speculate that the very conflict between missionary and whaleman raised doubts about each in the collective mind of onlookers. Augustus Earle, an intelligent artist-traveler (a later age would call him a tourist) in New Zealand in 1827, was overstrong in his condemnation of missionaries, but his point is interesting:

What credit soever the missionaries may take to themselves, or try to make their supporters in England believe, every man who has visited this place, and will speak his mind freely and disinterestedly, must acknowledge *they* have had no share in bringing about this change of character; but, on the contrary, they have done all that in them lay to injure the reputation of the whaler in the estimation of the natives. Hitherto they have not succeeded: their want of hospitality and kindness to their own countrymen raises a strong dislike to them in the minds of the unsophisticated people. According to their simple notions of right and wrong, they think the want of hospitality an unpardonable offence, and that the counsel or advice of a man who shuts his door against his neighbour is not worthy of being attended to.<sup>121</sup>

Such judgments aside (and Earle only spent a few months in New Zealand), there can be no question that whalemens brought exposure for Pacific societies to more varieties of world civilization than was ever possible through missionaries alone, not only by the visits of whaleships but also through the employment and subsequent dispersal of Pacific sailors on

those same whaleships. Recent Pacific studies by Francis Hezel, K.R. Howe, David Hanlon, and others have made the point very clearly that Pacific islanders, though suffering grievous losses, were well able to manage forces for change introduced from the outside.<sup>122</sup> The contrast of whaler and missionary was definitely a part of that management process.

From the other side of the water, John Quincy Adams noted in an often-quoted speech of 1843 that missionary activity in Hawaii gave the American people a deeper interest in that part of the world and a more specific mission overseas, "by a virtual right of conquest, not over the freedom of their brother man by the brutal arm of physical power, but over the mind and heart by the celestial panoply of the gospel of peace and love."<sup>123</sup> But more American whalers than missionaries by far visited the Pacific and returned to tell tales of distant isles, and thus excite interest on their own, and perhaps thus also to inspire contribution to the next missionary subscription from their audiences. That too is a topic that has not been considered here. It is safe to conclude, however, on the basis of the evidence submitted above, that any assessment of cultural interchange in the Pacific, or of the thrust of Anglo-American civilization into that area, must in fairness take account both of whalers and of missionaries and their interrelationship. Much the same should be said of the contact with native women, a subject that is taken up in the next chapter.

Clearly some whalers, like the workers in any industry, found solace in religion, but it was seldom a widespread solution to the terrors of the whaling life any more than it was to the army recruit or the asylum inmate. Even the most devout owner or master was no less likely to forgo insistence upon the letter of the ship's articles or code of discipline than the devout drill instructor or prison guard was to forget his duties. Only in the sense that religion might help a man escape the internalization of institutional totality, therefore, was it an escape. At least he might take his religion with him on his voyage; women, aside from the captain's wife, were seldom aboard for very long, as will be seen.

E I G H T

# Whalemen's Women, Whalemen's Wives

How soft the breeze of the tropic seas  
Now the ice is far astern,  
And them native maids in them island glades  
Are awaiting our return  
An' their big black eyes even now look out,  
Hoping some fine day to see,  
Our baggy sails running 'fore the gales,  
Rolling down to old Maui.<sup>1</sup>

**T**his song celebrates the stereotypical nineteenth-century whaler, a carefree rakehell, roaming the oceans of the world seeking whales, women, and drink, not necessarily in that order. The stereotype has another dimension as well, for the whaler has taken his place as part of the "fatal impact" portrayed by Alan Moorehead and other popular writers.<sup>2</sup> It is a concept that, fortunately, has been much qualified in recent years, but the whaler's reputation remains much as portrayed by Foster Rhea Dulles in his 1933 study entitled *Lowered Boards: A Chronicle of American Whaling*: "The American could not resist the proffered charms of these dusky beauties of the tropics, and although the inevitable result was the demoralization of native life and the spread of disease, the foremast hand so long cooped up in the narrow confines of a whaler's forecabin, took his fun where he found it."<sup>3</sup> Whalers were seldom saints, and their reputation was not undeserved, but like many simplistic images, this picture of the whaler as exploiter of native women needs qualification.

There is, however, another stereotype that is beginning to be shaped in

the literature of maritime history as attention has focused upon "whaling wives," those American women who voyaged, sometimes for years, aboard the vessels of which their husbands were masters. Joan Druett for example has catalogued the journals and letters of fifty-two such wives who sailed between 1830 and 1914 and in another paper raised the question of their moral impact upon whalemens' lives.<sup>4</sup> Margaret Creighton has outlined the place of children aboard, while Lisa Norling has studied the economic links of owners, officers, and crewmen afloat, and dependent families ashore.<sup>5</sup> These and other studies supplement older but still useful books such as Emma Whiting and Henry Hough's *Whaling Wives* or the published journals of Mary Chipman Lawrence on the *Addison* in 1856-60.<sup>6</sup> With the exception of Joan Druett, who concludes that the entry of wives into the world of whaling had a limiting effect upon the licentious behavior aboard whale-ships, these studies are primarily descriptive. The problem is that in portraying the difficulties of life for a woman aboard a whale vessel, and in noting their courage—indeed, occasional heroism—a new stereotype is arising of a seafaring pioneer making a significant impact upon her maritime world. They were heroines, surely, but the evidence rather demonstrates that their contribution in the context of social reform—in limiting dalliance with those same "girls of Maui," for example—was marginal at best. Overall, in fact, their presence aboard was often intrusive and resented as such.

I will turn first to the well-known, indeed notorious, practice of whalemens to consort with local women in non-Western societies encountered along the way, primarily, but not exclusively, in the Pacific Ocean basin (I do not propose to deal here with the separate issue of women in long-established Western sailortowns). I would not argue the lack of whalemens' resistance to native charms, and I will dodge the question of disease for the moment, but the term "demoralized" as used by Dulles deserves discussion. The common assumption underlying such "demoralization" is that the impact of the West collectively altered Pacific value systems in some major way. Perhaps this is so, though recent anthropological literature rather focuses upon the preservation of such systems beneath the veneer of even major transformations of outward lifestyles—much more likely to be the product of the impact of Christian missionaries who made a direct assault upon existing belief patterns than of whalemens taking their fun "where they found it." I leave this topic to the many anthropologists whose concern it is, and simply note that sexual contact too should not be oversimplified as some sort of Western-induced "prostitution" and little else.<sup>7</sup> In Polynesia, for example, sexual relations were not necessarily equated with social parings, mutual relationships, or even genealogical descent in the Western sense. Young men and women were often free to experiment, and the sexual

"favors" from attractive islanders that Western commentators found so astonishing were not so significantly regarded in island societies. Promiscuity, it may be said, was common, though payment for sex was not.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, sex was intimately linked with custom, mythology, and religion in ways that even longtime beachcomber residents were unlikely fully to understand. Outsiders did not always realize the fact, but island societies came in many forms. The Dionysian rites of the Arioi association of the Society Islands, for example, were well beyond New England's experience (though not that of ancient Greece).<sup>9</sup> Anything and everything might be forbidden, "tapu," for unknown reasons. In the case of women, chiefs might make their consorts easily available (in the Marshall Islands, venereal disease was known as "Chief's disease"),<sup>10</sup> or whalemen might find only lower class professional prostitutes available, or indeed no women at all.

The underlying motive for any particular response was often unfathomable, no doubt, though it seems equally safe to assert that whalemen were capable of discriminating between the extremes of sex freely bestowed and sex that was forced by chiefs, fathers, brothers, or husbands, though the intermediate stages of persuasion were doubtless harder to discern. The point here is not to categorize relationships so much as to assert that any detailed conclusions must be based upon difficult anthropological research and its application to the complex topic of specific societal encounters.

One of the problems of dealing with whalemen as a separate category, is the fact that more than whalemen were involved in such contacts. Regarding venereal disease, for example, while it is true enough that whalemen brought it, it is equally true that it was already present in many societies, brought by the explorers, naval men, or hunters of seals, sandalwood, or bêche de mer who arrived first, to say nothing of British whalers from Europe and Australia. Commodore David Porter, American commander in the Pacific in the 1812 war, left a detailed account of the role of local women in his base at Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas. Already, he wrote, they were familiar with visiting vessels and "had been taught by the seamen, some few English words, which they pronounced too plain to be misunderstood." Virtue among them, he wrote, "in the light which we view it, was unknown, and they attached no shame to a proceeding which they not only considered as natural, but as an innocent and harmless amusement, by which no one was injured."<sup>11</sup> As in the early contacts of colonial America, Europeans were often troubled by the fact that natives did not associate nudity or sexuality with sin.<sup>12</sup> Missionaries, who carried not only their religious message but also the nineteenth-century Victorian moralism in which it was packaged, found such personal sexual freedom of choice most distressing. Whalemen, on the other hand, might find the sexual mores they now encountered

far less shocking, not least because the subculture they often represented did not feel the same obligation to distinguish the untutored "savage" from the ostensibly right-living "civilized" man.

Porter's account is unusual only in that it offered an intelligent observer's relativistic assessment. The New Bedford ship *Hanover*, a sealer bound from Masafuero (Chile) to Canton, paused at another of the Marquesas in 1803: "lay off and on all night; 7 AM sent the boat on shore with the ladys they being very seasick." (Islanders might well know the sea but were unfamiliar with the roll of a big vessel.)<sup>13</sup> The Providence sealing ship *Zephyr* was in the Sandwich Islands in 1816, three years before the first true whaler called. At Kealakekua Bay on Hawaii, "A fine ensemble of Ladies on Board at Night. So ends the day." The *Zephyr* found temporary employment carrying sandalwood, hogs, and gin between Kealakekua and Lahaina on Maui, sometimes with women on board, sometimes not—it depended upon "tapu." Even then, the system was disintegrating. 19 September 1816: "Tarboo being on," the canoes were not allowed to come out to the vessel, "but the girls swam along after dark of which most of the crew tack [take] one."<sup>14</sup>

The pattern, in other words, was already set when the American whalers began to come in numbers to the Pacific in the 1820s. Over the succeeding years, some captains willingly permitted and participated in the process, others did not; once again, wholesale generalizations are unsafe. There did exist masters who shared fully in the moral crusades of antebellum America, including temperance—and the common association of grog and prostitution was one that from their viewpoint was likely to compound the evils of each. Such masters supported regulations introduced, with considerable difficulty, in the Hawaiian Islands in the late 1820s, and elsewhere at other times.<sup>15</sup> Despite regulations limiting the sale of liquor and the visit of females to vessels in harbor, however, prostitution continued, though quantification is not possible. Even the most abbreviated logs prove the point: thus the bark *Hesper*, in 1833 after seventeen days at Maui, was under way for Oahu and "came to anchor out side of bar ship loaded with girls 27 one boats crew at liberty rest spending there time as above."<sup>16</sup> The *Bowditch* of Warren, Rhode Island, had much the same object in the same islands in 1847: "Wee went in hear to get what the whalers call refreshments that is to see the ladies. And get some peeches they are very commitin [accommodating?] they will put you in to the fun for one rial they air verry good looking."<sup>17</sup>

After midcentury, however, the presence of women aboard in Hawaii was rarer as laws were more effectively enforced. Elsewhere the "good old days" went on for some time, particularly where missionaries might not be in full control. The *Ann Alexander*, in the Gilbert Islands, for example, in

1848: "There was some of the Ladies came to be our Wives . . . one of them could satisfy all hands easy enough at least she did several and wanted more for a head of tobacco apiece."<sup>18</sup> A quarter century later, the bark *Avola* was at Ascension (Pohnpei, in Micronesia). 2 February 1873: "the Asencion ladys came on board for company So Ends," and then on the twelfth, "we paid the ladys board and they went on shore at 10AM" while ship set sail. A month later the same vessel had trouble at Mcaskill (Pingelap, Pohnpei), a mere two hundred miles away, as noted in Chapter 7. Here missionary influence was strong enough to insure only disappointment to men going ashore.<sup>19</sup>

In the last decades of the century, of those whalers that went to sea at all, most went to the Arctic, and mid-Pacific idylls died a natural death (relations with Arctic peoples are another subject altogether.)<sup>20</sup> The examples so far quoted, however, offer no basis for judgment whether the associations were freely made or forced by others. Unfortunately, grimmer characterizations exist in plenty. Even brief references hint at the commercialization of the process, as in the log of the New Bedford bark *Fortune* at Pleasant Island (Nauru) in December 1851: "Lying off and on tradeing with Natives for Fowls, Cocanuts and Squaws."<sup>21</sup> But more detailed memoirs leave no doubt. In the same year, Charles Perkins on the ship *Frances* at New Zealand's Bay of Island was much troubled by what he saw:

there is one thing that shocked me very much which was that of fathers prostituting their own daughters and what rendered it still worse was that it appears to be a common thing for they did it openly before all their own people men & women. I could not help pitying the miserable and unfortunate little girls who were compelled to give themselves up to our [word illegible] and brutal sailors and I do candidly believe that the white people are more to blame than the natives themselves. There seems to be no bounds to the licentiousness of the whites when they get among these poor benighted beings.<sup>22</sup>

On the *Cavalier* of Stonington, a year earlier, William Wilson visited Pohnpei: "girls come on board—have to if brother tells them to—if they cry they are beat—a man can get any girl he wishes."<sup>23</sup>

Sometimes the transaction could go badly wrong. The schooner *Jupiter* at Dominica (Hiva Oa in the Marquesas) in 1851 got under way with five females (one a chief) aboard and took them in very cruel circumstances to the vessel's home port of San Francisco. There the women attempted to escape by jumping overboard, but were recaptured. In the end, happily, the master and mate were arrested and brought to trial for false imprisonment, but the eventual fate of the women is unrecorded.<sup>24</sup> These midcentury incidents date from an era when whaling in the Pacific had already begun to

decline; the brutality of some such transactions, however, was not new, having been long recorded in the complaints of missionaries against the sordid nature of the trade.

Nor was it a commerce restricted to the Pacific but rather was to be found around the world wherever whalers went—and a master who for whatever reason attempted to resist the system was likely to see his crew desert in mass or perhaps make trouble aboard. The Salem bark *Reaper* put into Fort Dauphin, Madagascar, in 1839 because the crew threatened to stop work if she did not make a port. Women were the issue. "Last night slept on shore and let the girls come on board for the purpose of keeping the crew quiet this is hard but I am forced to do."<sup>25</sup> The *Parachute* "recruited" at Hong Kong in 1857. The ship, recorded an unknown journal keeper, soon became "as one of the dens of five points, New York . . . The Chinese harlots . . . prominade the ships deck in all their scenic glory, for they know full well the disposition and ways of whalemens, and it gives them more money to be here, than they would get out of 10 merchantmen, for the merchant ship has pride. They do not convert their ships into a den of vice, as whalemens do."<sup>26</sup> How quickly the arrangements were regularized is demonstrated by the experience of Hakodate in Japan, opened to American whalers by treaty in 1854. Albert Peck, who visited the port in that year, found many houses of prostitution but none which were open to foreign sailors. The whalemens found their own pleasures, however, and took what they wanted, including sake. Bored with a local theatrical entertainment, they provided their own: "There were about fifty sailors collected here and after witnessing the performance for a while the stage was taken possession of by them and there being fiddlers banjo players &c. amongst them a negro concert was improvised and the stage resounded to the steps of the Juba dance with varieties which gave immense satisfaction to all in the theatre but the actors who appeared to be highly indignant at being interrupted in their performance and driven from the stage." The theater did not reopen for the three weeks the vessel remained in port. A year later Peck returned, and found that a new house of prostitution, "American House," had been established for whalemens—but now the local authorities allowed no sailors on shore at night.<sup>27</sup>

Clearly there is sufficient evidence, overall, to demonstrate that whalemens lived up to their image often enough. But why was this the case? It might be argued that whalemens—officers and fore-castle hands alike—were freed at distant landfalls from the home constraints of public Victorian morality and able to display the traditional "macho" values, including overt sexuality, expected of the sailors' subculture. Recent studies of Victorian sexuality have made it clear that the ideal woman, now redefined as "chaste,

pure, and sexually passionless by *nature*,"<sup>28</sup> really did not correspond to the private lives of many middle-class men and women. On the other hand, women's passions were expected to remain private, hidden, to be drawn out by men, above all in a relationship increasingly fused with a romantic quest for emotional intimacy and even spiritual union.<sup>29</sup> Sex, to satisfy propriety, required "love"; "purity" was still entirely possible in such circumstances even if sex was involved, so long as it was lawful, legitimate sex.<sup>30</sup>

But while the work of such scholars as Ellen Rothman and Karen Lystra demonstrate the contradiction of public and private morality, still their studies are weighted in favor of Anglo-Saxon middle-class (and literate) couples. Certainly similar images may be found in the logs and letters of whaling officers, men drawn from similar New England backgrounds perhaps, images all the more poignant as voyages grew longer and partings increasingly painful and long-lasting in memory. "It is often that I think of my Beloved Wife and wish it was so I could see her that I might encourage her heart when cast down. That I might help you share the burden of the day," wrote a humble and reflective journal keeper on the bark *Albion* in 1868.<sup>31</sup> Or as John Chapman wrote to his wife from Fayal in the Azores in 1888 or 1889:

I received your ever welcome letters and was glad to hear from you Laura dear i have not had a chance to write to you before and darling i did not dare to say good bye for fear of breaking down . . . i have not been ashore yet but if you was here i would go and be very apt to break my liberty darling you have no idea how much i miss you and my darling daughter.

Laura i must have been crazy to have shipped in this vessel but now that i am here i am going to make the best of it . . . darling if i had not come on this voyage we never would have known how much we loved each other.<sup>32</sup>

A whaleman might, of course, acquire a certain cultural relativism in the course of his travels. "Murphy McGuire," aboard the bark *Sunbeam* in the Celebes in 1869, after seeing how women were treated in the East Indies agreed enthusiastically with an article he had read claiming that American women were the most pampered and cared for in the world.<sup>33</sup> An encounter with a woman from home, however, perhaps during a "gam" or exchange of visits with a vessel on which sailed the master's wife, could bring memories flooding back. Charles Chase, mate of the *Montgomery* off the Galapagos in 1859, met Captain Stanton's wife aboard the *Ospray*, "and when I had an introduction to her it caused me to think many things [sic] and of My Sarah where was She and how was She and the little one and of all those I had left far away . . . but it almost seemed home like to see and chat with one of my country Women."<sup>34</sup>

Both Chapman and Chase obviously had more than a physical relationship with their wives, but both were Anglo-Saxon officers who, whatever their origins, had worked their way to respectability and had chosen whaling as a career. Some foremast hands were from equally respectable backgrounds, climbing their way up the same ladder of command. But most were not, certainly by the mid-nineteenth century. Urban and rural lower-class green hands searching for excitement and adventure were still to be found aboard whaleships, but, as has been seen above, Azorians, Cape Verdeans, and Kanakas, together with recruits from depressed European immigrant groups, predominated in the forecabin. None of these elements could be expected to share in Victorian ambiguities toward women; rather they brought their own moral baggage, soon enough submerged in the masculine culture that was expected of whalemen ashore.

Little specific evidence exists in the logbooks and journals that will permit exploration of the sexual attitudes of such groups; such records were normally kept by officers, among whom white New Englanders predominated. Kanaka attitudes were of course shaped by their particular island societies, and Cape Verdeans by the Catholic Portuguese/African Criolo society of their homeland. But all might quickly be integrated into the very limited world open to them at any westernized port-of-call, be it in South America, the Indian Ocean, or Asia, with its floating, mobile society in a "sailortown" of brothels, cribs, and grogshops, where for most men female relationships were restricted to the prostitutes who played upon itinerant sailor populations. In actuality, sailors and prostitutes used each other, and for men in naval service, for example, semipermanent relationships were not uncommon.<sup>35</sup> From whaling voyages lasting two to five years, references to such relationships are as rare as those to families left at home by foremast hands (as opposed to officers and some artisans such as coopers, blacksmiths, and sailmakers). When a subclass experienced sexuality primarily or exclusively with prostitutes only, courtship, love, purity, and other aspects of dominant Victorian culture had little place; or, to put it another way, respectability among the poor did not necessarily mirror middle-class respectability. Without further demonstration, it is not safe to conclude that respectability among such a subculture included appreciation of mutual sexuality; to the contrary, the prevailing attitude among sailors ashore might well be postulated as suspicion of wives or consorts who showed sexual inclinations.<sup>36</sup> Sex for pay, on the other hand, might well be tolerated for economic reasons; lower-class prostitution, after all, was not associated with the same pretense of luxury or sexual fantasy offered to the upper classes, as a prostitute "turned a trick" in the manner of a conjurer.<sup>37</sup>

It was, therefore, a complex mini-society in a whaleship's forecabin that

encountered an equally complex sexual world in Pacific societies. It is hard not to assume that participation in the orgies that did occur were something of a rite of passage, an initiation, just as was the long informal apprenticeship that green hands served before they earned the title, and pay, of ordinary seamen. As will be seen in the following chapter, formal initiations were rare in whaling—whalemen seldom even observed the ceremony of “crossing the line” at the Equator—but cramped forecandle life and the often boring but occasionally exciting chase for whales had its other trials. Sharing a lower-class masculine self-image, with an ingrained fatalistic hostility toward the prostitutes they encountered as so often reflected in those sea shanties about “flash girls” and their costs in money and disease, it is not to be wondered that whalemen, like others before them, entered into their encounter with South Seas sexuality with much enthusiasm. If, as John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman have remarked, the image of the pure Indian princess (a Pocohontas, for example) gave way to that of the savage squaw who was any man’s plaything,<sup>38</sup> perhaps it was not simply interaction with American Indians that produced the image. At least for eastern seaboard towns the tales told in waterfront grogshops of “them native maids” might well have made a contribution.

But if an individual aboard a whaleship wished not to participate in such activities, what then? The option seems to have been open to remain aloof, though obviously peer pressure might be strong, and thus be branded as lacking in the necessary qualities for full membership in the subculture, just as one who was “soft” in other respects.<sup>39</sup> But a man might be bound by his past and a moralistic Western upbringing that made his position very difficult. “Every night, at sunset, a boat was sent ashore, for the laudable purpose of bringing girls on board of the ship”; wrote Stephen Curtis of his visit to Nukahiva in 1842, “consequently, scenes which ought to make a man blush with shame were constantly before the eyes of the more virtuous part of the crew; for there were some who could claim a share of virtue, although they were sailors. This performance, too, was sanctioned by the captain.”<sup>40</sup> Such a man heaved a sigh of relief when the vessel sailed: “the last of the princesses left us to night and the ladies of pleasure and I am verry glad to see them go for they are as dark as mid night and for 2 yards of 5 cent cotton they afford all their charms which are verry few as I wish for none of them neither princess nor subjects” wrote an agitated John Winslow, journal keeper on the bark *Wave* at St. Augustine, Madagascar, in 1852.<sup>41</sup>

It was not simply that a man might be scandalized. To the journal keeper on the *Samuel Robertson* after seeing Nuku Hiva in 1843, the demoralization worked at least as much upon the whaleman as upon the native:

when we got to the beach we were surprised to see about 30 or 40 girls all standing on the beach with their white tappa or cloth in their hands or thrown round their necks perfectly naked and enquired if we were after girls. Now I will show you the reality and you can read the advertisement in any of our streets. Let Mothers & Fathers beware! Wanted immediately 100 enterprising Young Americans to go long and healthy whaling voyages. Parents and Guardians are particularly requested to look at this! The greatest care taken of their morals. It is the fashion for  $\frac{2}{3}$  of our whaleships when they cruise round these, or any other islands, where they can to run in to the land at night send 2 boats or 3 on shore and fetch off [f] girls 1 to a man fore and aft Cabin boy and all included and after a nights debauchery put them on shore and repeat the same night after night as long as they stop round here; it may be for 2 nights or 3 months just as it hapens (sic) to be good whaling. You may be surprised at this, but it is true as the word of God. Plenty of our young men are ruined by this and catch a disorder which ruins their blood makes old men of them before they are young ones for the disorder caught from one of these women is much worse than the same in America and seems to be real poison to a white man!<sup>42</sup>

Even where a ship might not permit this, he added, there still would be unavoidable repercussions when the men went ashore.

More of the era's observers, however, would be likely to agree with Augustus Earle (whose opinion of missionaries in New Zealand has already been quoted) and focus upon demoralization the other way round:

Their (the Maori) constant intercourse with whalers, who are generally low, unpolished men, leaves behind it a tinge of vulgarity of which the native women retain the largest portion. In many instances, they quite spoil their good looks, by half adopting the European costume. Those who are living in the retirement of their own villages have a natural ease and elegance of manner, which they soon lose after their introduction to rough sailors. I have seen a party of very handsome girls, just landing from one of the whalers, their beautiful forms hid under old greasy red or checked shirts, generally put on with the hind parts before.<sup>43</sup>

It was easier, perhaps, to adopt a sort of cultural relativism, as did Benjamin Doane, adding an awareness of class differences at Pohnpei in 1847: "Judged by our standards, the women of the middle and lower class would be called utterly immoral; but their freedom of conduct and absence of marital fidelity is regarded by them as a matter of course and an injury to no one. The upper class is chaste and virtuous, in that respect an example worth following in lands many degrees of longitude away."<sup>44</sup> Officers and men existed in a hierarchical society too, as sometimes became clear. William Wilson's stream-of-consciousness journal aboard the *Cavalier* in 1850 is an example: "Row with girls—they come forward and go aft—displeases both parties—some of the girls go ashore—Old Man is silly—foolish—half-drunk and pleased to think he has it all to himself—He is as silly as the foolishist man aboard."<sup>45</sup>

Captains, of course, had the power to establish more permanent relationships and "keep" a woman on board or ashore if they so desired, perhaps with a pretense of legitimacy that satisfied some cultural need for respectability. The master of the Stonington bark *Cynosure*, against whom his crew brought numerous charges of brutality including an extreme beating of 160 lashes, fooled no one. His vessel had called at Talcahuano several times in 1847, recorded the American commercial agent at St. Helena, "first of all to take a woman on board for his cruize, whom he called his wife, and lastly calling there again to put her on shore."<sup>46</sup> But not all such associations are so easily condemned. Robert Jarman, visiting the South Seas aboard the British whaler *Japan* in 1832-33, recorded an interesting meeting with the *Erie* of Fairhaven, whose captain had his Tahitian wife aboard, "considered a remarkably handsome female"; sadly, shortly thereafter she was killed by a shark while swimming in the harbor of Tongatapu.<sup>47</sup>

Foremast hands had no such privileges of carrying "wives" aboard for an entire cruise. Yet their associations were not always brief; women might stay aboard for weeks at a time while a whaleship exploited a particular nearby whaling ground and expected to return to the same harbor in the reasonably near future.<sup>48</sup> To a Western seaman who perhaps had little experience with permanent relationships ashore in any case, a "wife" of a week or so might be more than he could expect in whatever port he called home. The impression expressed by Commodore Porter in his Marquesan interludes is widespread: "With the common sailors and their girls, all was helter skelter, and promiscuous intercourse, every girl the wife of every man in the mess, and frequently of every man in the ship; each one from time to time took such as suited his fancy and convenience, and no one among them formed a connexion which was likely to produce tears at the moment of separation."<sup>49</sup> No doubt it was often that way, and the general use of the term "wife" does not prove the contrary, as in this remark by James Hoberley on the British sperm whaler *Caroline*, which touched at Tanna in the New Hebrides in the late 1820s: "we laid there about a fortnight, the Women came on board and every Man took a Wife to himself, we gave them Shirts and Tobacco which pleased them."<sup>50</sup>

But such associations could mean more, on both sides. A man on the New London ship *Chelsea*, for example, promised a woman at Oahu in 1834 that he would stay on shore with her and gave her various pledges of his faith, including a set of shoemaker's tools—but then deserted onto another vessel. He was brought back to the *Chelsea* in irons, and when the vessel was about to sail, the woman cried in considerable dismay. The next day, she again visited the vessel, seemingly quite composed, and brought her lover a gift of oranges. The crew was convinced that they were poisoned; the legend of

such dangerous parting gifts was by then accepted whaling lore.<sup>51</sup> Thomas Morrison aboard the bark *Avola* at Pohnpei in February 1873, on the other hand, made the acquaintance of one "Juboy" for about ten days and took considerable delight in renewing the relationship in June—and, more surprisingly, again three years later for another two visits. Each separation was more painful: "very hard luck we are having and I am home sick . . . and if it was not for sister I would live in Ascension and make an easy life of it." The last time: "I am very homesick so long to Ascension and if it comes right Juboy I hope to see you again. So ends." His "homesickness," obviously, was not for New England.<sup>52</sup>

Morrison was not alone in finding his "Fayaway," the heroine of Melville's *Typee*. A particularly poignant story is that of Charles Lane, who visited Guam in the mid-1850s aboard the bark *Henry Taber*. His girlfriend was named Marie Pareda, and their relationship was close enough for her mother to suggest that he marry her and stay on, though his Protestant faith presented a problem for a Spanish Catholic society. "I left her feeling rather blue, Marie clinging to me and crying, all the way to the ship, and the last that I saw of her, she was waving her handkerchief to bid me what proved to be her last adieu." Lane returned, apparently having decided to marry her. Alas, Marie and most of her family had been carried off by smallpox. Only the mother remained.

I spent most of my time, while on liberty, at her house, trying to console her, and I really think that she thinks as much of me as if I was one of her own children. She had to show me Marie's things, and gave me a lock of her hair, and said that Marie's last words were of me. She took me to her grave and I plucked a flower, that resembles our wild honeysuckle, which I still have in my trunk, and every time I come across it, it reminds me of the happy moments that I spent in the Island of Guam.<sup>53</sup>

Perhaps two men of the ship *Sharon* of Fairhaven had better luck. In the Okhotsk Sea in 1858, they refused to part with two girls from the shore, promising that if they were forced to do so they would first cut the girls' throats, then their own. The perplexed captain found the only solution to be to join their hands and marry them on the spot—and even yielded his own cabin up to them until he could put them ashore at his next landfall.<sup>54</sup>

Associations across cultures thus took several forms, and while the whaleman in truth might be the rakehell of song, he was also capable of a different sort of association. It is clear that a very small percentage of the thousands of American whalers who reached the Pacific stayed on permanently. Promiscuity and very short relationships were obviously the rule, but enough examples survive to show that romantic love was not entirely missing in the South Seas. Alas, overall any relationship no matter how roman-

tic was likely to be little more than a memory that haunted them and that is also celebrated in another form or ballad, equally a part of permanent whaling lore.

The last time I saw her she was down on the strand  
As my boat passed by her she waved her hand  
Saying when you get home to the girl that you love  
Remember the maid in the coconut grove.  
Now I am safe landed on my own native shore  
My friends and relations gather round me once more  
Not one that comes round me not one do I see  
That can be compared with the lass of Mowee.<sup>55</sup>

Romantic love was not entirely missing—but it could not be said to be the predominant outlook either. Much the same may be said about homosexuality, obviously another option but one that is seldom noted in the primary sources and therefore seldom remarked on in the literature on whaling as well. That references to homosexual relations are few in extant logbooks should not be surprising. Log-keeping officers were not necessarily completely familiar with the private off-duty lives of the men in the fore-castle. Homosexuality was not “mainstream” morality, and whaleships in the nineteenth century were not the defiantly deviant communities found in seventeenth century Caribbean pirate societies, for example.<sup>56</sup> Practicing homosexuals seem to have been nearly an invisible minority, even those “situational homosexuals” who adopted homosexual practices as a result of deprivation. No doubt too there was homosexual rape, but again the societal belief that a man should be able to defend himself, along with the trauma of reporting such an incident, insured that the record is faint, though it does exist. It should also be remembered that the fore-castle was a small and crowded place, with very little privacy in any case.

If openly homosexual journals were written aboard whaleships, they have not survived the censorship of families or nineteenth-century librarians. Logbooks, however, do record complaints brought by victims or witnesses. The steward on the *Favorite*, for example, was beaten for attempted sodomy in 1856; the cook of the *Plover* was discharged for a similar action in 1864.<sup>57</sup> On the *Helen Mar* in 1873, the problem of a man who attempted sodomy was solved when he deserted.<sup>58</sup> Sometimes the evidence is tantalizingly uncertain. One wonders, for example, why the cabin boy aboard the *Brighton* in 1857 committed suicide with a pistol, though there is less doubt about a man on the *Meridian* who in 1830 “did a thing he had no business to do” to another, or what is meant by the accusation leveled against a man in 1831 on the London whaleship *Vigilant* that he was another’s “fancy man.”<sup>59</sup>

Official records also have a contribution to make. The Admiralty court at Honolulu imposed two substantial fines (\$1,500 and \$2,500) against a master for sodomy in 1861, rejecting his defense that the charges against him had been manufactured by a vengeful crew.<sup>60</sup> The consular files at Port Louis, Mauritius in 1872 record a case in which the captain assaulted the cook who had accused him of sodomizing the steward.<sup>61</sup>

While such traces exist, their rarity argues that homosexuality was not a predominant feature of whalemens' sexuality. Nor was the presence of women aboard, as was the case, for example, in some eras of British naval history. As with many male-exclusive professions in the nineteenth century, there were occasional women who turned up as forecandle hands—but they were a rarity too. In over 3,000 logbooks and journals I have found references to only four, quite marginal cases, such as the "steerage boy" (his job was to care for the boatsteerers and artisans who inhabited the steerage) aboard the *William and Eliza* who at Paita in 1857 "was discovered to be a girl and sent on shore immediately."<sup>62</sup>

A considerable number of American women did sail aboard whaleships, however, as wives of masters, a practice that while rare enough before the mid-1830s, was quite common by midcentury. Wrote Reverend Damon of Honolulu in the 1850s: "A few years ago it was exceedingly rare for a Whaling Captain to be accompanied by his wife and children, but now it is very common. An examination of the list of whalers shows that no less than 42 [wives] are now in the Pacific. Just one half of that number are now in Honolulu. The happy influence of this goodly number of ladies is apparent to the most careless observer."<sup>63</sup>

Wives went for several reasons. Society was changing, and in the 1830s a turning point was reached in "women's economic participation, public activities, and social visibility."<sup>64</sup> But there were also motives specific to whaling. Preservation of some semblance of family life was surely one goal, as whaling voyages lengthened and officers might return home only every three to five years. The practice, moreover, was less of a risk as the years passed. While at first wives had to round the Horn with their husbands if they would view the Pacific, after midcentury it was possible to journey by steamer to Panama, cross by train, and steam again north to San Francisco or south to Paita or Talcahuano, often the first and last Pacific port of call for a whaler. A wife could proceed independently to Hawaii, where as Damon indicated she would find a growing community of American women, wives of whalers, merchants, and missionaries. Families could then live aboard while the whaleship worked the "line" (along the Equator), probably for sperm whales, but would return again to the islands when the vessel went north to the less appealing Arctic for the summer season, perhaps to repeat

the pattern the next year. When the whaleships began to forsake the islands at the end of the century, however, whaling wives traveled more frequently to the Arctic and soon were to be found in considerable numbers at the wintering station at Herschel Island where whalers stayed over for a winter or two to avoid making the lengthy round trip to San Francisco every year. Here they enjoyed the society of other wives and children in a fashion that is well recorded in the literature and that itself is evidence to support a counterargument to tales of whalemen's debauchery in winter quarters of this sort.<sup>65</sup>

Some whaling wives adjusted well to their very limited world, finding ways to fill their days—especially if they had children to raise. Reading, sewing, and various domestic tasks were possible, but really only within the confines of the captain's cabin and sitting room, and the quarterdeck in reasonable weather. Wives might cook but seldom did; this was the cook's job, supplemented for the officers by the steward, perhaps assisted by a cabin boy who would also be expected to do much of the domestic work. Except on shore, or when meeting another woman at a gam, there was no other female adult company; the *Alice Frazier* in 1852 had the wives and families of both the master and the mate aboard for the season from Honolulu, but this seems to have been an unusual exception.<sup>66</sup>

Participating in the business of whaling was simply not done. "After supper I went up and sat in a boat to see them cut the whale in. I was there an hour and a half sitting perfectly still watching them for the first time in all my being at sea I have only seen the whale come in, without seeing how it was done." Susan McKenzie, in the Arctic on the *Hercules* in 1870, had already been on several seasonal cruises from Hawaii when she wrote this.<sup>67</sup> But there were other compensations. Mary Brewster on the *Tiger* took considerable pride in being the first Western woman—or so she claimed—through the Bering Strait (the year was 1849).<sup>68</sup> The fact that the carpenter-cooper aboard was her brother was a help too; his position allowed him to share her life to some extent and to put his professional skills to use for her as well.

And some were heroines. Nathaniel Jernagan's wife aboard the *Eliza F Mason* in 1854 won praise from the log keeper for her fearless assistance despite her ill health to the men of that vessel when it caught fire in the Kingsmill Islands and to those of the *Jireh Swift* who came to help.<sup>69</sup> Ezra Gifford's wife loaded pistols for him when the crew of the New Bedford ship *Ocean* appeared to have taken him prisoner (none of the officers would use them, nor did she) in 1864.<sup>70</sup> Annie Holmes Ricketson's nursing skills probably saved the life of her very sick husband on the schooner *Pedro Varela* in the Caribbean in 1885.<sup>71</sup> Marion Smith was carried on the crew list of the bark *Josephine* as "assistant navigator" for her husband who was master. Both

shared in ownership of the vessel; Horace Smith had taught his wife the art of navigation, and she not only navigated the vessel but taught others, including Valentine Roza, a "Bravan" from the Western Islands who soon was himself master of the bark *Canton* (1907-14).<sup>72</sup>

No doubt there were many such women who responded to crisis with courage and intelligence, and, when the voyage was over, perhaps reacted with more sadness than elation, as did Helen Allen aboard the *Merlin* approaching New Bedford with her two small children aboard after a four-year voyage ending in 1872: "My little cabin never looked better to me than now. I know this kind of life is forever over for me. This is my home, I have no other. I want to *see my friends*—but I do not feel that I am *going home*. Though there have been many things annoying yet I have enjoyed being here with my family . . . The voyage is *finished*".<sup>73</sup> A successful master's wife, like a successful pioneer anywhere, might not be above a bit of gloating. As the wife of M.C. Fisher, master of the New Bedford ship *Cowper*, put it in a letter to a newspaper at home, she had entertained the wife aboard the bark *Shepherdess* for tea in the Okhotsk Sea. "She was only eight months from home but was heartily sick of it. I *comforted* her by telling her that she had seen only the best part of whaling, yet."<sup>74</sup>

It would be an error, however, to generalize on the basis of these examples, however forceful. Even the best adapted of whaling wives suffered from loneliness and boredom; these feelings, coupled with the sheer incapacity to govern their own lives (except perhaps in the education of their children), are in fact the dominant themes of most of the many logs and journals that survive. Sarah Smith, aboard the bark *John P. West* of New Bedford, may perhaps stand as an example of the effect of the demoralizing tedium. 21 February 1883: "Blowing a Gale trying to boil [i.e., boil oil in the tryworks] but hard work. nothing for me as usual." 13 May: "Moderate nothing to be seen & nothing to be done." 1 June: "I do not mutch knit lace and read it is getting tedious." 13 August: "It has been some time since I have written any in this book but there is nothing to write about we have seen nothing nor no body hoping to some time. Have not done my Patchwork yet getting Lazy."<sup>75</sup> Even the same Mrs. Fisher whose veteran gloating is quoted above admitted much the same: "I spend a great many hours in this little cabin alone during the whaling season, and if I were not fond of reading and sewing, I should be very lonely."<sup>76</sup>

Elizabeth Stetson, aboard the bark *E. Corning* with her husband, left a similarly revealing record. An experienced sailor, she was determined to make the best of her voyage, taking over one hundred books for leisure reading and noting each by title in her journal as it was completed, usually without remark—though she found Fielding "decidedly *vulgar*, & *coarse*."

She gave much effort to the education of her six-year-old son; she sewed; she cooked; she read, or at least taught, the Bible to small Charlie. When the mate had his hip badly broken by a falling cask of bread, much of the responsibility for tending him fell upon her until he could be left at Talcahuano. Her contribution was real, but her life according to her own journal was more misery than fulfillment. She was very often seasick and spent every gale lying on the cabin floor throwing up. Her struggle to keep clean, to control the fleas and cockroaches, was constant. She herself was injured, spraining her foot in one instance and falling in the cabin water closet in another. Her son hit her in the head with a top he preferred to throw rather than spin (a difficult child in his mother's view, Charlie was subjected to various punishments, including "salts for obstinacy").

Aside from the seasickness, such trials were found at home, but the boredom was something else. 1 May 1861, a year and a half at sea: "What *unsatisfactory* life this is; day after day the same monotonous existence I think some times that we 'never' shall see whales again." 26 June: "Did not sleep at night cried myself to death. Oh dear. I wish I was good. Very rugged." 1 July: "very tired and lonely." 10 July: in the midst of letting out her dresses, "I have grown so fleshy how strange that I should grow fleshy and yet be sick all the time." 24 July: "Perhaps I have better have staid at home. God *help* and *forgive* us all." And so on throughout the log. Perhaps most disheartening of all (24 September 1862): "I drank up the last bottle of ale yesterday."<sup>77</sup>

Ill health was a constant danger, with medical responsibilities normally falling to the master equipped with little but a box of assorted medicines and a book of instructions. Lucy Ann Crapo simply abandoned her journal for several weeks when her daughter was born aboard. "It is now the 6th of May, and the intervening time I pass over, merely saying of it that William & myself have been fully occupied in caring for baby and myself, and I trying to gain strength, that I might be able to assist him. I have walked a few steps today but am still weak." Fortunately a week later she was established in a hotel in the Canary Islands.<sup>78</sup> Mary Stickney, reflecting on Christmas Day 1880, could only express her frustration at her inability to help her husband, master of the bark *Cicero*, in his struggle against incapacitating rheumatism. "Oh its so sad and gloomy. seems as though my heart must burst but oh hoping soon he will feel easier and try to master my feeling but with difficulty."<sup>79</sup>

Some trials were unlikely to be found at home. Benjamin Doane's captain aboard the *Athol* ran up on deck to get away from a crazed steward with a carving knife—and to lead him away from his wife and two small children.<sup>80</sup> A crazed man aboard the ship *Commodore Morris* actually seized

Gilbert Borden's wife around the waist with "the intention no doubt of doing her some bodily harm" but was subdued by Captain Borden. Unwisely, the man was sent below without further restraint. The next day he attempted the same thing, trying to bite her in the throat. It took three or four men to subdue him and put him in irons; he was sent home by steamer.<sup>81</sup> On the ship *Frances Henrietta*, on the other hand, the master when faced with a mutiny sent his wife and children aboard another vessel which was cruising nearby, as noted in Chapter 4.<sup>82</sup> But the ultimate danger was that suffered by Capt. John Pettengill's wife and two children, sailing with him aboard the Provincetown schooner *E. Nickerson*, which simply went missing without a trace in 1857.<sup>83</sup>

Mortality was high at sea, just as it was on land, but wives and children were less likely than masters to be injured by an angry whale or other occupational hazard. As Margaret Creighton has pointed out, however, they did suffer from scurvy and vitamin deficiencies caused by a limited diet, another hazard of the sea.<sup>84</sup> Their mortality was more likely to be "natural," but no less moving for all that. "Died at St. Helena, March 15th [1881], an infant child of Mrs. Capt. Handy, of bark *Falcon*, of this port [New Bedford]. Mrs. Handy also died on the 16th. Their remains will be sent home in the Swedish schooner *Areid*, now loading oil for this port."<sup>85</sup> Sarah Barker died aboard the *Ohio* in 1858; her father buried the infant in the Galapagos.<sup>86</sup> Rebecca Wing, eighteen months old, died in 1859 aboard the *James Maury*; the *Ocean Rover* provided liquor in which to preserve the body and logged the event: "poor little girl come out on the ocean to die. so ends."<sup>87</sup> On the bark *Bertha* in 1890: "had service over the body of our baby and put the remains in a small cask of oil."<sup>88</sup>

The track of a voyage might be altered by health problems. The *Navigator* put into Pitcairn in July of 1851 to leave the sick wife of the captain in hope of her recovery; when the vessel returned two and a half months later to pick her up, she had died only three days earlier.<sup>89</sup> Sympathy in such a tragedy could be widespread. When the master of the *Athol's* small daughter died in Sydney in February 1848, all the ship's crew attended the funeral as mourners and subscribed to a headstone in her memory.<sup>90</sup> Elisha Fisher lay over in Paita in 1863 in the New Bedford bark *Trident* hoping the local doctor could cure his wife's severe dysentery. The physician, whose remedies included castor oil, was of little avail. Fisher could only hope that sending her and her two children home by steamer would help: "it was a heartrending seen [scene] few but those that have experience the same can imagin the agony of mind that is felt at a seen like the above; God grant they may have a short and prosperous passage and meet there friends in health; and that we may all be spared to meet each other in 9 months from date in my prayer."<sup>91</sup>

A heartrending scene indeed, and no doubt some at least of the *Athol's* crew were moved. Yet by no means did all the whalemen share a sympathetic attitude, or indeed much tolerance, toward wives and families aboard. As in the examples just noted, the presence of a wife might delay a vessel's voyage—perhaps already made interminably long by the lack of success. When Ezra Gifford, master of the ship *Ocean*, like Elisha Fisher lay over at Paita with his sick wife (1860), intending to send the vessel out under the mate's command for a few weeks, the crew "were a good deal of disappointed" and threatened to refuse to take up the anchor—but the captain called them to account, proving "their will was good enough to carry it out but their spunk was wanting."<sup>92</sup> Aboard the Stonington bark *Cynosure* journal keeper Nicolas Anthony kept the measure of the days lost on account of the master's wife. 12 February 1846: "Came to anchor in Talchuana harbor for the Capt. to look after of his wife 14 days lost in port." 19 June: "Came to in the port of Callo [Callao] 25 days lost and 800 or so dollars for the Capt to show his wife the City of Lima," and so on.<sup>93</sup>

There was little to be done save grumble, whether about time lost or abuse of privileged status—for such privileges were obviously unavailable to the ship's foremast hands. Adam Briggs was particularly sour about the master's wife and children aboard the *Eliza Adams* on her voyage of 1872-76. The children made too much noise, for example, when the watch off duty was sleeping below. When told by the second mate to keep quiet, the children were told by Mrs. Hamlin "to make as much noise as they like, for father owned the ship. Now that was a pretty reply to tel[!] the children, or to bring them up." Fresh fruit and vegetables when available went only to the officers and the captain's family, and that too was a sore point: "When a Captain looks after the welfare of his wife, more than the interest of the voyage it is about time to sell out, for we are playing a looseing game. For my part I wish them no harm, but all I wish I had never seen them and if I could have my way, i would have them wife and children in the middle of Cape Cod, we would get along better and I think more Oil (but such is fate)." Unfortunately for Briggs' peace of mind, the *Eliza Adams* twice during a long voyage put into port so that Mrs. Hamlin could give birth, or "the cow to calf" as Briggs put it rather uncharitably: "by the time our voyage is at an end he will have a crew enough to mann a boat of his own."<sup>94</sup>

Mates were not immune from the same attitude. "After supper all hands in the Waist fiddling and dancing to amuse the Capt.'s wife," noted the third mate of the *Benjamin Cummings* in 1854.<sup>95</sup> It is clear that many aboard a whaleship, both officers and foremast hands, shared the viewpoint of J.E. Haviland aboard the *Baltic* in 1856 as she put into Oahu where the master planned to pick up his wife. "I sincerely hope he may be disappointed and

not find her there is no place for a woman on board of a whale ship."<sup>96</sup> Some sympathy must be extended to wives in such circumstances, however, for they were in a difficult position and often realized that fact only too well. Laura Jernagan found she could not even trust the officers on the *Eliza F. Mason*; the second mate was discharged for spying upon her and talking about it to others.<sup>97</sup> This seems, however, to have been an unusual incident; mates and wives were better advised to find a way to get along. But wives widely obeyed the unwritten law that dictated that they keep their distance from ordinary crewmen. Almira Almy's journal, 4 July 1855, shows the lonely isolation that might result: "I suppose all hands have gone to the fireworks this evening S & G [Sissy and George, her children] among the rest, I should like to be there too. I guess they are having a 4th [of July party] in the steerage, I hear dancing."<sup>98</sup> But familiarity was forbidden. Warren Tobey aboard the *Xantho* found Captain Beebe's wife to be a kind and Christian woman but she could do little when the captain knocked him down: "she had spoken sympathetically to me and expressed the hope that I might get along and try to bear the harsh treatment which she knew would continue the remainder of the voyage. She was compelled to avoid her interest in my welfare, being observed by her husband, as it would mean unhappiness for her, and although I had to do many things for her as cabin boy, she seldom had conversation with . . . me."<sup>99</sup>

Clara Kingman Wheldon, aboard the *John Howland* in 1864-70, was concerned for the men, particularly in the cold arctic summer. "The men have looked very solemn, having neither danced nor sung. They have no fire [in the forecabin] and its a mystery to me how they can keep from freezing. Captain says men are more healthy without fire, that they would keep their quarters too warm and then expose themselves and take violent colds." When a Hawaiian Island crewman died, she was obviously moved. "I cut my maderia vine and together with some geranium leaves, made a wreath which was tacked to the canvas containing the body . . . Poor Sam! He loved his green islands, and always came to the ship with a wreath of bright yellow merrigolds on his black hat."<sup>100</sup>

Brave, longsuffering, at least sometimes sympathetic—surely such adjectives are appropriately applied to whaling wives. But what then was their role? In the final analysis, it is hard to pinpoint any area in which their influence was decisive or even predominant, though this should hardly come as a surprise given their isolation, perhaps exacerbated by deep-rooted crew resentment as well. When Joseph Enos, master of the bark *Greyhound*, chastised the cook for using bad language in front of his wife, it must be remembered that many masters had rules against swearing in any case.<sup>101</sup> Lucy Smith on the *Nautilus* in 1870 displayed clear sympathy for a man who

when being disciplined by being put into irons cried and apologized—but there is no reason to believe that her viewpoint influenced her husband's conduct in that or any other disciplinary matter.<sup>102</sup>

On the matter of morals, perhaps there is more ground for argument. Native women were still brought aboard whaling vessels even though a wife might be aboard, as was the case with the *Eliza F. Mason* in the Kingsmills in 1854.<sup>103</sup> But this practice did fall off, at the same time that the frequency of wives aboard increased substantially. It is difficult, however, to make a direct linkage, given the fact that Victorian attitudes prevailed among owners and masters alike, while port communities even on remote Pacific isles adopted stringent regulations governing alcohol and prostitution, as noted in the preceding chapter. Whaling wives made their contribution to this changing moral tone, no doubt, but only as a part of a multifaceted impact. When Mary Brewster in her journal was critical of a missionary at Hilo who had married a native woman, regardless of the fact that the woman was missionary-educated and the daughter of a high chief (“a native wife spoils the whole and leaves a dark side to this pleasant place”), she reflected as much as contributed to hardening racist attitudes.<sup>104</sup>

Unfortunately, it is the negative influence that seems the easiest to document, in the sense that whaling wives reinforced the hierarchical nature of whaleship society by their very presence on a vessel. Lisa Norling has added another aspect, arguing that owners were unenthusiastic about wives aboard, fearing that masters thus encumbered were inclined to take fewer risks, perhaps no longer themselves lowering in whaleboats to pursue their primary prey.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps it was so, though it seems a master might be just as eager to show his courage—or to realize that without oil, the considerable expenses of boarding his wife and children in Honolulu or elsewhere would only be all the harder to meet, if whales were not pursued with all determination.

What then is the final conclusion to be made from the scattered and varied evidence concerning the relationship of whalemen to women, whether afloat or ashore? It is, first, that simplistic generalizations are not in order. In their relationships with women ashore, whalemen did not just bring “demoralization” in their wake; nor was their view of women from different cultures always simply exploitative. It was still the case, however, that no matter how close the attachment, it was with a woman still bound to the shore; she might be aboard for a few days, even go to sea for a short trip to a whaling grounds, but she did not become part of the closed male whaling world. There was no such place available.

Yet whaling wives attempted, for understandable reasons, to enter that world. They did so at a time when they were expected to confine themselves to their “sphere” of domesticity. Whatever the utility of that sphere for

bonding and sisterhood in the concepts developed in the literature of feminist studies, it remains clear that there was no place beyond a tiny cabin and some motherly duties that in general whaling wives were allowed to fill. They could not exercise their skills of domestic science such as filled the days of their sisters at home. Elizabeth Stetson has already been cited as a determined woman aboard the *E. Corning*, but she was helpless to counteract a steward, "ugly and hateful," who told her to leave his things in the pantry alone.<sup>106</sup> The "discrete, specialized, and objective work-role" demanded by the "canon of domesticity" was simply not possible to the typical whaling wife. One stereotypical image of the frontier pioneer woman is of loneliness, of isolation from a network of sisterhood. It was sometimes an accurate picture, sometimes not—but a part of that frontier stereotype is *not* boredom with absolutely nothing to do.<sup>107</sup> "The challenges [whaling wives] faced, though real enough, were surely no greater than those faced by women determined to make a 'proper' home in a covered wagon crossing Indian country or in a sodhut on an isolated prairie," Linda De Pauw has written in her study of *Seafaring Women*.<sup>108</sup> To the contrary, the trial of isolated idleness was a different sort of challenge altogether.

Nor, finally, could the whaling wife even fulfill the pious mission to reform the world that too was a part of her "sphere," one of the few roles in which she could win the encouragement and approbation of ministers and other community leaders.<sup>109</sup> Class boundaries made proselytizing impossible to all but the most devout and fearless master's wife. Her influence was, once again, best accounted for as a part of the general moral crusade of the nineteenth century, in cooperation with other categories of women with similar goals.

It may be the case that wives aboard contributed to the diminution of prostitution aboard whaleships, but no evidence exists upon which to claim for them a major role even in this significant social change. Alas for the creation of a new stereotype of the moral influence effected by these women *on board whaleships*: the only safe conclusion regarding their social effect is that they reinforced the distinctions between officers—above all masters—and crewmen. Occasional mitigation of circumstances, or small kindnesses extended to foremost hands—the molasses cookies sent forward at Christmas—were not demonstrable trends but only exceptions to rigid if unwritten rules that restricted whaling wives to very marginal existences. The story of whaling wives is heroic, worthwhile, and memorable, but their collective impact upon the masculine "total institution" that was whaling should not be exaggerated into something it was not.

Wives aboard whaleships, then, did not substantially transform the world of the average whaleman. Nor, except for short periods of time, did

female consorts from the shore. Their presence aboard, like their availability on land, fell off where missionaries or revivalism held sway, depending of course upon the era, the vessel, and the port of call. Established "sailor-towns" would always offer women as part of the attraction, but for whalemen the solace they represented was for most of their working lives more dream than reality. There were, however, other diversions aboard.

## The Festive and the Ceremonial

**F**or the whaleman whose time had not expired, had not opportunity to desert, was far from a liberty port and the women and grog it might offer, and had not found religion, whaling life, like that of any prisoner, was repetitious monotony, relieved by whales, weather, and grumbles about the food, and always with the same two or three dozen faces aboard. Yet there were relieving moments. When officers were reasonable men and not brutal disciplinarians, a man's spare time was his own. This was particularly true on Sunday, if the general tradition of no unnecessary work was observed, and if no whales were sighted. A man might work upon scrimshaw, or repair clothing, or overhaul his sea chest. There might be music aboard, even a scratch band in the forecabin. On the New Bedford ship *Illinois* in her voyage of 1845-47, for example, foremast hand Elias Trotter left a record of what seems to have been a happy ship: "We have in the forecabin 4 fiddlers, 1 accordion, & flute—nearly all men sing & such a combination of sounds & song, men seldom hear—in the dog watch from 6 to 8 in the evening all hands on the deck as there is little doing, sit around in groups spinning yarns & singing songs."<sup>1</sup> (Masters tended to play in the privacy of their cabins—the flute, in the case of that of the *Arab*, the violin on the *Cicero*.)<sup>2</sup>

A reflective man could always read (Benjamin Boodry read *Moby Dick* aboard the *Arnolda* in 1852, only a year after its publication),<sup>3</sup> or even fall back upon his own mental resources and observe the world around himself. "It is a lovely evening almost calm and warm not scarcely a cloud to be seen save what we call the Magelen clouds which are probibly clusters of stars. Their are two of them which look like small white clouds situated to the southard of us . . . While upon deck in such a night as this my eye

often wanders from planet to planet and from sun to sun and when I consider them as other worlds and inhabited my mind is lost in condemnation [sic].”<sup>4</sup>

But even a grumbling crew might, on rare occasions, find opportunity for impromptu celebration. On the *Charleston* in mid-Pacific in 1845 the early morning decks were awash from a sudden squall. “The watch brought up their blankets and jackets to wash on deck. Then they began a Skylark. The wet Clothes were thrown from one to another. Some were taken in the scuppers and scrubbed. After the operations their naked hides looked more like red men than white. Their clothes received more injuries than benefits.”<sup>5</sup>

Pleasures of this sort were always subject to a master’s interference should he feel so inclined. Aboard the bark *President* in 1844, Captain Simonds happened to look down the forecandle gangway and saw some of the men playing cards. The result was a major incident, precipitated by his demand that the cards be handed over. The men refused, claiming that the cards were private property. After reading the ship’s articles to the crew the next morning, he ordered one still recalcitrant seaman into the rigging for punishment—but then the rest of the men rallied to his cause. Officers and men quickly armed themselves with any available weapons, and a bloody clash was only prevented by the intervention of the second mate acting as peacemaker. Nobody was flogged, and the men kept their cards.<sup>6</sup> Stalemate had resulted, but the incident showed the extent to which a master might attempt to exert his authority.

Such a confrontation was predictable only to the degree that a captain and mates considered themselves in control of every aspect of the lives of the men, or to which the crew was willing to defend perceived rights. A whaleship had clear hierarchies of power, but the actual boundaries as in this case were still the subject of dispute. A man’s time off watch, unless called to duty to chase whales or work the vessel, he considered his own. Beyond those off-duty hours, however, there was no claim to special rest or recreation. Whalemen had, in fact, very few if any holidays or festive occasions that they could expect would be regularly observed aboard whaleships.

Some ceremonies might take place at the option of the owner or master, when the vessel sailed from its home port, though many departed with little fanfare. The bark *Sunbeam* left New Bedford in 1860 only after a visit from a number of ladies and owners on board, with one owner’s wife presenting each man with “a sponge cake, box of mustard, bottle of peppers and a paper of pepper,” all useful items. “A minister made an address, a prayer, and ladies sung some hymns, and then took leave and returned with the steamer to New Bedford.” (In fact the vessel lost her first mate to a sperm whale only two days out and put back to port in search of another.)<sup>7</sup>

Once at sea, there were moments of respite or celebration. One whale-ship might exchange visits, or "gam," with another—though often only the officers and a boat's crew or two were likely to see fresh faces long enough to make any difference. One fairly common celebration was to boil "donuts" in the hot whale oil of the trypots when one thousand barrels had been taken; for a three-hundred-ton vessel this would on average represent roughly half a full hold.<sup>8</sup> On her return home, the very tryworks (the brick structure supporting the pots, not the pots themselves) would be thrown overboard with some glee, for they were rebuilt afresh for every voyage. Most whale vessels, on the other hand, had only disdain for the standard maritime ceremony held upon "crossing the line" for those who had not voyaged across the equator. But it did take place: "at 5 pm old Neptune came on board and shaved 16 of our Green Boys and made them the true sons of the Oshan. Mrs Reynard [the master's wife] paid her Grog and enjoyed the fun," recorded the cooper of the ship *Canada* in 1846.<sup>9</sup> On the *Marcia* in 1833, the traditional lathering with "slush" and tar in preparation for shaving with a piece of iron hoop was performed, following which ceremony some victim inscribed a brief poem upon the tryworks:

Last night I dreamt a dream  
Which seems to have proved true  
That old Neptune came aboard  
And shaved the *Marcia's* crew.<sup>10</sup>

Aboard the *Elizabeth* in 1847, however, the captain came on deck and put a stop to such activities before the crew had completed them, but not before half of them were drunk.<sup>11</sup> Jeremiah Wills, on the *Henry Kneeland* in 1854, reported in a letter home a crossing ceremony that seems to have been strictly confined to the forecabin, presumably in response to a master who prohibited it in public.<sup>12</sup> Willie Burbank, cabin boy on the *Tamerlane* in 1877, was disappointed when Neptune did not come aboard his vessel.<sup>13</sup> Most logs and journals simply make no reference to any ceremony at all, not even of the rather smug sort made by William Almy's wife on the *Cape Horn Pigeon* in 1854: "crossed the line to day, old Neptune was not invited to come on board, did not wish for his company."<sup>14</sup>

The gam or crossing the line ceremonies were traditions of the sea, whether or not observed upon a particular vessel. But what of holidays customary on land? Whalers might be outcast sailors, distinguished by dress, language, and tattoos as were other men of the sea—but many also had ties with families and communities left at home, and seasonal festivals on land were reminders of those ties. It is striking, however, how few such dates were observed on a nineteenth-century whaleship. Religious occasions, save for

Sunday, go unmentioned, with the sole exception of Christmas to which I shall return. I have found one mention of April Fool's Day, a pagan festival in origin, but not a single reference to Easter in over three thousand log-books and journals.<sup>15</sup>

It should be remembered, however, that officially proclaimed civilian holidays were slow to develop in any case. It should come as no surprise, for example, to find only one celebration in honor of Washington's birthday on 22 February upon a whaleship at sea (vessels wintering in the Arctic at the end of the century were an exception, for almost anything was excuse for a celebration of some sort to relieve the tedium). On the ship *Saratoga*, anchored at Hilo in 1854, 22 February was celebrated by firing a gun at sunset and again later in the evening, together with a bomb lance or two; the anniversary did not keep the captain that same day from flogging two men in the rigging for insubordination.<sup>16</sup> But Washington's birthday had been sporadically honored at best, only generally noticed after the centenary of his birth in 1832, and even then the date depended upon individual state option.<sup>17</sup>

Thanksgiving had similar problems getting started, despite myth and legend. Though it was celebrated in the late eighteenth century, since Jefferson did not believe in it, it died a natural death as an official event when he became president. Only when Lincoln declared a national day of thanksgiving in 1862 did the holiday revive,<sup>18</sup> though it had always been celebrated in New England at least—and most whaling officers at least were from New England. But the very few references to Thanksgiving are from a later date, generally as painful reminders of home rather than records of celebration. "This is your thanksgiving day with you. how different it is with us. a gale of wind, our bark tossed about. I cut aunt Dyers cake, and gave it to the steward and then went into my room, and had a good crying spell. I wondered if they missed my place at the table, or if [they] thought of me. . . . May God bless and keep you all."<sup>19</sup>

Thanksgiving may have been relatively unknown at sea, but it was hard to avoid either Christmas or the start of a new year. The elaborate celebrations held at Herschel Island and other end-of-century Arctic wintering stations were impossible to duplicate at sea, but still it was not unusual to celebrate with a festive meal of some sort, perhaps after killing a pig for fresh pork. On the *Iowa* in 1854, Christmas meant "bread pudding pies and cake all very good and dispatched with a superior relish."<sup>20</sup> On the ship *Julian* in 1847, "to day being Christmas we were allowed an extra share of plum duff for dinner nothing to do but eat and sleep & spin yarns at night Captain gave us a box of raisens PM raining."<sup>21</sup>

Officers, especially captains, could take what they wished aboard in

preparation for a future celebration at sea. "This christmas, we had the best we have. I cut one of my cakes, and found it good as ever. Had Berry Pie, mutton stew, and cherry pudding. But I have longed for home," wrote the master of the *Mary and Susan* in 1877—the same man who had a good crying spell at Thanksgiving—"and the friends I have there. I know they must have thought of, and missed me in their little circle."<sup>22</sup>

When the master had his wife aboard an even greater attempt was made to replicate Christmas at home—all the more so if there were children as well. Helen Allen aboard the bark *Merlin* helped her children make gifts for all, including little bags to fill with tobacco for each of the men—and some men gave gifts in return, including some fancy scrimshaw for daughter Nellie. Though the *Merlin* was off Cape Horn at the time, the day, she reported, had gone very well.<sup>23</sup> Mary Brewster on the ship *Tiger* had similar feelings. "I have passed as merry a christmas here as I should at home," she believed after a day spent teaching the steward how to make ginger bread and pies.<sup>24</sup>

For the foremast hands, much depended upon luck. "At 7 Oclock A.M. got breakfast which was porpoise liver got dinner which was dough (or duff) and flapjacks made of porpoise brains. After noon stood Masthead. for supper had minced porpoise. A great christmas this," wrote Keith Marshall on the *Ocean Rover* in 1861 (porpoise was a delicacy, but Marshall probably was being sarcastic).<sup>25</sup> Samuel Sanford was quite clear about his treatment aboard the *George and Martha* in 1821: "we were entertained with a plumb pudding which contained about 50 plumbs this is an instance of Nantucket generosity."<sup>26</sup> But even a small kindness could be worth notice, as on the *Barnstable* in the southern Indian Ocean in 1860: "Arrived on Desolation whaling ground a hard old christmas in Indian Ocean. captain brought forward candy to the sailors weather fine."<sup>27</sup>

All too often Christmas was not celebrated at all. "With good weather and moderate Trades employed hauling riggin nothing more of notis," logged the steam bark *Belvedere* of San Francisco in 1884, an era when Christmas was generally celebrated.<sup>28</sup> And if noticed, it might simply be because of its absence: "Christmas day was not noticed on board. it happened to be my midnight trick at the wheel Christmas eve and if I did not feel bad then I never did and never shall. hard life this, but may get used to it," wrote Robert Weir on the Mattapoisett bark *Clara Bell* in 1855—but as will be seen, he recovered on the 4th of July.<sup>29</sup>

The schooner *Emeline* of Mystic was unloading supplies for a shore party of elephant sealers at the Crozet Islands in the Indian Ocean on Christmas Day 1843: "We had almost forgotten that to day is Christmas day the season of festivity and rejoicing at home and we can almost fancy that we hear the

halls resounding with the enduring notes of the violon and the merry step of the fascinating dance the smoking punch and the table groaning under the weight of poultry, pie and all the delicacies of the season, and, but stop the bark of that infernal elephant has destroyed the illusion and recalled our wandering senses back to our anchorage in the cold stormy cheerless and desolate *Crozettes*." Washington Foster, another sarcastic journal keeper, added that the only consolation was the feast "on luxuries of the savory flavour of which you can form no conception the richest and most delicate morsels of food that ever found its way into the human stomach such as elephants tongues, flippers, hearts, livers, tripe and young bull elephants' —" (with Victorian delicacy, Foster left out the last word).<sup>30</sup>

If there was to be celebration, however, a drop of spirits was always appreciated. Sometimes the master allowed "splicing the main brace," as was done aboard the *Pioneer*, lying in Mauritius in 1871 with the ship dressed in all her flags.<sup>31</sup> The *Florida* was bound around the Horn on Christmas day 1854: "at 7PM all hands aft got together and drank the health of the wife's [sic] and sweethearts with wine" (but all hands aft meant officers only).<sup>32</sup> On the ship *Sea of Warren*, Rhode Island, foremast hands desperate for a cup of Christmas cheer brewed a sort of "beer" from "a great composition cream of tarter sanda salaratus spruce hopps yeast and molasses . . . If it ever goes off it will make a drink fit for the gods," but when tried out on Christmas Day it proved "bitter as alloes."<sup>33</sup> But alcohol was a dangerous solvent, as proven on the New Bedford ship *Junior* in 1857. On Christmas Day Capt. Archibald Mellen served spirits to the men and retired to his own cabin; the next morning Cyrus Plummer and four men with guns entered the cabin, killed Mellen and one of the mates and wounded the other two, thus beginning one of the most famous of whaling mutinies.<sup>34</sup> It is not possible to say, however, whether the link with Christmas—or alcohol—was casual or causal.

That a labor dispute might arise over a festive occasion was highly unusual; discipline, food, or the condition of the vessel were much more probable causes. I have found only one such, and it involved Christmas. On the ship *Nimrod* of New Bedford, anchored in Honolulu harbor on Christmas Day 1858, seven men refused to turn out when called to duty. The astonishment of the log-keeping mate is clearly evident in his entry: "They refused on account of it being Christmas Day had no objection to work on any other day but refused simply because it was Christmas no other reason being given Notwithstanding they could see the crews of every American ship in the Harbor at work." The Captain warned the men of the probable consequences, and all but one returned to duty; for the holdout, a trip ashore to see the American Consul was required before he too went back to work.<sup>35</sup>

If Christmas was important to some whalers, so too was New Year's Day, mentioned, or at least noted by special decoration on logbook page in a handful of logs. Exceptional meals might mark the day: "a New Years Dinner of fresh pig cooked into a pie and baked together with apple pie, apple sauce, etc. Another year has gone the way of centuries and never will return. If any one had told me one year ago that today I should be off the Coast of New Holland [Australia] I should have said impossible," wrote Daniel Baldwin aboard the New London ship *Charleston* in 1845.<sup>36</sup> The festivities, once again, might be for officers only: "We have had the warmest and pleasantest you ever saw for a new years Day. In the evening the Capt.n opened a tin Box and took from thence a Fair Haven cake, and called Mr. Rodgers Mr. Prior myself down to partake of it. And while eating of it, we paid many compliments to the Dear creatures at home."<sup>37</sup> As with Christmas, the absence of a notable meal was also recorded: "we have not much of a New years Dinner but it will do for Whale men," wrote the hardened log keeper on the *George and Susan* in 1846.<sup>38</sup> More often, the day was cause for reflection: "these few lines contains [sic] the proceedings of a day perhaps that I never shall see again. that is i may not live to see the next January. how many thousands are there who now enjoy all the luxurys of life, besides a large share of good health, that before the expiration of this year will close their eyes to wake no more."<sup>39</sup> Thus William Bunker on the *Hesper* in 1834. On the *Stella* in 1860: "The Lord send us good wind to reach home, home, sweet home, to see our dear & near friends what would not I give to see my better halph & little one, o how [I] long to land on the Island of Marthas Vineyard I wish you a happy new year, I hope the next one we will be to gather to part no more: goodnight dear little family: I feel lonely: I look to your Portrait to night it made me feel worst. adieu."<sup>40</sup> On the bark *Canton Packet* it was occasion for poetry:

Unto the year of fifty two  
 We now do bid a kind adieu  
 And gladly welcom fifty three  
 In hopes sperm whales we soon shall see  
 And before the year does roll 'round  
 That we'll be full, and homeward bound.<sup>41</sup>

It was the Fourth of July, however, that was celebrated upon more whaleships than any other holiday—in fact more than all others taken together, if logbook references are any guide (and there is no other). The Declaration of Independence was, after all, commemorated from very early in the nation's history, and, at least when in port, whaleships too displayed flags and set off guns and fireworks. The log of the *Houqua* in 1836, lying in

St. Augustine Bay, Madagascar, shows why Washington's birthday might not have been regarded as a separate holiday: "all the ships fired a gun & sat their coulars for a remembrance of President Washington no duty caried on this day." The celebration, recorded the *South Carolina*, which was present the same day along with half a dozen other American whalers, began at sunrise, with guns fired every five minutes.<sup>42</sup> The *Orion* of Nantucket in 1831 managed to set her own foresail afire in the course of the Fourth; it was put out with little damage.<sup>43</sup> On the bark *Lancer*, on the other hand, sailing in company with the bark *Stamboul* (both of New Bedford), dancing was the order of the day off Australia's west coast in 1871: "We hade our ship trimphed with our flags to day and the stombole hade hirne [illegible word follows] and we hade a dance all day and to night and this day end as it Begains," wrote the log keeper, adding a crude drawing of a violin in the margin.<sup>44</sup>

As in the case of Christmas, July 4 celebrations were most elaborate in the Arctic, where a number of ships were together in harbor and had been so all winter. A veritable Arctic Olympics might result, including tug-of-war, running races of various distances (even a "cabin boy's race"), standing and running jumps, sack races, wheelbarrow races, whale boat races, greased pole climbing, baseball games, and the like. As always, a certain class element was present: harpoon darting was open to "sailors and boat steerers" but "hand lance darting" limited to the captains and mates who used these implements to kill whales. Prizes of tobacco, clothes, blankets, and soap were awarded. Altogether it was a memorable day; the account made in the log of the steam bark *Narwhal* at Herschel Island fills several pages to record the 1894 holiday shared with the *Balaena*, *Grampus*, *Karluk*, and *Andrew Hicks*.<sup>45</sup>

A successful Fourth required good fare as well as fireworks. For the journal keeper on the *Cape Horn Pigeon* in 1867, it seems to have been the most important consideration: breakfast was "hard bread toasted, salt meat, sweet-cake. Dinner salt meat hard bread toasted, sweet cake; supper hot cakes and sweetcake, salt horse and hard bread. I shall not attend the fireworks tonight."<sup>46</sup> For Robert Weir (who stood a gloomy trick at the wheel on Christmas Eve), the Fourth was a good day: "coconuts, roast pig, minced pies, soft tack [bread], ginger cake, pepper sauce, molassas, pepper, rice and pickles was our bill of fare, quite extensive for sailors. wound up the day by firing salutes with a couple of packs of fire crackers, and a grand concertino given by the steward and myself on an old tin pan and a cracked flute."<sup>47</sup>

Often enough food *was* the celebration. "Pig. Pork stake for breakfast. Roast Pork and Preserve Peaches. Pumpkin Pie and Ginger Bread, and Roast Pork. Stewed Pork. Preserve Peaches, pumpkin Pie and Ginger Bread, for

supper. Have not done anything today but loaf, except me I made a lucky tiller for my boat I hope," recorded Lyman Bourne, mate on the *Tropic Bird* in 1882.<sup>48</sup> The menu differed somewhat aboard the *Avola* in 1871: "for the fourth of July for Breakfast porpoise liver and brains for dinner chicken soup and plain duff and for supper boiled ham and mince pie that is not bad for a whaler there is some at home that would think that it was not very bad if the[y] had it So end."<sup>49</sup>

Still there was always the pull of memory. "All hands having a tuckout on soaked bread and beef," wrote Thomas Ackerman in 1862, adding "I am down in the mouth I want to get home I never was so homesick in my life."<sup>50</sup> Nor was the celebration always such a pleasant reminder. George Wheldon was not impressed with the Fourth of 1853 aboard the bark *Sea Shell*: "the national anniversary was spent dull enough in the ship, not even drinking a bumper to the success of Liberty for the simple reason that we could not get it." And the following year, still on the same vessel: "The old man with his accustomed generosity gave us a flour griddle-cake apiece for supper."<sup>51</sup>

Such complaints were common. On the *Lancer* in 1865: "all hands employed breaking out watter by god a dry old Forth of July no whiskey."<sup>52</sup> The *Magnolia* in 1837: "All these 24 hours a moderate wind and fine weather . . . but nothing to cheer our drooping spirits excepting it being the day of our national independence we can feel but not realize it so ends these 24 hours."<sup>53</sup> On the *Smyrna* in the Straits of Sunda in 1855: "Commences with fine weather all hands employed wooding stowing water and blacking lar-board bends this is our fourth of July."<sup>54</sup> The journal keeper aboard the *Samuel Robertson* expressed his acidic opinion through a mock program:

Independence of the United States celled on board of  
an American Whaler in the South Pacific Ocean  
Celebration  
—Order of the Exercises—  
Rose in the morning and scrubed of[f] decks squared yards  
Lowered for Blackfish after long pull to windward come on  
board unsuccessful.<sup>55</sup>

For the disappointed log keeper, there was little recourse. One such simply headed the entry "4th of July 1776" whatever the year actually was (on the *Bowditch* in 1850, and the *Covington* in 1853).<sup>56</sup> Usually a grumble was about all that was possible. On the *Eliza Adams* in 1876, "the king of all 4th of Julys," the keeper might have been a proud teetotaler in noting that "all hands religiously sober," despite a small celebration of setting the stars and stripes at the mizzen peak and firing a small cannon after dinner—but

the odds are it was not meant as happy comment.<sup>57</sup> Clothier Pierce, master of the bark *Minnesota*, took a very pessimistic view, for in his mind, whales and holidays were interconnected. "This is the Fourth of July, a day of rejoicing with People at home; but a Sad Day with us no whales in the Ocean that we can find (a head wind) No chance to do any thing or to ever get one whale. The LORDS Hand appears to be against the Poor Old Minnesota and all concerned in her Will the Lord in his infinite Mercy ever suffer us to get One Whale."<sup>58</sup> But the most loquacious commentator I have found sailed aboard the ship *Milton* on the Fourth of July 1871, a calm day with mirror-like seas.

And still there was not anything in nature to remind us that another ANNIVERSARY of our National Independence had arrived. But we felt it in our souls. We fired no guns. Neither even hoisted what is left of our once American Ensign, which I am ashamed to say we can hardly call a remnant. But we did feel Patriotic several times through the day. We felt as though we should like to *shout*; but our liquid refreshments being very low, we refrained. At the close of the day we felt as though we must give three cheers for General Washington and the Heroes of '76, also the Continental Congress, and the 4th of July, or else burst. But after considerable exertion we choked down the felling and contented ourselves with setting astride the rail and whistling Yankee Doodle with variations.<sup>59</sup>

Though the most frequently observed holiday, still perhaps the Fourth is mentioned in one of every hundred logs, and some of those are no more elaborate than that of the *John Howland* in 1859: "thus ends the fourth simply as the fourth of July nothing more."<sup>60</sup> Log keepers, it should be remembered, were not obliged to record more than desertions, punishments, and the like as far as the lives of the crew were concerned. Keepers of private journals had no such requirements or limitations. In either case, however, failure to mention Christmas or the Fourth of July does not mean that the date was not marked in some way aboard.

There was another occasion that touched every man and that was required to be recorded in logbooks according to the law of the land: a death aboard. Even without such legislation, death with its inescapable feeling of inevitable mortality was likely to be remarked in any case. Aboard whale-ships the ceremonies of death were important, and much attention was paid to them, though here too as with all else there were class differences. Elaborate death ceremonial was hardly unique to the whaling industry, of course. As Lewis Saum has put it, antebellum America was "a society saturated with death, and fastidious to a fault in observances pertaining to it."<sup>61</sup> Attitudes were changing, however, and after the late 1820s death was beginning to be seen as an appropriate part of the life cycle rather than an intrusion to be

met with melancholy and gloom; the development of park-like public cemeteries was part of, and a reflection of, the process of change.<sup>62</sup>

On whaleships, death was a constant visitor. Men were killed in accidents aboard the vessel or by whales when in combat in whaleboats. They died of disease, whether brought aboard in the first instance, or contracted during the voyage. Kanakas in particular were susceptible to unfamiliar viruses, above all while serving in the harsh Arctic climates for which they were unprepared either mentally or physically in their home island environments. When any man died, some mention was always taken, no matter how brief, and often a black border inscribed around the entry, to set it off as a death announcement. Sometimes the entry is quite abrupt: "At 11 1/2 o'clock George Washington died, what his disease was no one on board knows. at 4 o'clock buried the dead."<sup>63</sup> (George Washington might have been a real name but more likely was one arbitrarily assigned to a Kanaka.) "Jim Kanaka a stowaway died and was buried at sea. Latter part wind from the N.W. so ends."<sup>64</sup>

But other examples show how great the impact could be. In 1857 a man named Kelly died of "consumption" aboard the Mattapoisett bark *Willis*:

just before supper he told the captain that he was dying and asked him to forward a letter to his brother—for he had one written—and we did not think that he was so very near to his final end, but just as the moon appeared . . . he *left us* without hardly a struggle. I was the only one with him at the time. I was rubbing his hands. But a moment before he had asked me to, for he said they were *so cold*. These were his last words. he was 22 years of age, and belonged in St. Louis—young—promising and inteligent [sic]. Oh! what a chance for reflection. We laid him out and he now lies on the main hatch. Our watch to-night is a solemn one.

The funeral was held in daylight, with all hands in attendance. The body, wrapped in a canvas shroud and under an awning formed of the American flag, was committed to the sea, with the journal-keeper at the captain's request reading a biblical passage. "A burial at sea, is one of the saddest events that can take place. Oh! what a shade it has thrown over our little crew. Can it be *possible* that any *one* of *us* shall be called away form the scenes of time during the remainder of this short voyage [the *Willis* was at sea for only 15 months]. Time alone will tell. We will hope for the best."<sup>65</sup> This account by log keeper Albert Griswold is unusual in its emotion—and its length. But a similar effect is conveyed in much shorter entries, for example in the bewilderment felt aboard the *Martha* of Fairhaven in 1854 when a man in apparent excellent health died of a sudden, unstoppable nosebleed, "a young lad Spanish Boy & was a verry promising smart young man."<sup>66</sup> There was a need to gather what little was known about a man and record it for

posterity, as on the *California* in 1883: "25 September 1883. A day of sorrow upon the Ocean. The Death of James A. Sharps formerly Carpenter of Ship James Arnold who at 3 a.m. was well & 4.50 am a corps. funeral at 4.30 P.M. Age 54 years. Been with us 14 months and 12 days. His home New York."<sup>67</sup>

No matter how little was known, it was important to observe the formalities. Aboard the *Franklin* in 1854 a Kanaka from Maui died, but there was nothing more that could be said of him. Nevertheless, the decks were washed, and the man laid out on a board and sewed up in canvas "with a bag of brick and sand lashed to it to sink it ready for burial." The main topsail was backed, and the men called down from mastheads for the service, with the master offering a bible reading "and a Prayer for a token of respect for our deased [sic] shipmate. The Body was then committed to the deep Squared the yards and kept the ship her course."<sup>68</sup>

The dead were buried over the side when the vessel was in deep water, far from land. But whenever possible, a man was laid to rest in a grave ashore, and a master might take considerable effort to this end. Whalers' burial grounds existed in a number of otherwise remote corners, such as the Galapagos Islands, for example. The master of the *Midas* in 1859 was laid to rest in the foreigner's cemetery at Ayan in the Sea of Okhotsk, with the priest of a Russian steamer officiating.<sup>69</sup> Four years later a service was held aboard the ship *Governor Troup* for Edward Cranston, with the colors half-masted and a service ready by the captain—then the body was carried ashore to be buried in the same ground, not far from the *Midas's* master no doubt.<sup>70</sup>

St. Paul, a desolate rock in the southern Indian Ocean, had its memorials to mark similar graves lying under a looming cliff. "Sacred to the Memory of Pardon Howland who fell from the mast head of ship *Midas* of New Bedford and was killed, aged 13 years, 1842"; "Sacred to the Memory of Mr. Charles Mallory, first Officer of the ship *Aeronaut* of New London, who was killed by a Whale near this place, aged 21 years, 1837."<sup>71</sup> A man might lie in a distant, perhaps watery grave, and yet be memorialized at home, as in New Bedford's Bethel:

In Memory  
of Benjamin Franklin  
son of  
Otis Norton and Susan Grinnel  
PIERCE  
lost in Ballemas [Ballenas] Bay  
Lower Coast of California  
February 20, 1863  
Aged 28 yrs 4 mos 22 days<sup>72</sup>

Masters who took their wives and children along on their voyages risked tragedy. In an often-cited disaster, the wife and daughter of the captain of *Roscoe* saw him and his son—along with four other men—killed by an angry whale off Cape Horn.<sup>73</sup> Charles Weeks, master of the steam bark *Thrasher*, fell down a hatch and died ninety minutes later in the presence of his wife; she at least had the comfort of two other wives present in the same Arctic anchorage. Weeks's body, with the entrails removed, was placed in an ice-house until the spring thaw, with a large cortege following the body to the impromptu vault. Later Weeks was conveyed to San Francisco, "in pickle" as Hartson Bodfish, master of the *Newport*, put it most pragmatically.<sup>74</sup>

Aboard the bark *Awashonks* in 1861, however, John Marble's wife had no such comforting friends when he died aboard, regretting with his last words that he must leave her and his son "almost as it were among strangers." He had time at the end to call in his small son "and give him a Dieing Fathers counsel & advice." It was Marble's wish for his body to be preserved in liquor and carried home. Apparently the spirits were unavailable, for he was put into a coffin coated inside with white lead and covered outside with canvas. Alas, for a poignant tale, a month after his death the log recorded a grim fact: "noticed to day that the box which contains Captain Marble remains commenced to leak a little." In due course another, leaden box was made in Fremantle to cover the first and the body conveyed home.<sup>75</sup> In death, as in life, there existed class differences; such efforts as were made for both Weeks and Marble would not have been made for any ordinary foremast hand. It was not always the master who died; on both the *James Maury* in 1859 and the *Bertha* in 1890 an infant child passed away. The former was preserved in oil, the latter in spirits, for subsequent burial.<sup>76</sup>

More commonly a master or mate died aboard with no family present to mourn him. If convenient, the body was taken ashore—sometimes even if not convenient—to avoid burial at sea. I have found only one case in which a man was buried over the side when it seems he might have found a grave ashore. The mate of the bark *Concordia* was killed in the surf landing from a whale boat on an island in the Mozambique Channel—a disaster witnessed by his son, who was a crewman aboard the vessel. The body was recovered and later buried at sea—but it may simply have been the case that the surf was judged too dangerous to risk yet again.<sup>77</sup> More typical were the cases of Pardon Winslow, master of the bark *Marcella*, who in 1852 was buried in Johanna (Anjouan) in the Indian Ocean's Comoro Islands, where the vessel had gone in search of medical assistance.<sup>78</sup> C.F. Buckler, master of the steam bark *William Baylies* in 1899 was killed accidentally by rifle bullet off the Siberian coast in the Bering Sea; the mate, now in command, went to considerable effort to navigate across to see to it that he was buried on American soil.<sup>79</sup>

On the *Montezuma* in 1852, it was not possible to bury on land Capt. Abner Tripp when he died three months out from New Bedford: "read a funeral seramony and a prare and then committed his remanse in to the bryny Oceian and with all the respect that could be under the sercomstances as it was blowing heavy called all hans and concluded to start for home as we thought it best for the oners and ourselves."<sup>80</sup> On the ship *Chandler Price*, on the other hand, Capt. John Curn died in 1856, despite earlier exchanging his steward for a man from the *Braganza* "that understood medicine." The mate tried to make Oki Island between Korea and Japan but despite heaving to could not reach it; in the end, Curn was buried at sea "after the usual ceremony."<sup>81</sup>

Mates also were important, and their loss might be felt very severely, as in the case of the second mate of the ship *Roman*, killed by a whale in 1852. He had been keeping the log, and Pardon Tripp, the vessel's master, now assumed that duty. His first entry was a sorrowful one, recording the loss of "a man that I looked upon eequal to an own brother & had it bin my Only real Brother I could not have felt worse. I fell sometimes as if I was at home I would never go in sight of salt water again But such reflections must not be given away to [:] the motto of the whaleman must be Perserverance, yes Persever he must . . . Pardon Tripp Master of Ship Roman of New Bedford . . . Respectfully dedicates this page of the Afflicted Relatives of the Deceased."<sup>82</sup> The second mate of the *Milton* was killed off Tongatabu by a whale in 1872. The body was lost at the time but recovered a week later some fifteen miles from the incident; the funeral, held on shore, was well attended by the vessel's crew and that of the ship *Niger* with which she was sailing in company.<sup>83</sup> Sometimes another vessel could help, as in the case of the bark *Spartan* which took the body of the fourth mate of the *Andrew Hicks* aboard to convey it to Talcahuano for burial.<sup>84</sup> It was a natural request but probably would not have been made for an ordinary crewman.

Whaling was a dangerous profession, and though mortality rates in the nineteenth century were not particularly low ashore, the risk of accidental death was clearly in a whaleman's mind at least in the aftermath of such a tragedy. But, like Pardon Tripp, many persevered so long as there were whales to hunt. Captains and mates might be given special treatment, but they were captains and mates after all, and had earned their positions. Even the death of an ordinary crewman, however, was not to be ignored on a whaleship's voyage. The ceremonies helped in marking the transition from life to death, just as on land. Indeed it was preferable to have them, or at least the burial, on land; I have yet to find any logbook remarks about the final rightness of consigning a sailor's body to the sea.

As on shore, the festivals and ceremonies in which a whaleman might

share were important, as reminders of home, or mortality, or both. Yet aside from death or punishment on board it is remarkable how seldom logbooks and journals record the festive or the ceremonial in any form. Christmas and the Fourth of July were the most likely to be celebrated, but even these relatively popular occasions were by no means universally observed, and when they were would quickly be set aside if whales were handy for the taking. Death was another matter, a more solemn occasion—and if a funeral was adjourned because of a whale sighting I have not found a record of it. On those rare occasions when celebrations of life, or commemorations of death, did take place, they proved once again that whaleships were class-bound institutions. Masters died as they had lived, with more authority.

Whalemen before the mast, unfortunately, had few rights, and could expect fewer privileges. The master had almost unlimited power, delegated in part to the mates, for the safety of the vessel and its equipment—the investment of the owners, of which he might be one—and the completion of a successful voyage. Owners, officers, and courts of law all agreed that such authority had to be supported, virtually at any cost. It seems clear, however, that only a rare master was able to maintain that authority and yet encourage an atmosphere in which the crew could anticipate some celebratory break in the general monotony. That fact probably helps explain the high rate of desertion that whaleships experienced when they went into port and the fairly frequent occurrence of work stoppage when they did not. Would a greater frequency of regular "holidays" have produced a more amenable work force on the average whaleship? It is impossible to say, for many factors were involved, including the steadily increasing percentage of foreign crewmen through the century. Still, it might have helped. The absence of regular festival, the predictability of ceremonial only in death, must nevertheless be taken into account in any general social history of nineteenth-century American whaling. For the average whaleman, if he survived in reasonable health and if the voyage was successful enough to put a few dollars in his pocket, the only festival to be regularly if rarely anticipated was the end of the voyage, whether at home or in some foreign part, though the delights might not always live up to long-savored expectations.

# Waterfront Havens and the Honolulu Riot of 1852

**T**he whaleman at sea was in many ways a prisoner, as has been shown in the preceding chapters. He was not helpless, nor without rights or means of protest or well-known avenues of escape, but a prisoner none the less. Of the escapes possible, desertion was subject to considerable danger, with recapture and punishment or perhaps a worse fate ahead, particularly if a man was taking his chances in a society unaccustomed to or intolerant of outsiders, or both. But what of the whaleman who either by successful desertion or discharge found his way to a recognized point of interchange between the sea and the shore, the waterfront, the "sailortown," of some recognized landfall? Here there might be refuge of a sort but also not without its own special dangers.

Home ports such as New Bedford could be expected to be reasonably familiar and receptive, though the same landsharks were still there, and the unwary man would find "infitters" as dangerous as outfitters.<sup>1</sup> In the major ports of the world, the whaleman was nothing unusual, and was just as likely to be swallowed up by San Francisco's Barbary Coast or the equivalent district of Rio, Cape Town, Hong Kong, or Sydney, and, like any other mariner, find himself bound away on some vessel before he knew what was happening. Whalers were no strangers, as well, to the lesser but important ports of the world, on their way to or from the more exotic grounds of the Indian Ocean, or perhaps the Sulu Sea, the Celebes, or the Molucca Passage, and thus with good reason to "recruit" at the Seychelles, or Mauritius, or the ports of the Philippines or Indonesia. Kabinda at the mouth of the Congo, or Zanzibar at the other side of Africa were common ports-of-call, romantic-sounding perhaps but in fact dreaded for their fevers, as were most African ports.

More favored, certainly by owners and cautious masters, were the more remote anchorages where, it was hoped, the strangeness of the local society or the harshness of the landscape might discourage desertion—though, as has been seen, whalers would desert anywhere. Such were, for example, Hakodate in Japan or the ports of Siberian Russia or Western Australia. Better still were those islands with limited hinterland and regulated societies, such as Port Stanley in the Falklands, or St. Helena, or Norfolk Island, though the very remoteness and limited agricultural surplus might make the price for recruits no bargain.

Such considerations, together with the nearness of a whaling ground, encouraged development of a settlement, for example, in the Bonin Islands, seven hundred miles south of Japan's coast and twelve hundred east of Taiwan.<sup>2</sup> Though the islands were long known, no successful community lived here (*bo-nin* means “empty of men”), until a New England sailor by the name of Nathaniel Savory, on the beach in Oahu, heard of the islands and, with the backing of the British consul in Hawaii, journeyed there with four white men and twenty-five Kanakas. His goal was to sell supplies—mainly potatoes and turtles—to whalers, and the whalers found the islands most convenient. Though a few men deserted here, on the whole the remoteness was protection enough. The Bonins, however, attracted the attention of outsiders—some of whom thoroughly looted Port Lloyd, Savory's settlement on Peel Island, in 1849. Both Britain and the United States had their eyes on this group as a possible base, and Matthew Calbraith Perry, in the process of opening Japan, purchased a small tract here for a coal depot and made Savory the American agent and “chief magistrate” on the islands.<sup>3</sup> The claim thus established was never enforced, however, and the refuge in paradise had as tragic a story as similar moments in the history of Pitcairn or the Galapagos (Savory killed a man who raped his ten-year-old daughter, at least according to one account).<sup>4</sup> In the 1860s and 1870s, Japan took control of the entire chain.

Many more-frequented islands became famous, or infamous, as recruiting ports. Nukahiva in the Marquesas; Papeete on Tahiti (until the French took control); Apia on Upolu, Samoa; Tongatapu; Pohnpei (Ponape) in Micronesia: each had their day, and the histories of their communities of whalers and other beachcombers, and their interrelations with native peoples, will long hold the fascination that continues to draw the attention of scholars. One most famous harbor, or rather group of landing places, was in New Zealand's Bay of Islands at the north end of North Island. Here a long struggle was fought out between whalers (British and American), missionaries, and Maoris, with the prize eventually going to Great Britain, which took over New Zealand in the 1840s.

Generally less well-known but probably more famous in whalemens' tales and forecandle songs were the challenging port towns of the west coast of South America. Whaleships paused in any settlement that offered a landing ground on this coast, but primarily they went to Talcahuano (often the first and last port touched by a whaleship voyaging to and from the Pacific round the Horn) and Valparaiso in Chile, and Callao, Paita, and Tumbes in Peru. There were others—the small town of San Carlos (home of the captain's "strumpet") on the Chilean island of Chiloe south of Talcahuano, Coquimbo, Arica, Guayaquil—but these five were the whalemens' main recreation centers.

Such towns were likely to have a favored nickname—Vallipo (or more rudely, Wallop-my-ass-with a Razor),<sup>5</sup> Turkeywanna—and be known by special features, such as the dangerous bar outside the harbor of Tumbes, or the destructive "northers" that could sweep down on Talcahuano. Some served as ports for larger and more important urban centers, Santiago in the case of Valparaiso, and Lima for Callao, and officers and their families at least might see the sights. The average whalerman, however, was more likely to recall the drinking dens, whether the local pulquerias or the foreign-run establishments aimed at emptying the sailor's pockets. Valparaiso lay close under three hills, separated from each other and the town by gorges; known as the Fore, Main, and Mizzen tops, these collectively formed the Sailortown, where the "vigilantes" (the word was borrowed by gold rush California) seldom ventured. Some bars and brothels build a permanent reputation, such as Madam Gashee's in Callao, or the "American Restaurant" in Talcahuano.<sup>6</sup> Most, however, were simply the habitat of "ladrones y picarones," rascals and thieves, with little in the way of civil authority to control them. Thomas Bennett, who worked as a carpenter for some months in "Vallipo" in the 1820s, was particularly severe in his condemnation of the several hundred unpaid soldiers who were supposed to keep order in that town. "It is unsafe to walk the streets by night; they will take the clothes from one's back, if they see an opportunity; and should they find foreigners assembled at a tavern in the evening, they will do their utmost to disturb their comfort, to excite a quarrel, and to shed blood. They take the lead in pulquerias (grog shops), and at the fandangos (dance houses); and strangers must look to it they do not thwart them."<sup>7</sup>

Robinson Warren was in Callao in the 1850s. "In Callao were gathered together perhaps as 'fine a collection' of gallows birds as ever were collected in one spot on earth, Newgate not excepted; banished from California by the Vigilance Committees, or escaped from Botany Bay and Norfolk Island, they all centered here, and luxuriated in the utter lawlessness of this delightful spot, indulging the pleasant little excitements of throat-cutting and rob-

bery, so much so, that no one ever thought of moving around at night without having the handle of his revolver in a position to grasp at a moment's notice."<sup>8</sup> A half-century later, Howard Hartman was shanghaied into a Chilean whaling bark after a visit to a Valparaiso bar, which he recalled was adorned with whaling trophies, ship models, and Patagonian Indian weapons and "was presided over by a broad-shouldered, hairy-chested one-eyed individual, crowned and bewhiskered with a mop of coarse hair like a horse's mane, who served half a dozen shifty-eyed half-caste waiters and customers with a nonchalance, that discouraged argument."<sup>9</sup>

Few visitors came away with a favorable impression of any of these ports; I have found no other who would have shared James Caswell's 1850s memory of Talcahuano: "I thought if ever I settled down on shore it would be in that place." (Caswell by his own account jumped ship every time he signed aboard and never settled anywhere; in any case, he had visited the port several times and spoke fluent Spanish.)<sup>10</sup> Of all five ports, however, Paita seems to have had the most unsavory reputation. Little more than a few dusty streets under a high cliff, the most memorable feature was the graveyard a half-mile from town, where the bodies were buried under sand, which soon blew away. "Hundreds of greedy turkey-buzzards hovered around this miserable abode of death, preying upon the bodies which lay exposed," wrote Stephen Curtis, who was there in 1841 on the New Bedford ship *Mercury*.<sup>11</sup>

The log keeper Thomas Roe, foremast hand aboard the New London ship *Chelsea* was most glad to escape Paita after his visit in November 1831. After a good meal in a public house, he thought he would stroll about the town, but "in one of the back streets was seized by four men who took all my money shoes neck hankerchief & they threatened to stab me if I made any resistance. We lost one of our men at this place (John the frenchman) wether he ran away or was kill'd by the spaniards we never could tell. Two more of the crew attempted to run away but after being robbed of all they had were at last seized by the spaniards who claimed a reward of 30 dolls which Capt had to pay."<sup>12</sup>

Roe was lucky to survive and to pen his memoirs. Many, by all accounts, were not, emerging on the wrong end of a quarrel with what J.C. Mullett, in Paita in the early 1850s called "a swarthy looking people, filled with superstition and treachery, carrying long dirk-knives in their boots" (he too was most impressed by the graveyard).<sup>13</sup> Yet recruiting in such ports was inescapable, at least for vessels exploiting the nearby "on-shore" ground. Their contribution to the local economy was substantial, and not simply to the grog shops and houses of prostitution. The ship *Nye* of New Bedford is a case in point. Recruiting at Paita in November 1845, she was obliged to pay

\$21.50 in case for various entrance, anchorage, and clearance fees, another \$6.00 to the American consul, advances to the crew totalling \$87.75, and another \$206.65 for supplies, including 75 bushels of potatoes, 20 of onions, 200 pounds of sugar and 145 of cocoa, 425 pounds of beef, 40 watermelons, 365 pumpkins, and 20 dozen eggs (enough, in other words, to supply all the crew and not just the officers), for a total of \$322 in cash money. In April 1846 the Nye returned to the same port, and paid out slightly more once again (this time selling a few barrels of oil to offset cash expenditures).<sup>14</sup>

Many whalemens would have offered the opinion that the inhabitants of such ports as Paita were insufficiently grateful for the boon to the economy recruiting brought in its wake. Indeed, officers and crew alike seem to have found it far more pleasurable to have recourse to the Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands, as they did as soon as the "off-shore" grounds and the area a few degrees north and south of the Equator known as "on the Line" were exploited in depth. Honolulu, Lahaina, and Hilo all were major whaling entrepôts in their day, though Hilo had not quite the same level of traffic nor as lengthy a history of serving the whaling industry. Lahaina's ease of access made it a major roadstead for whalemens, requiring substantial American consular activity as has been seen. That heritage is still preserved to the benefit of the tourist industry, in part through the research of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation, that has substantially documented the town's history. Above all, however, it was the town of Honolulu that was the most powerful magnet for whalemens in that part of the world. So vast was the impact of whalemens on the islands that historians are, for once, in general agreement that whaling shaped their basic economy in the early decades of the century.

More than one serious quarrel arose, not surprisingly, between whalemens and natives or missionaries. Only at Honolulu, however, was there a disturbance large enough to put the town into the hands of the whalemens. It is a story interesting enough in its own right to be told in detail—but it is a tale that gives final reinforcement to the image of whalemens captive to their industry, even though ostensibly free ashore.

On the evening of November 8, 1852, Henry Burns, foremast hand on the New Bedford whaling bark *Emerald*, died in his cell in the fort that served Honolulu as prison and police barracks.<sup>15</sup> Precisely how Burns died has never been clear. All accounts agree that he was drunk and disorderly and had been arrested and confined in the fort. Cells in this edifice held up to thirty men, and Burns shared his with from four to ten others: accounts do not agree on this point. Perhaps Burns quarreled with another prisoner, and in the process both men tore bricks from the floor and heaved them at one another, while the other prisoners, caught in the line of fire, yelled to

the constable on guard for help. Perhaps, on the other hand, Burns only used the bricks to hammer noisily on the door in some drunken fashion. However it occurred, there was a disturbance, and George E. Sherman, the foreign constable on duty, went to the cell door and told Burns (and perhaps the others) to stop. George E. Parke, "Marshal of Hawaii" and therefore Sherman's superior, has left the only detailed recollection of what happened next.<sup>16</sup> According to the marshal, since the prisoners had paid no attention to Sherman, the constable opened the door and stepped inside. "The cell was pitch dark, and fearing the men might set on him, he swung his club or cane from one side to the other; in doing so he struck Burns in the temple, the blow, together with his drunkenness, causing his death in three or four hours." It is not a satisfying account. Why Sherman would enter a darkened cell in such circumstances, how men could throw bricks at each other in pitch darkness—the details must remain a puzzle.

Parke was not informed of the death until the next morning; perhaps no one knew of it until then. He then quickly summoned a coroner's jury of ten men, five of whom were whaling masters.<sup>17</sup> Sherman in the meantime was locked up as much for his own safety as any other cause. At some point that morning, after hearing the statements of unnamed witnesses, the jury reached its verdict, announcing that Burns had died due to a blow from a club wielded by Sherman. "We believe that the blow was not given with malice aforethought, but rather from cowardice in quelling the disturbance which was the cause of his visit to the cell where Burns and others were confined."<sup>18</sup>

While the jury was hearing evidence, many sailors, now aware of the death of Burns at the hands of a constable, gathered before the fort; the assemblage began to look much like a mob. Parke refused to submit to demands that he turn Sherman over to the crowd, promising instead that the constable would receive justice through trial in Hawaii's courts. The whalemen clearly were unsatisfied, and Parke felt "decisive action" was now required. The marshal had at his disposal a native militia force of some two to three hundred men, together with his force of constables, about one hundred men for the whole of Oahu island. "I therefore ordered all the soldiers and constables in the Fort under arms, picked out seventy-five of the best men with the purpose of going out and dispersing the crews, thereby preventing any further opportunity of trouble."

Parke's planned operation was canceled, however, by an order from the government, in the person of Kekuanaoa, governor (and thereby chief judge) of Oahu. Parke was ordered to remain in the fort, though he was to use force to defend himself should the sailors attempt to attack the fort or break in the gates. King Kamehameha III, coming to the end of a long reign

(1825-54), and his advisors clearly hoped to avoid a confrontation. Parke disagreed with such tactics then and afterward: "I believe that if I had been allowed to carry out my intention, the trouble would have been checked in the bud. I was disappointed in being obliged to remain inactive." Parke instead turned his energy to securing the fort, placing a strong guard on duty and training two field pieces loaded with grapeshot and cannister on the gate. "The men hung around all day but did not make any attack, as I think they had the idea that they would get the worst of it." The evening passed without further disturbance—or at least none is recorded in the several accounts of the 1852 events. The next day was another matter.

On the afternoon of Wednesday the tenth, Burns was buried in the cemetery in the Nuuanu Valley, with a considerable if uncounted crowd in attendance. According to the *Whaleman's Shipping List* for Honolulu for December 1852, on that day there were a total of 116 whaleships either moored in the harbor or lying off the reef.<sup>19</sup> A rough estimate of thirty crewmen per vessel would yield a crowd of nearly 3,500. While each vessel would normally leave some men aboard—shipkeepers and such, often indeed one of the two watches into which crews were divided—the crowd would have been augmented by unemployed sailors and other beachcombers hanging about the port. Parke, since assuming his post in 1850, had done his best to turn out his men in good military style, including distinctive police caps for his constables. He had drilled his militia in the manual of arms with the help of a marine officer from the *U.S.S. Vandalia*. Still, militia and police together were not automatically a sufficient force to quell a serious attack from several thousand hardened seamen. Parke's fears, in other words, seem justifiable; after all, he was responsible for the preservation of law and order not only in the town but throughout Oahu.

The burial over, the crowd returned to the town and the grog shops. "Sea-lawyers" in plenty were there to stir the crowd to action. Several shipmasters and government officials made conciliatory speeches—though according to Parke there were other ships officers present who were more willing to urge the men on. The American consul, Elisha H. Allen, spoke to the crowd from the steps of a store on Fort Street (at the foot of which lay the fort itself), and Luther Severance, U.S. commissioner for the Hawaiian Islands, did likewise from the balcony of the American Consulate at the corner of Nuuanu and Marine Streets. Both men also assured their hearers that Sherman would be tried by due process of law, and advised the men to return to their vessels. The sailors paid little attention to either.

While some of the crowd remained near the fort, one band of men moved to the United States hospital on Alakea Street, under the impression that some of their fellows were being ill-treated there by Mr. John Ladd, a

Honolulu merchant who had charge of that institution. Indeed, the management and finances of the sailors' facilities at Honolulu and Lahaina had long been the subject of controversy, and whalers who had enjoyed their amenities had over the years made considerable complaint. On this day, however, the visitors found their comrades well enough cared for, but Ladd had fled—with his funds and papers—up the Nuuanu Valley to Luther Sevrance's residence.

No further trouble was experienced at the hospital, but another substantial group of whalers had made for the police station house, a new three-story structure at the foot of Nuuanu Street. This building served as the offices of the police, the harbor-master, and the harbor pilot, whose services were essential for any vessel entering the narrow, winding entrance to Honolulu harbor proper. On the ground floor was a most important fresh water point, the terminus of a 4" pipeline from a spring in the Nuuanu Valley meant to supply water to the moored vessels and those nearby inhabitants unconnected to the town's water supply (the entire building was known as "Hale-wei," or waterhouse). The pipeline was a significant urban improvement, for the stream from the Nuuanu Valley was, when the pipeline was built in 1850, seriously polluted and unfit for the use of vessels.<sup>20</sup>

At the waterhouse, about 9:00 or 10:00 P.M., the mob did get out of hand, determined, it seems, both to rescue a sailor who it had been reported was locked up there and to "liberate" arms stored in the building. Constables then on duty were driven out—one sailor was slightly wounded in the skirmish—the arms seized, and the building wrecked with axes, clubs, and sundry tools. The structure was thoroughly looted (including the harbor master's safe, funds, and papers), the furniture piled up inside, and the whole set afire. The building, along with two smaller structures nearby apparently used as butcher shops to supply the fleet, were totally destroyed, an estimated loss of some four thousand dollars. The Honolulu fire brigade turned out and attempted to control the blaze with its one hand-pumped apparatus, but its hose was cut and the brigade was prevented from doing anything more by a ring of sailors thrown up around the building (no violence was done to the firemen).

The greatest danger now was that the nearby lines of ships might catch fire. The method of mooring was bulwark to bulwark in two long columns, leaving only a narrow channel in the middle for entry or exit. Close-packed in this fashion, and in many cases loaded with flammable whale oil, the resulting conflagration had the potential of becoming the greatest single whaleship disaster in history. Luckily, a southerly breeze was blowing off the water into the town; had the normal "trades" from the northeast quarter been active, the ships would have had far less chance of escape. As it was,

one whaleship near the buildings was reached by hot sparks, but as Parke, no friend to whalers, admitted in his account, once the sailors realized that the whole fleet, and with it the season's catch, was in danger, "they quickly set to work and put out the fire."

Whether owing to the satisfaction of destroying the police station, or to the rude awakening presented by the danger of the fire spreading, the crowd now was bent more on celebration than destruction as it moved up Nuuanu Street. Various commercial establishments, including the Commercial Hotel and the French Hotel on Fort Street, were entered and the proprietors persuaded to hand over responsibility for the service of liquor to their unwanted guests. By 11:00 P.M., the degree of drunkenness among the crowd had increased substantially.

A few men, however, according to Parke were now determined upon more serious revenge upon the government. Dr. Gerrit P. Judd was probably the most prominent American in office at the time, serving then as Minister of Finance; his name was associated with the sort of restrictive legislation that sailors found so burdensome to their planned recreation. Some fifty sailors set out up the valley to "Sweet Home," Judd's house, to reeducate him. The road, as Parke put it, "was long and dark," and many fell out or turned back. Judd had been warned, and most of his family had gone to a neighbor for safety, while Judd himself, his son, and a few others remained on the veranda to confront the whalers. The sailors got as far as the gate, where they made a few threats, and then departed. Parke believed that another handful went to the lower Manoa Valley home of Rev. Richard Armstrong, minister of public instruction, but if so they never reached their destination. A few other homes, it seems, were entered—mostly by invitation, the citizens entertaining sailors to "cakes and ale" as part of a well-advised policy of conciliation. One Dr. R.E. Hoffman, for example, did exactly that, providing such congenial hospitality, complete with beer and songs, that the men finished up by bidding him a friendly "good evening," at least according to local historian Thomas G. Thrum.

The long night had passed without further serious trouble since the fire, but for all practical purposes the town remained in the control of the seamen. Not surprisingly, the leading citizens remained seriously alarmed. Parke, by his own account, now took the offensive. The morning of the eleventh, he attended King Kamehameha III at the royal palace and in the process announced that he wished to resign the office of marshal since he had not been allowed to take any steps to put down the riot. The king refused to accept his resignation and instead asked what Parke proposed. "I replied, 'If you will not consent to my using the soldiers in putting down this disturbance, then send for the Governor [Kekuanaoa], and order him to hold a

meeting of the citizens at the Fort on the state of affairs." The governor, called in to consult, agreed that the idea was sound, so Parke returned to the fort.

In consequence of these discussions, at 11 A.M. a meeting was held in the marshal's office, attended by a number of prominent townspeople and shipmasters. Capt. G.L. Cox of the *Magnolia* pledged the collective support of the officers for any measures that the meeting agreed were required to quell the mob. When the governor arrived soon thereafter, Parke and others pressed him to declare martial law. Some of those present, however, believed the governor had no such powers, and Kekuanaoa hesitated. Parke insisted that he himself would take the responsibility and, taking Kekuanaoa aside, persuaded him to sign the order, which he then had printed and posted about the town in short order. (Thrum claims that the declaration was not made, but Parke is quite definite on the point.)

Meanwhile, the meeting had formed a military company of some two hundred foreign citizens, complete with a captain and four lieutenants, which was now issued arms in the fort. After an unexplained delay—perhaps for some of the men to return home for their arms, or lunch—that afternoon the company gathered again in the fort, placing themselves under the marshal's orders. Soon thereafter the entire force, now numbering some two hundred foreigners, three hundred native soldiers, and those police not on duty elsewhere, marched uptown.

Accounts differ on what transpired next. According to the *Polynesian*, the main local newspaper (an account repeated by Thrum), the governor gave orders to unarmed natives, assembled outside the fort, to clear the streets of the mob. "With a shout and a rush the multitude went forth in execution of this command, and in the course of two hours the streets were all cleared, and some fifty or more rioters lodged in the Fort. Some hard fighting took place in King Street, near Nuuanu, and some wounds with clubs and stones were sustained by both parties." On Hotel Street, added Thrum, the native posse came upon some defiant sailors, but, after converting a nearby picket fence to handy weapons, the natives cleared the street in short order. According to Parke, however, the streets were emptied by his force of militia and foreigners, assisted by captains and officers from the fleet who marched up with them. "The sailors, who by this time were rather demoralized, offered no resistance to the show of force; only two of them showed any disposition to fight while the force was marching along Hotel Street, but they were soon cared for. The result was that in a short time law and order were restored; some two hundred of the rioters were locked up in the fort, and by sundown not a sailor could be found in the streets."

Parke was present; Thrum based his account on the newspapers and on

a lifetime spent on the Honolulu waterfront hearing often-recounted tales of 1852. In any case, the five foreign military companies (four on foot and a cavalry unit of some fifty men) were now posted about the town which they patrolled for the next several nights. Sailors without a valid discharge paper or a pass from a captain to stay ashore were arrested. Even those with such papers found outside their lodging house after dark were locked in the cells. Parke realized that such arrests of sailors with proper credentials was not legal—and even the declaration of martial law was a moot point, according to the local district attorney—but in his mind the end justified any means. The following day, November 12, the governor issued an order that no seaman should be allowed on shore at all until further notice, and the company of foreigners now enforced this regulation as well.

In the aftermath, Parke pointed out to Kekuanaoa that had he been permitted to act with his soldiers in the first instance, the station house and its contents would not have been lost. The governor agreed but added that “you might have killed and wounded some forty or fifty men. These we could not restore to life, but the Station House we can build again.’ I thought, after all, that perhaps he was right.”

The order to keep the sailors on board their ships was enforced for some weeks, but gradually it was made less necessary as the various whaleships completed their “recruits,” transhipped their oil, and set sail for the winter season. By the end of the first week of December, there were fewer than fifty whaleships in Honolulu. Most of these had arrived only after the riot, and all of them planned to sail soon, except for a handful under major repair or, like the *Heroine* of Fairhaven, condemned by survey. A number of the sailor “ringleaders” were tried and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment (six of them had smallpox while in jail, recovered, and were of great help in coping with a smallpox epidemic that ravaged Oahu the following year). George Sherman was convicted of manslaughter, served a brief term in jail, and then according to Thrum’s recollection, was said to have been “banished” to the island of Hawaii, where he worked as a shoemaker and saddler for many years.

Not surprisingly, the record of the riot of 1852 has come down through the perspective of the Hawaiian authorities—above all from Parke’s memoirs—and the newspapers of the day. Whalemens, on the other hand, seldom left such traces, though a few exceptions exist. Every whaleship was required to keep a logbook, and of the 116 vessels in or off Honolulu at the time, at least 39 logs survive. Unfortunately it was not the general practice to keep a daily record of events when in harbor, nor did log-keeping officers often bother to mention incidents that did not take place on board the vessel or did not directly affect it. Thus the vast majority of surviving logs

say nothing of the riot. That of the *Benjamin Tucker* of New Bedford, for example, was concerned only to record that on the tenth/eleventh of November (one entry for two days), three men deserted.<sup>21</sup> On the bark *Manuel Ortiz*, the entry of November 11 was "This day employed as usual doing nothing" (the log was rather more detailed when, on the twenty-fourth, thirteen men were arrested and taken on shore for refusing duty).<sup>22</sup>

A few logs make brief references only to the event. The bark *Canton Packet*, on 10 November: "Employed getting water. at 10AM [P.M.] the sailors burnt the police office."<sup>23</sup> The *Cossack*: "At 9 PM the station house was set a fire by the sailors and burnt down. shipping caught fire." (On the eleventh, as on the tenth, her crew was active loading fresh water; the riot apparently brought no interruption to the regular routine on some ships.)<sup>24</sup> A few keepers had a bit more to say. On the ship *California*, for example, Theodore Bartley was interested in the cause: "Weather fine and hot nothing of consequence going on larboard watch ashore on liberty in evening there was a Riot in consequence of a seaman being killed after being confined in the fort. One of the Policemen struck him which killed him he was arrested for quarreling while drunk in the evening the seamen set fire to the Police station house and several other buildings which burned down." The next day he added the fact that there were now some one hundred seamen imprisoned in the fort, though the "incendaries" had not been apprehended.<sup>25</sup>

Sixteen-year-old S.B. Morgan, who kept a detailed journal aboard the Fairhaven ship *South Boston*, arrived at Honolulu on November 10, the day of the burial. His account adds details demonstrating the solidarity felt among the seamen.<sup>26</sup> When the *South Boston* was hauled into line in the harbor, her crew found that all the other vessels had their flags at half-mast for Burns. Men from neighboring vessels, several of whom had been encountered at New Zealand's Bay of Islands, supplied the *South Boston* with an explanation, and they joined the crowd.

Latter part during the night the crews of the ships went ashore and raised a great disturbance knocking down every kiki (police man) they could find, tried to knock down the Fort to get the man that killed the sailor and when they found they could not do it they went and pulled down the Station house and set it on fire. . . . The mob stepped ashore all night went in to the market and took what they could find it is against the law for any man belonging to a ship to be ashore after 10 o'clock without they have a pass but last night the kikis dare not show themselves for fear of the mob. In the morning the man was tried and sentenced to be hung. The mob would not stop if they would not try him and hang him. The militia are all out and no one is allowed to land or to stop on the beach to night. They have succeeded in taking 30 or 40 of the ring leaders and put them in the fort. The Consul has sent for a man of War, the one that was stationed here left a few days ago. The Captain came on board and left word to scuttle the ship if in danger of fire.

That the local police were in thorough disarray is further testified to by Alonzo Sampson, who was aboard the ship *Junior* of New Bedford. Sampson, who published his memoirs in 1867, was by that date confused on details.<sup>27</sup> In his memory the cause was the arrest of a man from the *Eagle* of Sag Harbor (the *Black Eagle* from that port was indeed in Honolulu at the time), who broke the law stipulating that horses could be ridden no faster than a walk in the town. In the process of his arrest, according to Sampson, the man knocked down a couple of "Sidney Rangers," a force of constables from Australia, much hated by sailors (a force not mentioned by other accounts). It was this man, in Sampson's version, who died in his cell. He remains unmentioned in other records, but it is entirely possible that he was one of the other prisoners in the fort—and sailors were indeed prone to break that particular ordinance when adrift on an unfamiliar hired nag. Sampson added, however, that "the captains and ship's officers, who shared more or less the resentment of the men, had little or nothing to say, and as matter began to look serious, they generally retired on board their vessels." Obviously there were exceptions to that inclination, but it does seem as if the mass of officers (a captain and three mates per vessel would total well over four hundred) did not interfere in any serious way. According to Sampson, the police and civil population took refuge on Punch Bowl Hill. Meanwhile, "We now returned to plunder the city. Stores, grog shops, dwellings, all were thrown open and ransacked."

Thus are legends created, for Honolulu was not exactly "plundered." But the resentment held by sailors shows clearly in these accounts and helps explain the entire outburst. For that resentment, or at least impatience, several reasons can be cited. The first point to be stressed is the imbalance between the physical size and resources of the town and the magnitude of visiting fleet. By midcentury, Honolulu had become a very major entrepôt for the supply of the Pacific whaling fleet that twice a year, in spring and fall, gathered at the islands for "recruits" of food, wood, and water, as well as to discharge and recruit men. For the year 1852, according to Consul Allen's year-end report, Honolulu was visited by 178 ships, 49 barks, 13 brigs, and 6 schooners, employing a total of 4,155 American and 2,280 foreign sailors—6,435 men in all (these are individual visits; many of the ships called twice at the same port).<sup>28</sup>

Supplying the demands of this substantial fleet had become the most important industry of the islands. It has been argued by Ralph Kuykendall and others that, for better or worse, the supply of beef and potatoes to the whaleships delayed the development of such staple plantation crops as sugar and coffee.<sup>29</sup> Though the government encouraged the visit of whaleships by giving them preferential treatment in harbor in transit dues and exempting

them from the payment of import duties on goods to the value of two hundred dollars to be used for bartering of supplies, the unpredictable behavior of the fleet as a whole created an unstable dependency relationship that some leading Honolulu citizens found alarming. For example, though 1846 had been a banner year (167 vessels to Honolulu and 429 to Lahaina), there was a considerable falling off the following year (167 and 239 respectively), and some island merchants were caught with a surplus of imported supplies in anticipation of sales that never materialized.<sup>30</sup> The Mexican War of 1847, and even more the discovery of gold in California, created satisfactory if short-lived substitute markets for such goods as well as agricultural exports, but such windfall circumstances could not be relied upon. (Lahaina was never to recover its supremacy of the mid-1840s, which was the result of temporary conditions: better potatoes, fewer moral restrictions, and an open roadstead that required neither harbor nor pilot fees of the sort paid at Honolulu.)

Though the economy of the islands responded very well to the demands of the fleet for meat and other food, it was nevertheless the case that this substantial influx of whalers was impacting upon a fairly small island society. The entire population of the islands, according to the official census of 1853, was 73,134, of which 2,119 were foreigners and 983 part-Hawaiians.<sup>31</sup> The accuracy of these figures is questionable, but the general order of magnitude is not far off. Some 10,000 of the total lived in Honolulu,<sup>32</sup> rather a small town to provide sufficient recreation and entertainment for several thousand additional men for some weeks at a time, to say nothing of those islanders who came to town during the whaling season to sell something or to find employment, whether as whalers (for hundreds of the islanders did indeed work in the fleet) or as prostitutes.

Not all visiting sailors were ashore at the same time; as in the log of the *California* quoted above, it was customary for liberty to be given to each watch in turn. Still, to satisfy sailors on the beach either discharged or on liberty, there were in 1847 four hotels (a class of establishment intended more to serve whaling masters and mates and their families than foremast hands), and some fifteen lesser establishments and boarding houses.<sup>33</sup> Their sale of alcohol, together with that of the six or seven grogshops, was limited by license; hotels sold by the bottle and grogshops by the glass only. As will be seen, hours of sale to sailors were strictly limited, at least in theory. There were of course churches and the Seamen's Bethel (and its library of sorts), but in the main they were not overused by sailors on liberty. There were also mercantile establishments, but sailors had little money with which to buy goods—and merchants were understandably reluctant to enlarge permanent establishments for a few weeks' worth of sales mainly to those (par-

ticularly women) who were briefly in a position to put the sailors' cash back into circulation.

Though whalemens came in many guises, and many were clean-living and God-fearing men, the standard image remains that portrayed by Kuykendall in his multivolume history of the islands: "Whaling seamen on shore leave were a boisterous, pleasure-seeking rabble, whose ideas of pleasure were not over-refined; too frequently their tastes rose no higher than the grogshop and the brothel, and a brawl with a native constable was entered into with real zest."<sup>34</sup> Kuykendall is certainly correct regarding the general desire for women and drink, and the strong probability of a disagreement with the native constables while in the pursuit of one or both.

The struggle to control the morals of visiting sailors has a long history in the Hawaiian Islands, linked closely with the struggle to control the morals of the islanders themselves.<sup>35</sup> As noted in Chapter 2, missionaries and their allies looked askance at unfortunate role models provided by licentious visiting sailors. The fight to subdue the whalemens' natural proclivities lasted as long as whaleships came to the islands. It was complicated, however, by yet another issue: the shifting political alliances associated with the international status of the Hawaiian Kingdom. This third struggle may have ended with an American victory, but the eventual outcome was not always clear in the eyes of British, French, even Russian challengers. Whaleman, missionary, merchant: each group looked to its own interests and calculated its foreign options, as meanwhile the Hawaiian Kingdom evolved the legal mechanisms considered necessary for civilized survival.

Liquor legislation seems to have predated whalemens in Hawaii, for King Kamehameha I is said to have proclaimed a stringent law in 1818, the result of excesses not only of his subjects but also of the fur traders, sandalwood merchants, and other Europeans who were early on the scene.<sup>36</sup> If so, this law did not survive the general carefree atmosphere of the brief reign of Kamehameha II (1819-24). Under Kamehameha III in the 1830s general controls were established on liquor elsewhere in the islands, but such regulation seems to have been difficult to apply in Honolulu, at least until the mainland temperance movement began to take hold in the islands. The penal code of 1835 included a law against drunkenness. More effective, however, were two laws of 1838, which acted to limit and license the number of grog shops, including the requirement that they be closed by 10 P.M. and remain closed on Sundays, and in addition prohibited the distillation of liquor within the kingdom and the import of most varieties from abroad. But these laws too were hard to enforce, not least because of the presence of foreigners claiming various treaty-generated extraterritorial rights. The French, in particular, were soon to mount a successful challenge to the

liquor importation prohibition. Similarly, it was hard to prevent either home brew in several varieties or smuggling from the many vessels entering harbor each year.<sup>37</sup>

If liquor laws were problematic, regulations governing prostitution were no less so. Gavan Daws has estimated that, on average, seamen spent \$10 each in three or four weeks ashore in midcentury; 12,000 sailors he estimates would leave \$120,000.<sup>38</sup> (The \$10 seems correct, but the 12,000 will not stand up; the highest number of whaleships in Honolulu was 249 in 1859, at thirty men each, some 7,500 men for the year, not 12,000.) Of whatever sum was left, however, Daws concludes that nine-tenths went to prostitutes. Much of that in turn went back to the merchants who sold cloth and other goods to the women, while some went to the government (court fines, poll taxes), and to the inter-island shipping the women used to get to Honolulu in season.

Neither liquor nor prostitution was ever successfully controlled, it would appear, but at least some appearances were served, and law and order better maintained, by keeping the men on their ships as much as possible. As early as 1826, the governor of Oahu ruled that a seaman could only remain ashore after dark with a permit from his captain. In 1841, the authorities began firing two guns from the fort each evening; a warning shot at 7:30, and a curfew at 8:00, after which the police rounded up stragglers. It was an impossibly early hour, and seaman and grogsellers alike appealed. In 1843, the hours were changed to 9:00 and 9:30, and in 1846, 9:30 and 10:00, at which hour all saloons and similar establishments were required to be closed in any case.<sup>39</sup> Public closing times could be enforced, but liquor still found its way into sailors' hands.

Another form of control attempted to keep men from deserting. In the 1840s a discharged sailor was required to pay one dollar to the sheriff for permission to remain on shore and, in addition, a bond in surety of sixty dollars that he would not remain on the island more than sixty days. Since few sailors could or would pay such a sum, the bond was furnished by boardinghouse keepers who charged the man five dollars for providing the bond. In other words, to be on shore sixty days cost a whaleman six dollars, "a sum which, out of their scanty earnings, they were illy able to pay," as Alexander G. Abell, American consul at Honolulu put it in 1845.<sup>40</sup> A regulation such as this that directly affected the whaleman's pocket and for which there was no return was not likely to enhance his admiration for the local authorities.

Rules against prostitution, first promulgated in the 1820s in the form of chiefs' tapus, like those against liquor never had total effect, nor would they so long as there were willing women and cooperative masters who allowed them to come aboard. The periodic reaffirmation of such controls

speaks mainly to their ineffectiveness. In the end, prostitution was finally licensed after a fashion in 1860, over the protests of the religious community, in a landmark defeat of the puritanism that once had been so powerful in the islands.<sup>41</sup> By 1860, however, the role of whaling in the social and economic life of Hawaii had fallen off considerably and was not to survive the Civil War in a major way. In the process, the whalers had made their contribution in the war between strict puritans and their enemies, whether the battlefield was liquor, women, or even dancing or public theater (the erection of the Royal Hawaiian Theater in 1848 was another signal moment).<sup>42</sup>

The social impact of whalers, however, did not stem merely from sailors on leave. From a fleet of this size, numerous desertions were to be expected unless careful steps were taken to regulate the presence of sailors ashore, another reason for the regime of passes and curfews. Similarly, masters were subject to fines for letting their men escape control. While desertion could be controlled at least in part by such methods, little could be done to prevent the discharge of sick sailors. It should be recalled that, for the most part, the fleet in the fall had just returned from a summer season whaling in the Arctic, where conditions could be most demanding. Many sick and disabled men were discharged in the Hawaiian ports, in addition to those seamen who had been shipped aboard for the season only and were thus legally entitled to their discharge. They too could find themselves on the beach with little means of support. The American Consul in Honolulu regularly took charge of nearly two hundred sick and/or destitute seamen in each season, the expenses for which resulted in serious charges of graft and a substantial investigation by treasury department auditors, as noted in Chapter 5.<sup>43</sup> Whatever the expenditure, there was always a feeling among sailors that more could be done for such men, and stories of corruption were not uncommon. Such grievances surely contributed to the mob's invasion of the Honolulu seamen's hospitals during the riot, but it appears that this time either the men went away sufficiently satisfied with conditions or Ladd himself had been their only objective.

In general, however, it was the hodgepodge of regulations governing women, grog, riding horses, and the like with which the average whaler on liberty was concerned. Not surprisingly, the police force, which after its establishment in Honolulu in 1834<sup>44</sup> was called upon to enforce these rules, was not regarded with a kind eye by whalers ashore; as more than one commentator has remarked, some sailors at least went out of their way to bait the native constables. At the time of Parke's appointment as marshal in 1850, the entire force for the whole Kona district of Oahu (in effect, the island's southern coast) was one hundred men, of which only one-third were

paid by the month. The others received only half of the fines for which they were responsible, a system that made them most watchful but did not win many friends among the culprits. Nor were there rules and regulations for the force's conduct, according to Parke, until he himself established them and, apparently for the first time, exercised some control particularly over the unsalaried constables scattered about the district. Though the force was no doubt more efficient after their new outfitting and drilling at arms, their method of payment was not altered until 1860.<sup>45</sup> In other words, the overall tension with libertymen was probably increased, not reduced, by these reforms.

A further problem lay in the fact that Honolulu had no municipal government until long after the riot of 1852. The practice throughout the century was for the king to set a chief as governor over each island, and on Oahu, among other responsibilities, this officer looked after the management of the harbor, the fort, and the town of Honolulu. As clearly demonstrated by the 1852 crisis, the jurisdictional lines separating the marshal and the governor, each directly responsible to the king, were unclear. Nor was the governor himself quite certain of his powers relative to the king—certainly in the matter of martial law. In 1850, at last, Honolulu was named a city and proclaimed capital of the islands but still, despite occasional discussion, was given no local government as such. According to Daws, "the national government remained reluctant to surrender its powers and the people of the city were unwilling to take the financial risk of self-government."<sup>46</sup> Yet the rapid rise of a foreign population in the city, coupled in the 1840s with dramatic governmental reconstruction, the establishment of religious toleration, and major land reforms—all subjects beyond the scope of this paper—had created a midcentury situation of considerable tension and confusion, however important these developments might be for Hawaii's future.<sup>47</sup>

Given the inadequacy of Honolulu as a liberty port, the long history of regulations and prohibitions directed against visiting sailors, and the unwieldy procedures for their administration, it seems unsurprising that the whalers exploded upon hearing that one of their own had been killed by a constable. The striking fact, indeed, is that in the light of the inability of the police to control the situation, and the unwillingness of the government to use force in the first instance, the violence was not more widespread.

All in all, the riot of 1852 was a milestone in Honolulu's history, for all that it was little noted in the whaling industry, which would soon enough leave Honolulu behind. The "Hawaiian Guards," a permanent militia force directly descended from the 1852 foreigners' militia, was one legacy. Eventual reform of the police was another, for that body had come under consid-

erable criticism for its inability to preserve law and order. The Honolulu *Weekly Argus* in mid-December admitted part of the problem: the police, it editorialized, "have rendered themselves more and more obnoxious thro' their inquisitorial proceedings, their summary manner and rough treatment."<sup>48</sup> The pay was inadequate, and the marshal could not be everywhere to supervise his men. Conditions would have to be changed; "It is humiliating to see old, grey headed men obliged to turn out and patrol the streets every night to protect their property."

The police station was rebuilt (only to be burned down again in another fire in a few years). More significant was the fact that as a result of the riot the preservation of order had fallen all the more into the hands of foreign residents of the town. The evils with which whalers were so often associated still flourished, and whaleships came more than ever in the 1850s. The prosperity was deceptive, however, for there were now too many whaleships and too few whales, and the men often had less to spend in their pockets. In 1853, a smallpox epidemic swept Oahu, taking some 2,500 lives<sup>49</sup>—an event that no doubt overshadowed in the minds of contemporaries the riot that had taken no lives at all (if one excepts seaman Burns). Thus the Honolulu's sailors' riot of 1852 passed quietly into history as the time "the whalers ruled the town." Those several days of November 1852 might better be remembered, however, as the time the whalers spared the town of Honolulu.

Eventually, however, the riot would be forgotten, simply another neglected aspect of the "whaling days," which are still recalled, if dimly, in Hawaii. The whalers returned to their vessels and sailed away for another season, another decade, and then with the Civil War era the industry changed in such a way that the whalers would never come again in anything like the same numbers. Thus the whaler had come full circle, in a sense—prisoner aboard the whaleship at sea but equally obliged to share continued membership in the caste that was "whaler" even when ashore—certainly in Honolulu in 1852. Like an "ex-convict," the whaler found it hard to shake off that identity—the price of having been held in the grip of the total society that was nineteenth-century American whaling.

Much as been written on that substantial industry, including a body of literature on the life of the whaler, whether in the unforgettable *Moby Dick* or more mundane studies of the economics of whaling or such aspects as scrimshaw or shanties. The central system of discipline, however, has not been studied in any serious manner, and the foregoing chapters have attempted to do just that. That the system could be harsh to the point of life-threatening there can be no doubt, yet general conclusions of this sort must

always be tempered by the circumstances pertaining on any individual voyage—each whaleship, after all, was its own self-contained system at sea. A man might serve on a hellship on one voyage and be helped up the ladder by a sympathetic officer on the next. It does appear, however, that over time various factors such as the increasing lack of homogeneity among crews, the lengthening average time spent at sea, and the widening gap in experience and pay between officers and men reduced the appeal of whaling over the course of the century.

Where conditions were intolerable in the eyes of crews, there were avenues of escape, as have been explored in this book. Desertion clearly was common, but it was motivated as much by boredom as harshness. Protest by an individual had little effect, and punishment commonly was harsh; but collective stoppages were reasonably common (if 7 percent of voyages may be termed "common"), and sometimes with the result desired—but only sometimes. Appeal to the consul was another option. Some consuls were indeed poor representatives, chosen for the wrong motives and incompetent at or uninterested in their assigned duty. Others were fully capable but only to aid the masters and owners, and themselves perhaps take profits as outfitters. Yet there were also consuls who were farseeing men with considerable sympathy for the derelict seamen who looked to them for succor.

Whalemen had other friends, with varying motives: missionaries, for example, or the women and landsharks who were so friendly to newly landed "Jack" in any sailortown ashore. For the most part, even idyllic relations with female Pacific islanders were brief indeed, and not really an extensive intrusion upon the whaleman's world. Masters could and did bring their families aboard, but in general it cannot be shown that these additions to the shipboard community did more than reinforce the separation and class differences of afterguard and forecastle. For most men at sea, the daily round of labor, such as it was on a whaleship, relieved by the toil and danger of the occasional chase of leviathan, were interspersed only with such recreation as was offered by scrimshaw, or yarns, or books, or perhaps a brief fling with an evangelical or temperance movement, or perhaps simply nothing at all—save for such short-lived debauches as were available at occasional landfalls, after which he sailed out again to repeat the same cycle, if he was able.

Some whalemen of course left the profession, going to the navy, or the merchant marine, or some foreign service, or staying ashore, now a beachcomber or wharfrat himself. Such a man could be swallowed in a port such as San Francisco, but was even to be found in smaller New England whaling ports. Abroad, usually he was confined to sailortown, where multiple societies mingled, or cast adrift on the beach, a sort of "middle ground" where

special circumstances prevailed, taking elements from all contributing societies but overall resembling none.<sup>50</sup> How little whalemens in any numbers were likely to be absorbed is demonstrated by the Honolulu Riot of 1852—an extreme case, of course, but typical in the alienation it reflects.

For all their common participation in the world of sailors, and their occasional crossover to naval or mercantile service, still there was something special about whalemens. Only the whaleman, after all, was commonly condemned to cruise aimlessly about, or so it often seemed, with little to do save hope for the appearance of a whale or the need to recruit in a hospitable port. In that sense, the small society of the whaleship was a very particular and peculiar “total institution,” more so, for example, than any short-voyage merchantman, with which others such as prisons or armed forces bear useful comparison.

But by the early years of the twentieth century, for better or worse (and many would say for better), the old long-voyage whaleman was gone forever. Whaling, of course, lived on, so long as men found newly inventive ways to chase whales into the polar regions and to make use of the faster (and sometimes smaller) whales that the nineteenth-century whaleman could not catch or valued little if he could. But the factory ship with its whale-chasers of the next century was quite dissimilar (aside from the similar aim of taking whales) in terms of lifestyle, danger, or, indeed, the romance that, for all its horrors, the old whaling trade still manages to convey, perhaps thanks to Herman Melville more than anyone else. It is hoped that this book has shed some light on the life lived by the crew of the fictional *Pequod*—and all her hundreds of real-life sister-ships.

# Notes

Works and sources frequently cited have been identified by the following abbreviations:

AACP	R. Gerard Ward, ed. <i>American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790-1870 . . . Taken from Contemporary Newspapers, etc.</i> , 6 vols., (Ridgewood, N.J.: Gregg Press, 1966-67).
D/S	Department of State Records, National Archives of the United States, Washington, D.C.
KWM	Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, Mass.
MSM	G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Conn.
NBFPL	New Bedford Free Public Library.
ODHS	Old Dartmouth Historical Society and Whaling Museum, New Bedford.
PPL	Providence Public Library.
WSL	<i>Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchant's Transcript</i> (New Bedford).

## Chapter 1. Introduction: The American Whaleman

1. Shipping Paper, bark *Onward*, 1863, filed with Honolulu consulate papers, U.S. Dept. of State microfilm, microcopy M144/9.
2. A useful review of the subject is Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Teresa D. Hutchins, "The Decline of U.S. Whaling: Was the Stock of Whales Running Out?", *Business History Review* 62 (Winter 1988): 569-95.
3. Ellen Dwyer, *Homes for the Mad: Life Inside Two Nineteenth-Century Asylums* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1987), 217.
4. David Moment, "The Business of Whaling in America in the 1850s," *Business History Review* 31 (1957): 267.
5. Standard sources used for this discussion are Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery from Its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876*, 2 vols. (1878; reprint, New York: Argosy-Antiquarian, 1964); Walter S. Tower, *A History of the*

*American Whale Fishery* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1907); for the modern era, J.N. Tonnessen and A.O. Johnsen, *The History of Modern Whaling* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1982). On Nantucket, see Obed Macy, *The History of Nantucket . . .* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, 1835; reprint, N.Y. Research Imprints, 1970), statistics from pp. 213-15. An important overall modern study is Richard Ellis, *Men and Whales* (New York: Knopf, 1991).

6. See Frederick P. Schmitt, Cornelis de Jong, and Frank H. Winter, *Thomas Welcome Roys . . .* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1980).

7. Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Teresa D. Hutchins, "The Structure of the Capital Stock in Economic Growth and Decline: The New Bedford Whaling Fleet in the Nineteenth Century," in Peter Kilby, ed., *Quantity and Quidity: Essays in U.S. Economic History* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1987), 343.

8. Bark *John Dawson*, 23 June-30 August 1865 in the Mediterranean; whale taken 13 July at 38° 21' N x 1° 57' E. Providence Public Library, log J655/1864L.

9. Tower, *History*, tables.

10. See John R. Bockstoce, *Steam Whaling in the Western Arctic* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1977), and *Whales, Ice, and Men: The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1986).

11. Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Teresa D. Hutchins, "Risk Sharing, Crew Quality, Labor Shares and Wages in the Nineteenth-Century American Whaling Industry" (Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper No. 13, May 1990), table 1C gives average voyage lengths, showing, for example, that in 1840/1 they could be expected to last 34 months, but in 1857/8, 45 months.

12. The Vermont prices are provided by Michael Haines in "An Economic Analysis and Statistical View of the American Whaling Industry, 1790-1860," unpublished paper, 1968. I am indebted to Professor Haines for this data.

13. Davis et al., "Risk Sharing," 107.

14. Paragraph based upon Lance E. Davis, Robert E. Gallman, and Teresa D. Hutchins, "Productivity in American Whaling: The New Bedford Fleet in the Nineteenth Century," in David W. Galenson, ed., *Markets in History: Economic Studies of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 97-147.

15. On lays, see Elmo Paul Hohman, *The American Whaleman . . .* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1928), ch. 10, and Davis, et al., "Structure."

16. Davis, et al., "Structure," 301.

17. Davis, et al., "Risk Sharing," 27-30.

18. Davis, et al., "Productivity."

19. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 73

20. Davis, et al., "Productivity," "Risk Sharing," and "Structure."

21. Turrill to State Department, 1 October 1847, State Department, microcopy [D/S] M144/3.

22. Ship *Houqua*, New Bedford, 9 August 1835, Providence Public Library [PPL] log 774/1835j.

23. Clifford W. Ashley, *The Yankee Whaler* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938), 51.

24. Davis, et al., "Risk Sharing," 27-30.

25. Davis, et al., "Risk Sharing," table 8, and p. 19.
26. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, ch. 6.
27. Ashley, *Yankee Whaler*, 100.
28. Based upon Hohman, *American Whaleman*, and Moment, "Business of Whaling," particularly p. 267.
29. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 98-99.
30. Ringgold to State Department, 1 September 1858, D/S F600/2. All quotations from Ringgold in this chapter are from this document.
31. Adamson to State Department, 1 February 1870, D/S M144/12.
32. Ashley, *Yankee Whaler*, 108.
33. Adamson to State Department, 1 February 1870, D/S M144/12.
34. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 240.
35. Cover to State Department, 12 October 1871, D/S T203/7.
36. J. Ross Browne, *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise*, edited by John Seelye (1846; reprint, Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1968), 24.
37. Ship *Mt. Wollaston*, New Bedford, 1 January 1854 (vessel had sailed 21 December 1853), New Bedford Free Public Library [NBFPL], log 488.
38. Ship *Chelsea*, New London, 23 June 1832, Mystic Seaport Museum [MSM], log 371.
39. Ship *Mt. Wollaston*, New Bedford, 1 January 1854, NBFPL 488.
40. Bark *Atkins Adams*, 22 November 1858; in mid-1859, the crew protested the food aboard, to no avail (23 August 1859), Old Dartmouth Historical Society, New Bedford [ODHS], log 485. On food, see Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 130-36.
41. Bark *Clara Bell*, Mattapoisett, Mass., 18 August 1855, MSM 164.
42. Bark *Richmond*, Providence, 4 December 1845, ODHS 968.
43. Ship *Midas*, New Bedford, ODHS 478 includes trading accounts.
44. Alcohol is discussed in Hohman, *American Whalemens*, 136.
45. The *Polynesian* article appeared 26 November 1853, quoting letter to consul, MSM microfilm reel 112.

## Chapter 2. Crime and Punishment

1. Ship *Samuel Robertson*, New Bedford, 18 December 1841, and undated entry (but December 1841); 2 August [1842]; see also in the same log appended "list of men flogged." ODHS 1040.
2. R. Gerard Ward, ed., *American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790-1870 . . . taken from Contemporary Newspapers*, 6 vols. (Ridgewood, N.J.: Gregg, 1966-67) (hereafter AACP).
3. George T. Curtis, *A Treatise on the Rights and Duties of Merchant Seamen . . .* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1849), 88ff., and appended maritime statutes; R.H. Dana, Jr., *The Seaman's Friend; Containing . . . Laws Relating to the Practical Duties of Master and Mariners* (Boston: Thomas Groom and Co., 1845; reprint, London: MacDonald and Jane's, 1974), 145.
4. See, for example, bark *Pacific*, New Bedford, 25 March 1868, for a man ironed for breaking regulations against talking Portuguese on deck; ODHS 677A.

On whistling, Capt. Joseph Gomes, *Captain Joe: Whaleman from New Bedford* (New York: Vantage, 1960), 133-35.

5. Ship *China*, New Bedford, 27 August 1862, PPL C539/1859L.

6. Ship *Horatio*, New Bedford, 8 September 1880, LWM 219.

7. Ship *Zephyr*, 12 February 1845, PPL Z57/1843J.

8. Ship *Milo*, New Bedford, 18 October 1849, ODHS 395.

9. Bark *Catalpa*, New Bedford, 22 November 1875, ODHS 557. This voyage was famous for another reason: the *Catalpa* rescued a number of Fenian prisoners from Western Australia. See William J. Laubenstein, *The Emerald Whaler* (London: Readers Book Club, 1962).

10. Bark *Matilda Sears*, Dartmouth Mass., 1 February 1872, PPL M433/1869L.

11. Brig *Vesta*, Edgartown Mass., 3-9 April 1846, MSM 837.

12. Steam Brigantine *Karluk*, San Francisco, 7 and 30 April, 17 June, and 26 September, 1905, and 17 April 1906, PPL K18/1904L.

13. In order, ship *Courier*, New Bedford, 17 April 1867, PPL C861/1865L; ship *Condor*, New Bedford, 22 January 1853, NBFPL 199; bark *Helen Mar*, New Bedford, 22 February 1873, ODHS 128.

14. Schooner *Walter Irving*, Provincetown, 28 March 1857, KWM 579.

15. Bark *Clarice*, Edgartown, Mass., 13 April 1879, PPL C5915/1878L; ship *Clematis*, New London, 22 January 1855, PPL C625/1854L.

16. Bark *Aurora*, New Bedford, 13 September 1868, NBFPL 95, reel 11.

17. An example of smoking out the crew: bark *Richmond*, New Bedford, 14 March 1846, ODHS 968.

18. Trypots: ship *Eliza Adams*, New Bedford, 13 July 1872, ODHS 940; ship *Mary Frazier*, New Bedford, 5 December 1873, PPL M3939/1871L.

19. Dana, *Seaman's Friend*, part 2, discusses the rights and obligations of officers. Examples: steam bark *Belvedere*, San Francisco, 3 October 1885, ODHS 235A; ship *Brandt*, New Bedford, 25 April 1851, NBFPL 111 (two cases of mates sent to quarters for striking the captain); ship *Eliza F Mason*, New Bedford, 18 October 1855, ODHS 995 (mate disciplined for spying on the captain's wife); ship *George Washington*, Wareham, Mass., 28 February 1838, PPL G349/1873L (abusive mate discharged).

20. Bark *Mattapoisett*, Westport Mass., 3 June 1863, ODHS 418A; ship *Niger*, New Bedford, 17 January 1888, ODHS 212.

21. Bark *Bartholomew Gosnold*, New Bedford, 19 March 1879, ODHS 165.

22. Ship *Canada*, New Bedford, 5 April and 10 September 1847, ODHS 200.

23. Warren P. Tobey, *The Cabin Boy's Log: Scenes and Incidents on a New Bedford Whaler* . . . (Boston: Meador, 1932), 111.

24. H. Griffiths, Port Louis, to State Department, 1 July 1839, D/S M462/1.

25. Bark *Bertha*, New Bedford, 10 April 1907, PPL B538/1905L.

26. Ship *California*, New Bedford, 1 August 1853, KWM 509.

27. Bark *Alice Knowles*, New Bedford, 19 October 1907: the mate was ordered to discipline a man, "and I shook him up and was going to put him in irons but when he saw the irons he shut up and went to work again and we have had no more trouble with him." MSM 112.

28. Bark *Nautilus*, New Bedford, 28 March 1870. "I am glad that he was re-

leased," continued Lucy Smith, "as it is his first offence, and I hope will be his last. We have always considered one of our best men." PPL N3145/1869j.

29. William H. Woods, letter to Moses Pearson, Medway Mass., 16 May 1878, ODHS MS B 84-31.

30. The steward of the bark *Avola*, New Bedford, after fighting with the mate, and being ironed, was offered the chance of going onto the ship *James Allen* as a foremast hand—but preferred to go on shore in the Marquesas with his pay of two bolts of calico. 11 February 1873, KWM 26.

31. Curtis, *Treatise on Rights and Duties*, 411.

32. Ship *Susan*, New Bedford, 20 November 1841, KWM 529; ship *Nantucket*, report from San Carlos, Chile, in *Whaleman's Shipping List and Merchants Transcript* (New Bedford; hereafter WSL), 4:43, 2 June 1846. Compare the experience of the *Bartholomew Gosnold* in 1883, in which sixteen men were given more than ten years in prison at Albany, West Australia; 6 May 1883, ODHS 668.

33. G.S. Holmes, American Consul at Cape Town, elaborates upon this problem in a letter to the State Department, 13 November 1851 (D/S T 191/1); the immediate issue was of a man from the bark *Philip 1st* who had tried to shoot the second mate. The consul wished to send him home for trial, but the captain could spare no more than one other man as a witness. The man was kept in a local prison until the vessel sailed, so that the crew would believe he had been sent home, but he had to be released in Cape Town.

34. Respectively *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 29 May 1840 (*Beaver*), and *Boston Daily Evening Transcript*, 7 October 1858 (*Betsey Williams*), AACF, 4:172-73, and 3:22; bark *Hope On*, New Bedford, 14 January and 23 March, 1883, ODHS 923.

35. Steam bark *Lucretia*, San Francisco, 24 March 1883, ODHS 216B.

36. Ship *Milton*, New Bedford, 3 January 1853, ODHS 264.

37. Maj. Leo ES. Horan, "Flogging in the United States Navy: Unfamiliar Facts Regarding its Origin and Abolition," *US Naval Institute Proceedings* 76:1 (1950):969-75, discusses the legislation that affected merchant vessels.

38. Ship *Eliza F Mason*, New Bedford, 16 February 1855, ODHS 995.

39. This aspect may be followed in Myra C. Glenn, *Campaigns Against Corporal Punishment: Prisoners, Sailors, Women, and Children in Antebellum America* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1984); Michael Ignatief, *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1978); and, from the naval side, James E. Valle, *Rocks and Shoals: Order and Discipline in the Old Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980).

40. Ship *Jasper*, Fairhaven, Mass., 24 September 1840, PPL J392/1839L.

41. Bark *Palestine*, Salem, Mass., 15 May 1842, Essex Institute (Salem), group 91, reel 3.

42. Bark *Louisa Sears*, New Bedford, 7 November 1857, MSM 832.

43. On the ship *Amazon*, Fairhaven, for example, Isaac Dagggett, the master, found that some of his crew had attempted to desert with a stolen whaleboat. After consulting his officers, he decided to flog the three men whose clothes were found in the boat, but first he asked "those on board that had been at sea before, whether they would say those men did not deserve to be flogged." There was no answer, not

surprisingly. The men were given fourteen, twelve, and eleven lashes respectively. 5 November 1848, NBFPL 1615 reel 4.

44. 125: steam brig *Mary D. Hume*, San Francisco, 21 March 1891 (the last flogging found in the survey), ODHS 949; 250: ship *Canada*, New Bedford, 27 July 1847, ODHS 200.

45. Ship *Alfred Gibbs*, New Bedford, 17 March and 12 October 1860, ODHS 571.

46. Bark *Canton Packet*, New Bedford, 7 April 1851, ODHS 108.

47. Ship *China*, New Bedford, 28 January 1854, ODHS 549.

48. Ship *Lapwing*, New Bedford, 27 April 1862, ODHS 539.

49. Respectively ship *Arnolda*, New Bedford, 1 September 1862, ODHS 121, and bark *Canton Packet*, 9 September 1851, ODHS 108.

50. Bark *Canton Packet*, 30 October 1857, PPL C232/1857L.

51. Bark *New England*, New London, 24 March 1852, MSM 887.

52. Bark *Hector*, Warren, R.I., 13 April 1847, ODHS 1052A.

53. Bark *Millinoket*, Warren, R.I., 28 January 1851, ODHS 1052B.

54. This point is made by Marcus Rediker, "The Common Seaman in the Histories of Capitalism and the Working Class," *International Journal of Maritime History* 1:2 (December 1989): 342-43.

55. William Henry Nicols, *Journal of a Whaling Voyage . . . on Board Barque Emerald of Salem . . .* (Salem: Naumkeag Publications, 1973), 4 December 1838.

56. Charles Ward to State Department, 5 January 1848, D/S M468/1.

57. Ship *Montreal*, New Bedford, 2 January 1851, KWM 527. Although this journal is for a voyage of 1852-53, it contains some earlier entries.

58. Ship *Cambria*, New Bedford, 27 July 1844, PPL C178/1842L.

59. Ship *Alpha*, Nantucket, 7 September 1850, ODHS 1054A. Race relations aboard whaleships also deserve special attention, but race seems not to have been a determining factor in this instance.

60. Ship *Parachute*, New Bedford, 14 March 1857, University of Washington (my thanks to Charles Schultz for bringing this log to my attention).

61. U.S. Commissioner's Court, *U.S. v Ichabod Handy*, master of bark *Hesper*; reported in WSL II:24, 20 August 1844.

62. U.S. District Court, Boston, *Joaquin Arnod, seaman, v Hezekiah Allen*, master of bark *Sea Queen*, WSL 37:36, 21 October 1879.

63. The parallel is developed by Daniel Fickers in "Roundtable," *International Journal of Maritime History* 1:2 (December 1989): 312.

64. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 63.

### Chapter 3. Race and Status

1. Old Fleece is found in chapter 64 of *Moby Dick*, Baltimore in chapter 11 of *Omoo*, Mungo in chapter 1 of *Typee*, and the "Handsome Sailor" in the opening paragraph of *Billy Budd*, any edition in each case.

2. As pointed out, for example, by Eleanor E. Simpson, "Melville and the

Negro: From *Typee* to 'Benito Cerano,'" *American Literature* 41 (1969):19-38. Still an important analysis is Sidney Kaplan, "Herman Melville and the American National Sin," *Journal of Negro History* 41 (1956):311-338; 43 (1957):11-37.

3. W. Jeffrey Bolster, "'To Feel like a Man': Black Seamen in the Northern States, 1800-1860," *Journal of American History* 76:4 (1990):1173-1199. A helpful guide is Mary Malloy, *African Americans in the Maritime Trades: A Guide to Resources in New England* (Sharon, Mass.: Kendall Whaling Museum Monograph Series, 6, 1990).

4. Sidney Kaplan, "Lewis Temple and the Hunting of the Whale," *New England Quarterly* 26 (1953):78-88.

5. Martha S. Putney, *Black Sailors: Afro-American Merchant Seamen and Whalemens Prior to the Civil War* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1987), 54-60. See also Lamont Thomas, *Paul Cuffe: Black Entrepreneur and Pan-Africanism* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1986).

6. Putney, *Black Sailors*, table 6, p. 125.

7. *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 14 September 1846, reproduced in Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis, eds., *The Black Worker: A Documentary History from Colonial Times to the Present*, vol. 1: *The Black Worker to 1869* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1978), 196-99. Floris Barnett Cash uses this estimate in "African-American Whalers: Images and Reality," *Long Island Historical Journal* 2 (1989): 43, but advances the year to 1859. The 1859 date probably comes from James F. Clarke, using the same 1846 numbers; see a similar citation in James Barker Farr, *Black Odyssey: The Seafaring Traditions of Afro-Americans* (New York: Peter Land, 1989), p. 95 and n. I am indebted to Graham Hodges for the reference to Cash's article and for his comments on an early draft of this study.

8. Bolster, "'To Feel Like a Man,'" discusses immigration and crimping; on the increase of "scientific" racism, Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1981). A contrary, if unpersuasive, argument that blacks occupied a larger role in midcentury seafaring may be found in Harold D. Langley, "The Negro in the Navy and Merchant Service, 1789-1860," *Journal of Negro History* 52 (1967):273-86, who postulates an increase in black seafarers at least in the period 1847-60, but ultimately concludes only that "at least a small percentage of Negroes could be found on any Navy or merchant ship, and that they lived and worked in harmony with other members of the crew", p. 286.

9. Michael Cohn and Michael K.H. Platzer, *Black Men of the Sea* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1978), 84.

10. Matthew Howland Letterbook, 1858-79, Old Dartmouth Historical Society (New Bedford), quoted in Everett S. Allen, *Children of the Light* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), 126.

11. Bolster, "'To Feel Like a Man,'" 1180.

12. Bolster, "'To Feel Like a Man,'" 1195.

13. Cohn and Platzer, *Black Men of the Sea*, 84.

14. For examples of such conflicts: ship *Arabella*, New Bedford, 3 June 1851, PPL A6582/1849L; ship *Plover*, New Bedford, 5 January 1863, PPL P7315/1862L. Incident on the *Mary Ann*, Fairhaven, 24 May 1861, ODHS 1098.

15. Bark *Aurora*, New Bedford; 23 October 1861; NBFPL 95, microfilm reel 11.
16. Bark *New England*, New London, Conn., remarks following entry for 21 November 1851; MSM 887.
17. Francis Allyn Olmstead, *Incidents of a Whaling Voyage* (1841; reprint New York: Bell, 1969), 45-46.
18. Ship *Lucy Ann*, 25 February 1847; published as Captain Edwin Peter Brown, *In the Wake of Whales: the Whaling Journals of . . . 1841-1847* (New York: Old Orient Press, 1988), 378. Brown, as it happens, was a deeply religious man, who encouraged revivalist and temperance meetings aboard his vessel.
19. Bark *Draco*, New Bedford, 15 January 1850, PPL D757/1843L.
20. Schooner *Charles Colgate*, 23 October 1875, MSM Coll. 25, vol. 112.
21. Ship *Tiger*, Stonington, Conn., 5 December 1845. MSM 38. In her next voyage, Mrs. Brewster was more moderate concerning a new black cook who was rather better at his job; see the same log for 13 July 1848.
22. Ship *Archer*, New Bedford, 18 March 1846, ODHS 945B. "Guinea" might mean Africa, of course, but just as probably refers to "New Guinea," an impoverished black district of Nantucket town.
23. Ship *Charles Phelps*, Stonington, 9 February 1843, MSM 141.
24. Frank T. Bullen, *The Cruise of the Cachalot: Round the World After Sperm Whales* (London: Smith, Elder, 1898; reprint, New Haven: Leete's Island Books, 1980), 4.
25. Bark *America*, Mattapoissett, 24-25 October 1856, ODHS LB 88-6.
26. Bark *Atlantic*, 22-23 May 1866; two logs for the same voyage, both describing the incident, are at ODHS 796 and 797 (quoted).
27. Ship *Roman*, New Bedford, 7 April 1844, MSM log 792.
28. Bark *Alto*, New Bedford, Appendix (5 February 1857), KWM 14.
29. Horan, "Flogging in the United States Navy," 969-75; the clause respecting merchant vessels was included in an act abolishing flogging in the U.S. Navy. See on this question Valle, *Rocks and Shoals* and, in a somewhat wider perspective, Glenn, *Campaigns Against Corporal Punishment*.
30. Bark *Lagoda*, New Bedford, 2 April 1862, NBFPL 389.
31. Browne, *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise*. On the navy, see Frederick S. Harrod, "Jim Crow in the Navy (1798-1941)," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 105 (1979):46-53.
32. Ship *Alpha*, Nantucket, 7 September 1850, ODHS 1054A.
33. Nicols, *Journal of a Whaling Voyage . . . on Board Barque Emerald of Salem . . .*, 4 December 1838, 23 March 1839.
34. Robert Ferguson, *Harpooner, a Four-Year Voyage on the Barque Kathleen, 1880-1884* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1936), 16 (8 July 1880).
35. Ship *Parachute*, New Bedford, 9 March 1839, ODHS 50.
36. Ship *Samuel Robertson*, New Bedford, 1841-45, ODHS 1039; list of men flogged is at p. 253.
37. Ship *Meridian*, Edgartown, 12 May 1830, PPL M561/1829j.
38. Ship *Sea*, Warren, R.I., 28 December 1852, PPL C726/1851j.
39. Ship *Sharon*, Fairhaven, Mass., 1 September 1842, PPL S531/1841j.
40. Ship *Sharon*, Fairhaven, Mass., 15 May 1846, ODHS 660A.

41. Bark *Shepherdess*, Mystic, Conn., 15 March 1849, PPL S548/1848L.
42. Bark *Clarice*, New Bedford, 14-15 March 1845, NBFPL 193, microfilm reel 19.
43. Captain George Fred Tilton, 'Cap'n George Fred' Himself (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1928), 19.
44. Ship *Illinois*, New Bedford, 22 September 1845, ODHS 1005 A + B.
45. Ship *Alfred Gibbs*, New Bedford, 20-23 March 1861, ODHS 571.
46. Information in this paragraph is drawn from Briton Cooper Busch, "Cape Verdeans in the American Whaling and Sealing Industry, 1850-1900," *American Neptune* 45 (1985):104-16.
47. Ship *Governor Troup*, New Bedford, 24 December 1866, PPL C456/1862j.
48. Schooner *Era*, New Bedford, 26 June 1900, MSM Coll. 102, vol. 2.
49. Robert Bruce Strout, "A sketch of the performance on board *Bark Clione* [sic, *Cleone*, New Bedford] on her third season in the Arctic," MSM Coll. 210, box 1/1, p. 49.
50. Ship *South Boston*, Fairhaven, 4 December 1851, ODHS 761.
51. Kaplan, "Herman Melville and the American National Sin," 31.
52. [Herman Melville], "The 'Gees,'" *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 1856, pp. 507-9. The piece can, of course, be viewed merely as satire, as it is by Carolyn L. Karcher in "Melville's 'The 'Gees': A Forgotten Satire on Scientific Racism," *American Quarterly* 27 (1975):421-42. Karcher takes issue with those scholars, including Kaplan, who take Melville literally in this case, arguing that Cape Verdeans are simply "a fictional Negro analogue." Karcher is thus another scholar who ignores the actual status of Cape Verdeans in the industry. Mid-nineteenth-century whalemens would more probably have seen Melville's remarks as humorous exaggeration of what to them seemed real enough characteristics—which is, of course, one purpose of satire.
53. William B. Whitecar, Jr., *Four Years Aboard the Whaleship, Embracing Cruises in the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, and Antarctic Oceans in the Years 1855, '6, '7, '8, '9* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1860), 42.
54. Ship *Contest*, New Bedford, Introduction and 16 April 1869, KWM 234.
55. John Thompson, *The Life of . . . A Fugitive Slave: Containing His History of 25 Years in Bondage, and His Providential Escape* (Worcester, Mass.: privately printed, 1856), 124.
56. Ship *Plover*, New Bedford, 27 August 1863, PPL P7315/1862L.
57. Bark *Lagrange*, Fairhaven, 3 August 1855, ODHS LB 88-4.
58. Bark *Zone*, Fairhaven, 18 October 1855, KWM 278.
59. Bark *Pacific*, New Bedford, 25 March 1858, ODHS 677A.
60. Ship *Metacom*, Bristol, R.I., 30 September 1839, ODHS 535.
61. Bark *Fanny*, 21 March 1857, ODHS 619B. The slush had some value when sold ashore as grease; part of it was commonly a perquisite of the cook.
62. Ship *Betsy Williams*, Stonington, 26 October 1849, PPL B564/1849L.
63. Ship *Hannibal*, Sag Harbor, N.Y., 1827-28 crew list, MSM 204.
64. Herman Melville, *Omoo*, ch. 12.
65. Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land, Marquesas*

1774-1880 (Honolulu: Univ. Press of Hawaii, 1980), 3. On this subject generally, see Marion Diamond, "Queequeg's Crewmates: Pacific Islanders in the European Shipping Industry," *International Journal of Maritime History* 1 (1989):123-40.

66. Farr, *Black Odyssey*, 92.

67. Simpson, "Melville and the Negro," 28.

68. Ministry of Interior to King, 1 August 1846, Ministry of Interior Dept. Misc., Archives of Hawaii, Honolulu. See also Janice K. Duncan, "Kanaka World Travelers and Fur Company Employees, 1785-1860," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 7 (1973):93-110.

69. Whaleman's Shipping Paper, 3 December 1870, with log of bark *Lagoda*, New Bedford, 1868-1873, ODHS 494. A useful file on the subject is "Native Seamen Shipped Before Honolulu Harbor Master 1858-1867," in the Minister of Interior files, Hawaiian Archives, Honolulu.

70. Ship *Lalla Rookh*, New Bedford, 1837-40, crew accounts, PPL L196/1837L.

71. Letter from Vice Commercial Agent, St. Helena, undated but 5 February 1857, appended to log of bark *Alto*, New Bedford, 1854-57, KWM 14.

72. Bark *Callao*, New Bedford, 11 June 1870, ODHS 421.

73. Bark *Alfred Gibbs*, New Bedford, 14 April 1871, PPL A392/1870jf.

74. Bark *Osceola III*, New Bedford, 1859-61, Crew List, PPL 081/1859j.

75. Ship *Gay Head*, New Bedford, 10 March 1855, NBFPL 265.

76. Bark *Palmetto*, New Bedford, 15 April 1882, ODHS 197.

77. Brig *Bogota*, entries for April-June 1843 (the vessel was sold at public auction on 13 June), PPL B675/1842L.

78. Ship *Phenix*, New Bedford, 16 September 1849, KWM 399.

79. Bark *Triton*, New Bedford, 27 July 1863, KWM 193.

80. Bark *Sea Shell*, Warren, R.I., 2 October 1854 and 12 December 1855, PPL SH4392/1853j.

81. Ship *Orion*, Nantucket, 27 July 1832, PPL 0692/1829j.

82. Ship *Houqua*, New Bedford, 16 June 1836, PPL H774/1835j.

83. Bark *Cavalier*, 5 March 1850, MSM 18.

84. James F Munger, *Two Years in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans and China, Being a Journal of . . . A Whaling Voyage* (1852; reprint, Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1987), 21.

85. This point is made by Thomas Miller, American Consul, Hilo, Hawaii. Miller to Department of State, 25 May 1854, D/S T/133/1.

86. Ship *India*, New Bedford, 19 July 1847, ODHS 1116B.

87. Ship *California*, New Bedford, 30 December 1852, KWM 509.

88. Bark *Callao*, New Bedford, 11 March 1870, ODHS 421.

89. Bark *Atlantic*, 22-23 May 1866; two logs for the same voyage, both describing the incident, are at ODHS 796 and 797.

90. Ship *Minerva*, New Bedford, 1859-60, crew list, KWM 353.

91. Lyman R. Garde, Reminiscences on board bark *J.D. Thompson*, New London, 1868-69. Typescript, MSM microfilm reel 96.

92. Ship *Speedwell*, Fairhaven, 25 March 1860, PPL S742/1857j.

93. Bark *Wanderer*, New Bedford, 25 October 1879, ODHS 409.

94. Pip is introduced in ch. 93, and his death noted in ch. 129 (both quoted) of *Moby Dick*, any edition.
95. Kaplan, "Herman Melville and the American National Sin," 329-30.

#### Chapter 4. Work Stoppages

1. Ship *Georgia*, 16 July 1835, MSM O Log 15; W.G. Merrill, Praia, to State Department, 29 July 1835, enclosing deposition from Peabody, and same to same, 23 March 1836; D/S T 434/1. This chapter first appeared in a different form in *International Journal of Maritime History*, 3 (1991):95-107. My thanks to Victor Lewinson for his helpful comments on that paper.
2. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 197-99 discusses both mutinies. The log of the *Junior* is NBFPL 357. See also Edwin P. Hoyt, *The Mutiny on the Globe* (New York: Random, 1975).
3. Holdings are mainly but not exclusively the entire logbook collections at KWM, MSM, ODHS, NBFPL, and PPL.
4. Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, and Reginald B. Hegarty, ed., *Returns of Whaling Vessels Sailing from American Ports . . . 1876-1928* (New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society and Whaling Museum, 1959).
5. Bark *Globe*, New Bedford, 26 July 1869, KWM 627. The vessel at the time was roughly in the "36°/36° ground".
6. Ship *Eliza Adams*, New Bedford, 12-14 February 1853, KWM 318.
7. Bark *Smyrna*, New Bedford, 7-17 July 1855, PPL S667/1853j.
8. Ship *Milton*, New Bedford, 3 January 1853, PPL M662/1851j (quoted) and ODHS 264.
9. Ship *Coral*, New Bedford, 22 April 1844, KWM 17:2.
10. Bark *Eliza*, New Bedford, 7 October 1870, NBFPL 218.
11. Bark *Arnolda*, New Bedford, 7-13 July 1878, ODHS 591.
12. Bark *Perseverance*, Fayal, Azores (L. Kelly, 3rd mate, keeper), 19 January 1882, KWM 103.
13. Bark *Clarice*, 10-15 March 1845, NBFPL 193.
14. Ship *Frances Henrietta*, 27 May 1857, PPL M3932/1852j.
15. Bark *Gay Head*, 3-4-October 1883, PPL G285/1882L.
16. Ship *Susan*, 19 November-10 December 1841, KWM 529.
17. Ship *Massachusetts*, New Bedford, 29-31 August 1861, NBFPL 439.
18. Ship *Clifford Wayne*, 9 January 1844, PPL C638/1841j.

#### Chapter 5. Whalers and American Consuls Abroad

1. New Bedford Merchants' petition, 13 February 1865, D/S M144/9.
2. Useful summaries of laws relating to seamen are Dana, *Seaman's Friend*, and Curtis, *Treatise on the Rights and Duties*. At least some whalerships in midcentury carried a one-page summary of quotations from the laws of 1790, 1803, 1835, and 1840, printed in New Bedford as "Acts of the Congress of the United States of America for the Government of Seamen, Merchants, &c." (n.d.) A copy is in the Honolulu consulate files, D/S 144/9; my quotations are from this copy. On consuls

in general, see Charles Stuart Kennedy, *The American Consul: a History of the United States Consular Service, 1776-1914* (New York: Greenwood, 1990).

3. Abell to State Department, 1 July 1846 D/S M144/3. Lists of holders of all consular posts may be found in the series M587.

4. H. Willis Baxley, *What I Saw on the West Coast of South and North America, and at the Hawaiian Islands* (New York: D. Appleton, 1865), 535-36. For examples of general criticism: Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 78-83; Jean Ingram Brookes, *International Rivalry in the Pacific Islands, 1800-1875* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1941), 29, and Robert Erwin Johnson, *Thence Round Cape Horn: The Story of United States Naval Forces on Pacific Station, 1818-1923* (Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 13. Some consuls have received particular attention, for example John Coffin Jones in Honolulu (see Ross H. Gast, *Contentious Consul: a Biography of John Coffin Jones, First United States Consular Agent at Hawaii* [Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1976]).

5. Such trading consulates were not above criticism. See for example the petition of whaling masters against the consul at Paita in 1853 for putting his own business before theirs: April 1853, signed by eighteen masters, Paita D/S T600/2.

6. Haight to Department of State, 29 April 1846, Azores D/S T203/3.

7. Clipping from *New York Herald*, 8 January 1880, Azores D/S T203/7, and other documents in this volume.

8. Ship *Janus*, New Bedford, 13 July 1835, MSM 225.

9. Clara Wheldon, "Life at Sea with Pen Pictures of the Arctic . . ." (*John Howland*), 8 November 1864, ODHS 460.

10. Bark *Benjamin Franklin*, New Bedford, 7 April 1864, KWM 256.

11. Lindsey to State Department, 5 August 1862, and other notes in file, D/S T483/2.

12. Johnston to State Department, 18 March 1861, D/S T25/3.

13. Fairfield to State Department, 20 February 1857, D/S M462/3.

14. Pratt to State Department, 20 October 1859, D/S M144/7.

15. Winslow to State Department, 1 October 1862, D/S T600/2.

16. Smyley's other interests are mentioned by Captain John D. Whidden, *Old Sailing Ship Days . . .* (Boston: C.E. Lauriat, 1925), 106.

17. Merritt to State Department, 13 April 1836, D/S T434/1.

18. Hawes to State Department, 7 August 1874, D/S M452/1.

19. Captain U.S.S. *Savannah* to Secretary of the Navy, 24 April 1870, in Tumbes files, D/S T353/1. For another example, see the petition against a drunken consul in the Tahiti files, dated 5 July 1858, D/S M465/2.

20. Deposition, 8 February 1848 and other documents in the file, St. Catharine's, Brazil, D/S T483/1. Another example: G.S. Holmes to Department of State, Cape Town, 19 August 1858, D/S T191/4. On elephanting in general, see Briton Cooper Busch, *The War Against the Seals: A History of the North American Seal Fishery* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1985), ch. 6.

21. Surveys, like anything else, were open to abuse. See for example the journal of the bark *Hope On*, New Bedford, 1881-83, appendix, complaining against a consul who condemned a vessel, in the master's view, simply in order to get it into his own hands at a cheap price. ODHS 923.

22. Atwater to State Department, 3 June 1872, D/S M465/9.
23. *Bark Sea Fox*, Westport, Mass., 22 August 1870, KWM 182.
24. *Bark Sea Breeze*, New Bedford, 18 March 1855, KWM 472.
25. *Bark Marcella*, New Bedford, July-December 1852, ODHS 34.
26. *Bark Spartan*, New Bedford, 6 April 1872, ODHS 1064.
27. December 1871-December 1872 file (Pike to State Department, 6 February 1872 quoted), D/S M462/5.
28. Dorothy Pyle, "The Intriguing Seamen's Hospital," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 8 (1974):121-35, discusses fees, noting that in some cases as much as 7 percent was charged.
29. S.W. Dabney to Department of State, 20 May 1873, responded to instructions that consuls collect sixty dollars (twenty dollars per month) by noting that the order "seals the doom of many a weary man." D/S T203/7.
30. Miller to State Department, 14 April 1858, D/S T133/2.
31. Collector, New London Customs District, to State Department, 19 April 1842 (complaining against this fee), both D/S T203/3. Charles Dabney also elaborated a system of rewards paid for location of deserters, which amount had risen steadily from three dollars to fifteen dollars during his consulship. His system is mentioned in a letter from his son, S.W. Dabney to State Department, 1 February 1873 D/S T203/7.
32. C. Dabney to State Department, 3 January 1842, D/S T203/3.
33. Hickling to C. Dabney, 24 December 1836, D/S T203/1.
34. Card to State Department, 10 August 1863, D/S T353/1. Capt. Ebenezer F Nye's voyage came to an end when his vessel was captured and burned by the C.S.S. *Shenandoah* two years later (Starbuck, *History*, 585).
35. Adamson to State Department, 1 February 1870, D/S M144/11.
36. Anson G. Chandler, Lahaina, to State Department, 30 June 1857, D/S T101/2.
37. Stuart M. Frank, "Jailed in Honolulu: Daniel K. Ritchie, Second Mate, 1843-45," ms. (based on Ritchie's journals in KWM). My thanks to Stuart Frank for the use of this forthcoming paper.
38. Larkin to State Department, 17 October 1845, D/S M138/1.
39. An example is Peter A. Brinshade, Honolulu, to State Department, 2 July 1844, D/S M144/2.
40. *The Friend*, 1 December 1866, enclosed in Thomas F Wilson, Honolulu, to State Department, 31 December 1866, D/S M144/9.
41. S.W. Dabney to State Department, 22 May 1890, D/S T203/10.
42. Cover to State Department, 31 March 1870, D/S T203/5.
43. Treasury Department to State Department, 24 March 1852, enclosed in Allen to State Department, 31 December 1852, D/S M144/5, and Treasury Department, Auditor's report, 29 June 1860, D/S M144/7. See Pyle, "Intriguing Seamen's Hospital."
44. As pointed out by Joel Turrill, Honolulu, to State Department, 3 January 1848, D/S M144/4.
45. Caldwell to Comptroller of Treasury, 20 May 1862, D/S M144/8.

46. Winslow to State Department, 1 October 1862, and see also his end-of-year report, December 1862, both D/S 600/2.
47. G.H. Greene, Paita, to parents, 28 October 1862, and to Allen Greene, Colebrook, Conn., 12 January 1863, D/S T600/2.
48. Winslow to State Department, 24 April 1863 and enclosures, D/S T600/2.
49. Ship *Trident*, New Bedford, 18 July, 2 and 6 October (latter quoted), 1862, MSM 634.
50. Hogan to State Department, 11 August 1824, D/S M146/1.
51. Williams to State Department, 1 January 1844, D/S T49/1. See John B. Williams, *The New Zealand Journal, 1842-1844* (Salem: Peabody Museum, 1956).
52. Lovejoy to State Department, 1 April 1862, D/S M155/4.
53. Pike to State Department, 3 May 1872, D/S M462/5.
54. Smith to State Department, 10 December 1867, D/S M144/10.
55. Farrell (San Francisco), to Secretary of State, 15 April 1867; memorial signed by twenty-nine whaling masters, 2 December 1867, both D/S M144/10.
56. Rice to State Department, 30 June 1858 and other documents in file. Rice was one of the few consuls to be singled out by whaling masters for praise; see memorial signed by two dozen captains, April 1857. Both D/S M452/1.
57. Ringgold to State Department, 31 December 1854, D/S T600/1.
58. Rose to State Department, 28 December 1856 D/S T600/1. For another rare public protest, see letter from seven men from the Sag Harbor ship *Emerald* published in the Honolulu *Polynesian*, 26 November 1853, addressed "to the Public" and complaining against transshipment of oil and other grievances. A copy may be found with the log of *Emerald*, MSM microfilm roll 112; see ch. 1, n. 45.
59. Ship *St. Peter*, New Bedford, 19 May 1847, PPL S149/1846L. Since the log keeper was not particularly literate, the spelling may be his rather than the authors'.
60. Bark *Endeavour*, New Bedford, 27-30 November 1855, NBFPL 236.
61. Bark *Globe*, New Bedford, 14 January 1850, and later entries, ODHS 892.
62. Petition of John Murray and others to Alfred Caldwell, Honolulu, 28 January 1862, D/S M144/7.
63. Bark *Louisa Sears*, Edgartown, 7 November 1857, MSM 832; see above ch. 2, p. 14.
64. Ship *James Edward*, New Bedford, 30 April 1856, PPL J276/1855L.
65. Fairfield to State Department, 25 February 1857 and file, and same of 16 June 1859, D/S M462/3.
66. Ship *Eliza Adams*, New Bedford, 21 April 1853, KWM 318.
67. Bark *Mattapoisett*, Westport, Mass., 7 November 1882, PPL M435/1881L.
68. Bark *Sea Ranger*, New Bedford, 2 January and 27 February 1874, ODHS 830.
69. Bark, *President*, New Bedford, 3 July 1869, NBFPL 537.
70. Bark *Smyrna*, New Bedford, 15 January 1855 (the mate was the log keeper), ODHS 644.
71. Bark *Alto*, New Bedford, 5 February 1857, including appended letter from Carroll giving his version of the events, KWM 14.
72. Miller to State Department, 20 January 1856, including depositions, D/S T133/1.

73. Ringgold to State Department, 1 April 1852, D/S T328/1.
74. Froberville to State Department, 17 June 1837, D/S M462/1.
75. Wells to State Department, 21 June 1838, D/S T483/1.
76. Clendon to State Department, 3 July 1840, D/S T49/1.
77. Deposition of Samuel Cooke of *Hibernia*, and others, 6 July 1844, and other documents in file D/S M462/1.
78. Bark *Palmetto*, New Bedford, 7 and 14 April 1873, NBFPL 512.
79. Bark *Bartholomew Gosnold*, New Bedford, 5-6 May and 9 September (quoted) 1883, ODHS 668.
80. Ship *Charles*, New Bedford, 10 August 1846, NBFPL 156. The man may in fact have been a beachcomber, not one of the crew; the log is unclear on this point.
81. Bark *Emma*, New Bedford, 6 January 1848, KWM 497. The official consul's record confirming all the details entered in the log is in Zanzibar files at D/S M468/1. The consul did in fact go aboard to inspect the food of which the men complained.
82. Quoted in *Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchant's Transcript*, 12:5, 4 April 1854.
83. Bark *Thomas Pope*, New Bedford, 23-24 July 1862, KWM 191; Hadlett and Perkins, Mauritius, to Williams and Haven, New London, 3 February 1863, in Port Louis files, D/S M462/4.
84. Bark *Cossack*, New Bedford, 5 November 1851, ODHS 92.
85. Bark *Ellen*, Edgartown, 1 September 1855, ODHS 242.
86. Larkin to State Department, 18 August 1844, D/S M138/1.
87. Mellen to State Department, 27 June 1863, D/S M462/4; the vessel is not named in his report.
88. Jenkins to State Department, 16 June 1857 and enclosures, D/S T27/1.
89. Miles to State Department, 21 February 1857, D/S M155/2.
90. Card to State Department, 10 August 1863, D/S T353/1.

## Chapter 6. Desertion

1. Ship *Caroline*, New Bedford, 2-7 October and 13 December 1843, KWM 596.
2. Quoted in Clement C. Sawtell, *Ann Alexander 1805-1851* (Mystic, Conn.: Marine Historical Association, 1962), 55.
3. Justin Martin, letters, Blunt White Library, manuscript VFM 246, 29 November 1844.
4. WSLMT, 15:26, 8 September 1857, letter from Captain Crenner of the *Anaconda*.
5. Captain Burr Osborn, *Reminiscences of a Voyage Around the World in the Forties* (Union City, Mich.: Union City Register, 1892), 29.
6. Bark *Isabella*, New Bedford, 19 May 1854, NBFPL, log 310.
7. Ship *Pocahontas*, Falmouth, Mass., 6 October 1834, bound with log ship *George*, New Bedford. Clifford served on both vessels, and it was his experience on the *George* of which he wrote. PPL G347/1832j.
8. Bark *Globe*, New Bedford, 21 May 1872, final entry. PPL G562/1869j.

9. Charles Nordhoff, *Life on the Ocean*, Part 2: "Whaling and Fishing" (1874; reprint London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1974), 91.

10. Charles Studley, who deserted at Madagascar in 1877 and took a month to make his way to Tamatave where there was an American Consul, stated that he had deserted from the *Young Phenix* of New Bedford because of "an unprofitable voyage, and its prospective long duration." (Consul, Tamatave, to State Department, 4 January 1877, D/S T60/2). William Torrey gave a similar reason for leaving at Paita in 1832: "The poor success which had attended us, caused the greatest dissatisfaction among the crew, yet none attributed it to the officers of the ship. Myself and two others concluded to try our luck in another way." William Torrey, *Torrey's Narrative; or, the Life and Adventures of . . .* (Boston: A.J. Wright, 1848), 86.

11. Ship *Young Phenix*, New Bedford, 22 October 1850, NBFPL 650.

12. See, for example, the collective petition to French authorities by several masters against the activities of a crimp in Nukahiva in 1842 quoted by Florence Bennett Anderson, *Through The Hawse-Hole: The True Story of a Nantucket Whaling Captain* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 232.

13. Reuben Delano, *The Wanderings and Adventures of . . . Being a Narrative of Twelve Years' Life in a Whale Ship* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 232.

14. William M. Davis, *Nimrod of the Sea: or, the American Whaleman* (New York: Harper and Row, 1874), 362.

15. Brig *Nonpareil*, San Francisco, Calif., 17 April 1856, KWM 520.

16. David Howarth, *Tahiti: A Paradise Lost* (London: Hervill, 1983), 101.

17. Quoted in Levi Whittaker, *The Mainland "Haole": The White Experience in Hawaii* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1986), 19.

18. The concept of a frontier is stressed in J.D. Legge, *Britain in Fiji, 1858-1880* (London: Macmillan, 1958), 20.

19. The relationship of race to desertion deserves special treatment. One sample of note taken of black beachcombers, however, occurs in T.H. Hood, *Notes of a Cruise on H.M.S. 'Fawn' in the Western Pacific in the Year 1862* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1863), 134-37. One "New York Negro" had married a chief in Apia; another tried to smuggle spirits onto the *Fawn*; a third informed the officers that "he was the first white man who settled at Apia!"

20. Ship *Nathaniel P. Tallmadge*, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Francis Post, master and log keeper, p. 484 ("a visit to Raratonga Island"), ODHS 1078B, reel 1010.

21. James Caswell, *A Sketch of the Adventures of . . . During Fifteen Years on the Ocean . . .* (New Bedford: privately printed, 1860), 14-16.

22. Journal, John M. Warner (ship *Cassander*, Providence, 1844-46), PPL C343/1844j.

23. Mary Chapman Lawrence, *The Captain's Best Mate: the Journal of . . . on the Whaler "Addison" 1856-1860* (Hanover, N.H.: Univ. Press of New England, 1896), 26 (25 April 1857).

24. Charles A. Maker, affidavit, left destitute by *Lagoda*, 29 October 1864, is an example (E.L. Hamilton, Pilot of Apia, to Consul, 15 November 1864, enclosing affidavit, Department of State, Apia Consulate, D/S T27/2); Colonial Secretary, St. Helena, to U.S. Consular Agent, 29 April 1854, is an example of captain's regret that a man (from the *John Dawson*) had been found; "he would rather have

given him [the constable] three dollars not to have taken him"; D/S T428/8. Sometimes an individual's motive is difficult to pinpoint, as in the case of the black seaman who refused duty, was flogged and then left on the beach at Upolu, Samoa, by the master of the *Lagoda* in 1862 (2 April 1862), NBFPL 389.

25. *Seaman's Friend*, 190-91, discusses desertion and the 1803 law.

26. See ch. 4, table 3.

27. Robert L. Hadfield, *Mutiny at Sea* (1928; reprint Stanfordville, N.Y.: Earl Coleman, 1979), 53.

28. N.A.M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1986), 191-96.

29. Bark *Morning Star*, New Bedford, 28 October-17 November 1898; 1-4 December 1899, NBFPL 471. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 62-69. Nordhoff, *Life on the Ocean*, 236, believed 90 percent deserted. Ernest Beaglehole, *Social Change in the South Pacific: Rarotonga and Aitutaki* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957), 91, is an example of how widely Hohman's conclusions have been used.

30. Francis X. Hezel, "The Beginnings of Foreign Contact with Truk," *Journal of Pacific History* 8 (1973):51-74.

31. Thomas Farel Heffernan, *Stove by a Whale: Owen Chase and the "Essex"* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1981), 128-29; Anderson, *Through the Hawse-Hole*, 232.

32. Bark *Helen Mar*, New Bedford, 16 September 1876, ODHS 129.

33. Bark *Hope On*, New Bedford, 28 June 1881, ODHS 923.

34. Ship *Tuscaloosa*, New Bedford, 11 January 1842, ODHS 638C-639C; bark *Clarice*, 13 December 1871, MSM 838.

35. Commercial Agent, Apia, to Department of State, 26 November 1872, D/S 727/2; another example of "blind Jack" taking the helm (i.e., nobody at the wheel) is given by Alonzo D. Sampson, *Three Times Around the World, Life and Adventures of . . .* (Buffalo: Express Printing, 1867), 97-98, when a man jumped overboard five miles off Honolulu in shark-filled waters.

36. Ship *Martha*, Fairhaven, Mass., 16-20 March 1839, NBFPL 427.

37. Ship *Montreal*, 3-4 August 1860, NBFPL 462.

38. Lyman R. Garde (New London), "Reminiscences," typescript, MSM.

39. AACF, 3, 50 (from Boston *Daily Advertiser*, 12 July 1850). Captain Willis reported that, in fact, the men had intended to take the ship and steer her for California but for unknown reasons changed their minds.

40. WSLMT 27:23, 3 August 1869.

41. WSLMT 35:8, 10 April 1877.

42. Charles Francis Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux: The Narrative of Captain . . . 1860-1862* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, 1864), 86.

43. Bark *Java* (II), New Bedford, 15 December 1868 (the position of the vessel at the time is not entirely clear); steam bark *William Baylies*, San Francisco, 28 June 1906, ODHS 956A.

44. Contrasting examples of desertions at the Galapagos: ship *Java*, New Bedford, 15 September 1850, ODHS 38; ship *Bengal*, Salem, Mass., 9 October 1832, which recovered a deserter after thirty-six hours without water, "and from his appearance I think would not have lived 36 hours longer," Essex Institute, Salem, log

91, reel 25; deserters from the ship *Coral*, New Bedford, on Charles Islands, found refuge with a Spaniard settled there but were recovered when the vessel returned a week or so later, 6 May 1843, KWM 17:2.

45. Captain Howard Hartman, *The Seas Were Mine* (London: George G. Har-  
rap, 1936), 44-46.

46. Bark *Louisa*, New Bedford, 16 November 1871, NBFPL 403. On the ship *Barclay*, New Bedford, in Callao in 1837, the crew delayed the vessel's sailing, forcing the captain to find replacement for a deserter (26 January 1837, ODHS 1); on the brig *Agate*, in 1841, the voyage simply came to an end at Kingston, West Indies, when nine men ran (ODHS 182).

An interesting comparison can be made with the United States Army in the same era; desertion was the most common crime in the years 1867-1891, though it was not regarded as a particularly dastardly offense—the loss of government property was the most troublesome aspect to officers and units involved. Punishments included flogging, marking, dishonorable discharge, hard labor, even a tattoo on the hip with the letter “D,” depending on the era. Don Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting in the Indian Wars* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 138-47.

47. Ship *Courier*, New Bedford, 6 November 1840, PPL C8592, 1838j.

48. Ship *Fabius*, New Bedford, 27 December 1859, NBFPL 246.

49. John D. Jones, *Life and Adventures in the South Pacific, by a Roving Printer* (New York: Harper, 1861), 202-3.

50. Ship *Hope*, New Bedford, 15-16 March 1846, NBFPL 305.

51. Rhys Richards, *Whaling and Sealing at the Chatham Islands* (Canberra: Roebuck Society, 1982), 18-19; Sampson, *Three Times Round the World*, 46; firing the hills is mentioned in log of bark *Sea Shell*, Warren, R.I., 7 February 1854, PPL S4392/1853j.

52. Ship *Cicero*, New Bedford, 3-10 February 1857, is an example of a master who, when told that it would be expensive to recapture some men who had deserted at Tumbes and made their way inland, decided to hire other replacements, ODHS 17.

53. Ship *Eliza F. Mason*, New Bedford, 10 March 1854 (thirty dollars for each deserter recaptured), ODHS 995; ship *Louisa*, New York, N.Y., 19 July 1829, paid twenty dollars each to two Spaniards to recapture two men, ODHS 62; bark *Vigilant*, 7-16 February 1872, paid fifty-five dollars to recapture three men who deserted at Bunbury, W. Australia, ODHS 377.

54. Ship *London Packet*, 27 March 1839, ODHS 760.

55. See ch. 2.

56. Bark *Belle*, Fairhaven, 9 June 1860, NBFPL 102; ship *Amazon*, Fairhaven, 5 November 1848, NBFPL 1615 (See ch. 2, n. 44).

57. Bark *Roscoe*, New Bedford, 18 June 1847, PPL R793/1846j.

58. Ashley, *Yankee Whaler*, 104: “if he was caught and returned to his ship, his officers would not harbor it against him, for the chances were that they had each in the past done the same thing.”

59. Ship *Saratoga*, New Bedford, 21 October 1857, KWM 180.

60. Ship *Adeline*, New Bedford, 17 December 1870, NBFPL 1611.

61. U.S. Consul, Bay of Islands, to Department of State, 26 October 1839 and enclosures, D/S T49/1 (Bay of Islands).
62. Bark *Canton Packet*, New Bedford, 4 December 1848, ODHS 178.
63. Bark *Palestine*, Salem, Mass., 15 May 1842, Essex Institute, Salem, group 91, reel 3.
64. Bark *Favorite*, Fairhaven, 3 August 1835, ODHS 240; bark *Belle*, Fairhaven, 29 November-31 December 1858, NBFPL 102.
65. Ship *Martha*, Fairhaven, 14-18 March 1856, ODHS 365.
66. Ship *Golconda*, Bristol, R.I., 21 April 1837, ODHS 373.
67. Osborn, *Reminiscences of a Voyage*, 49, 58-60.
68. Joseph P. Faulkner, *Three Years on a Whaler* (Bath, N.Y.: A.L. Underhill, 1875), 51-52, 65-69.
69. Ben-Ezra Ely, *There She Blows: A Narrative of a Whaling Voyage in the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans*, edited by Curtis Dahl (1849; reprint, Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1971), 84-87.
70. John C. Williams to Department of State, 8 October 1846, and deposition of Frank Withers, 23 February 1847, D/S Apia, T27/1. (Williams had no regular appointment, having been given only a rather unofficial commission by Wilkes.)
71. Denning, *Islands and Beaches*. Recent scholarship may be reviewed in K.R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall: A New South Sea Islands History* . . . (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1984); other valuable studies include H.E. Maude, *Of Islands and Men: Studies in Pacific History* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), and Caroline Ralston, *Grass Huts and Warehouses: Pacific Beach Communities of the Nineteenth Century* (Honolulu: Univ. Press of Hawaii, 1978).
72. Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985), viii.
73. M.G. Levin and L.P. Potapov, eds., *The Peoples of Siberia* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956), is a good study (walrus meat, p. 813). Individual accounts include Daniel Weston Hall, *Arctic Rovings: or, The Adventures of a New Bedford Boy on Sea and Land* (Boston: Abel Tomplins, 1861), while John Bockstoece surveys the entire subject in *Whales, Ice, and Men: The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic*.
74. Ernest S. Dodge, *New England and the South Seas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1965), 177-78.
75. Bengt Danielsson, *Forgotten Islands of the South Seas* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957), 16. Thor Heyerdahl has similar remarks to make in *Fatu-Hiva: Back to Nature* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974).
76. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 65.
77. Ship *Pacific*, Fairhaven, 24 October-12 November 1855, PPL P117/1854j; bark *President*, 19 March 1867, PPL P933/1865L.
78. Bruce Nelson, *Workers on the Waterfront: Seamen, Longshoremen, and Unionism in the 1930s* (Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1988), 23.
79. Eric W. Sager, *Seafaring Labour: The Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914* (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1989), 192.
80. Consul, Tahiti to State Department, 4 May 1836, D/S M465/1; William Crosby, Consul, Talcahuano, to Department of State, 10 December 1849, D/S T115/3.

81. WSLMT 10:15, 8 June 1852.

82. Douglas Porch, *The French Foreign Legion: A Complete History of the Legendary Fighting Force* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 326. Interestingly, in the early century at least, a man was not a “deserter” to the Legion until he had been missing for six days (p. 64).

83. Ship *Florida*, Fairhaven 29 January 1859, ODHS 763; the remark is quoted with appreciation by the log keeper.

84. Robert Louis Stevenson, *In the South Seas* (1896; reprint, London: Hogarth, 1987), 116-7.

## Chapter 7. The Practice of Religion

1. Pitman to LMS, 27 February 1837, Council for World Mission Archives (hereafter CWMA), Box 11, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.

2. Pratt to LMS, 25 May 1842, CWMA, Box 15.

3. Bark *Avola*, New Bedford, 13 March 1873, KWM 26.

4. Hazelwood to brother, 24 July 1849, Methodist Missionary Records (MMR), Box 532, SOAS.

5. Chase and Turner to LMS, 26 March 1841, CWMA box 14. A slightly different version is quoted in Beaglehole, *Social Change in the South Pacific*, 60.

6. Harold W. Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii: The Pioneers, 1789-1843* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1942), 34.

7. This background is discussed in Harold W. Bradley, *American Frontier* and, from another angle, in Brookes, *International Rivalry in the Pacific Islands, 1800-1875*. The best recent history is K.R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*. On Australia, Nigel Wace and Bessie Lovett, *Yankee Maritime Activities and the Early History of Australia* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1973); on New Zealand, Harry Morton, *The Whale's Wake* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1982).

8. Charles I. Foster, *An Errand of Mercy: the Evangelical United Front, 1790-1837* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1960), 218-19. Useful studies on missions include Clifton Jackson Phillips, *Protestant America and the Pagan World: The First Half Century of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1860* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. East Asian Research Center, 1969), Neil Gunson, *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas, 1797-1860* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978), and John Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania* (Geneva and Suva: World Council of Churches, 1982).

9. Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, I: 1788-1854* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1938), 161-62.

10. Bingham to LMS, 18 March 1830, CWMA box 7. The *Daniel* affair is discussed in many sources; see for example Rev. Sheldon Dibble, *History and General Views of the Sandwich Islands Mission* (New York: Taylor and Dodd, 1839), 97ff. for a contemporaneous account, and, for a more modern summary, Jane Litten, “Whaler versus Missionary at Lahaina,” *Hawaiian Historical Review* L:4 (July 1963):68-73. Considerable correspondence on these events may be found in CWMA, boxes 6-7, and in the collection of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Houghton Library, Harvard University (hereafter ABCFM), 19.1, vols. 1-2.

11. Darling to Sir G. Murray, 12 August 1830, MS A 1267-4, Transcripts, Governor of N.S.W. 1833-38 (quoted); Marsden to Darling, 2 August 1830, Governor's Despatches, N.S.W., vol. 18, both Mitchell Library, Sydney. Brind's role is discussed in Jocelyn Chisholm, *Brind of the Bay of Islands* (Wellington, New Zealand: privately printed, 1979), 34f.
12. Orton to Methodist Missionary Society, London, 19 September 1833, MMR box 524.
13. Henry Williams to CMS, 16 October 1826, Letters to CMS 1822-1851, MS copy in Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z.
14. Henry Williams Journal, 24 April 1831; MS copy in Turnbull Library.
15. James Watkin Journal, 14 June and 7 October 1840, MS copy in Turnbull Library.
16. Niel Gunson, "The Coming of Foreigners," in Noel Rutherford, ed., *Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), 96.
17. Pritchard to LMS, 6 January 1827, CWMA box 6.
18. Williams to LMS, 12 November 1825, CWMA box 5.
19. Rev. George Turner, *Nineteen Years in Polynesia: Missionary Life, Travels, and Researches in the Islands of the Pacific* (London: John Snow, 1861), 8-10. Turner notes the vessel was the "M-Z-A" of Sag Harbor, and the date August 1842. The only known whalers to fit those initials are the *Montezuma* and *Moctezuma*, but both sailed from New Bedford; the *Montezuma* was at sea from 1841 to 1844, the *Moctezuma* was not. See Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*.
20. Buzacott to LMS, 1 August 1839, CWMA box 12.
21. Ship *Stanton*, New Bedford, 1828-30, KWM 577.
22. Buzacott and Pitman to LMS, 25 May 1839, CWMA box 12.
23. Andrews to Levi Chamberlain, 26 April 1844, Lahaina Restoration Foundation file (LRF), vol. 9B, Hawaiian Mission Children Society Library, Honolulu (HMCS).
24. Forbes to Castle, 4 October 1845, LRF/9B.
25. Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii* (Honolulu: Univ. of Honolulu Press, 1989), 104.
26. Quoted from Peter Turner in 1831 by Sione Latukefu, "The Wesleyan Mission," in Noel Rutherford, ed., *Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), 118.
27. Ship *Nathaniel P. Tallmadge*, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 1836-40, p. 486f., remarks on "visit to Pylstaert's Island," ODHS 1078B.
28. Denig, *Islands and Beaches*, 184.
29. J.W. Davidson, *Samoa mo Samoa: The Emergence of the Independent State of Western Samoa* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), 37-38.
30. Pritchard to LMS, 17 May 1832, CWMA box 8.
31. John Davies, Haweis Town [Paparua], to LMS, 21 October 1833, CWMA box 9.
32. Simpson to LMS, 16 December 1833, CWMA box 9.
33. Ephraim Spaulding and William Richards, memorandum of 30 November, 1835, "Brief History of the Temperance Movement in Maui, Molokai, and Lanai," ABCFM 19.1, vol. 4. On the movement in general, Clifford S. Griffin,

*Their Brothers' Keepers: Moral Stewardship in the United States, 1800-1865* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1960).

34. Gill to LMS, 30 November 1846, CWMA box 19. Early employment: Janice K. Duncan, "Kanaka World Travelers."

35. Pitman to LMS, 23 July 1851, quoted, and 1 January 1852, CWMA box 24; oranges were widely grown on the island after 1849 as an export item destined for gold rush California.

36. Ministry in Interior to King and Council, 1 August 1846, Archives of Hawaii (Interior), quoted in LRF/9A. Numbers are discussed in Ministry of Interior, file on "Shipping: Hawaiian Seamen 1840-1858," Archives of Hawaii, Honolulu.

37. Ship *Orion*, Nantucket, 27 July 1832, PPL 0692/1829j.

38. Bingham to Prudential Committee, ABCFM, 25 November 1822, ABCFM 19.1, vol. 1.

39. David and Leona Crawford, *Missionary Adventures in the South Pacific* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 1967), 93.

40. White to MMS, 14 February 1830, MMS box 524.

41. M.S. Loomis, Journal, 1819-24, entries of 9, 11, and 20 April, and 6 November 1821, HMCS.

42. C. Forbes, Journal 1837-62, 15 October 1844, quoted in LRF/9B.

43. Bird to LMS, 7 March 1864, CWMA box 30.

44. A.J. Baldwin letter of 7 December 1843, quoted in LRF/9B.

45. *The Friend*, 25 March 1844.

46. Dwight Baldwin to Sophronia Baldwin, 12 February 1843, quoted in LRF/9B.

47. *The Friend*, 6 May 1854.

48. Alexander to Anderson, 28 September 1833, quoted in T. Walter Herbert, Jr., *Marquesan Encounters: Melville and the Meaning of Civilization* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1980), 64.

49. Dening, *Islands and Beaches*, 176.

50. Henry Nott to LMS, 3 November 1830, CWMA box 7; the captain was Capt. David of the whaler *Nelson*.

51. Buzacott to LMS, (undated) September 1845, CWMA box 18.

52. Royle to LMS, 25 June and 19 September (quoted) 1847, CWMA box 20.

53. Chamberlain journal, vol. 1, 28 November 1823, HMCS. On the *Globe* mutiny, see Edouard A. Stackpole, *The Sea-Hunters: The New England Whaleman During Two Centuries, 1635-1835* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1953), ch. 19, and Hoyt, *The Mutiny on the Globe*.

54. Judd to Chamberlain, 25 April 1829, quoted in LRF/9A.

55. Baldwin to S. Robinson, 7 October 1845, quoted in LRF/9A.

56. Lahaina Mission Diary, 4 May 1840, quoted in LRF/9B.

57. Buchanan to LMS, 28 February 1846, CWMA Box 19.

58. Andrews to Chamberlain, 10 September 1844, LRF/9B.

59. Forbes Journal, 6 April 1847, quoted in LRF/9B.

60. Ship *Canton Packet*, Bristol, R.I., 27 October 1833, PPL C2322/1832j; bark *Covington*, Warren, R.I., 15 August 1853, PPL B785/1849j.

61. See ship *Caroline*, New Bedford, 17 January 1843 (meetings in cabin and tracts distributed), KWM log 596; ship *Lady Amherst*, London, 15 December 1833 (Sunday sermons); ship *Atlantic*, Bridgeport, Conn., 15 July 1836 (steward a Methodist minister who held services aboard), MSM 822.

62. Ship *Catharine*, New London, 26 October 1850, MSM 52.

63. See below, Ch. 8, p. 8.

64. Ship *Eliza Adams*, New Bedford, 23 March 1873, ODHS 940.

65. Ship *Siren Queen*, Fairhaven, 23 December 1854, MSM microfilm reel 90.

66. *The Friend*, 6 May 1854, n.s., 3:5. A copy of Andrews tract, 21 pp. in length, is in the Hawaiian Historical Society Library, Honolulu.

67. *Moby Dick*, any edition, ch. 22; C.W. Morgan to Capt. Jacob Taber, ship *Condor*, New Bedford, 28 May 1844, C.W. Morgan letter copybook, 1844-46, MSM microfilm reel 100. Melville's views on missionaries, which strongly reflect the standard whaler's criticism, may be found in *Typee*, ch. 26.

68. Rev. Henry T. Cheever, *The Whaler's Adventures in the Southern Ocean, as Gathered by . . . on the Homeward Cruise of the Commodore Preble*, 5th ed. (London: Darton, 1861), 230; Cheever discusses Scoresby, but see also Roald Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions: Their Origin and Early Growth* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1986), 288, and W. Scoresby, *An Account of the Arctic Regions, with a History and Description of the Northern Whale-Fishery*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Constable, 1820), 222ff., for his arguments.

69. *Magnet's* policy is mentioned in the log of the ship *Tiger*, of Stonington, which gamed with her, 22 August 1846, MSM log 38, and also discussed in a letter of Dwight Baldwin, 12 April 1847, who mentions Capt. Barker of the ship *Edwards* in the same context (probably the ship *Edward*, New Bedford, Capt. J.S. Barker): Rev. S.C. Damon Coll., box 2 (HMCS). See also *The Friend*, 1 May 1850 (8:5), noting a letter from the captain of the *Hannibal* on the same point—taking pride in resisting a very large whale which sported about next to his vessel for some hours on a sabbath as a clear temptation.

70. Schooner *E. Nickerson*, Provincetown, 30 April 1854, PPL E116/1853j.

71. Bark *Brunette*, Falmouth, 24 July, 8, 9 August 1842, PPL B845/1842j.

72. Ship *Napoleon*, New Bedford, 24 June 1855, PPL N216/1855j.

73. Ship *Martha*, Fairhaven, 6 July 1859, ODHS 785.

74. S.E. Bishop letter in *Sailors Magazine and Naval Journal*, July 1856, quoted in LRF/9B.

75. Lahaina mission diary, 18 October and 25 November 1840; LRF/9B. For another serious religious experience, see Ely, *There She Blows*, 125ff.

76. Ship *Orion*, Nantucket, 20 March 1831, PPL 0692/1829j. The ship *Catharine* of New London in the Navigator Islands in January 1844 noted that Sunday trade was prohibited, MSM log 52.

77. Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty*, 57.

78. Ship *Nimrod*, New Bedford, 3 December 1849, PPL N713/1848hj.

79. Ship *Tiger*, Stonington, 17 September 1846 (and see entries for April and August for the Coans), MSM 38.

80. Rev. Titus Coan, *Life in Hawaii: An Autobiographical Sketch . . .* (New York: A.D. Randolph, 1882), 141-42.

81. Sampson, *Three Times Around the World*, 96-97.
82. Lawrence, *The Captain's Best Mate*, 22.
83. Clara Kingman Whelden, "Life at Sea with Pen Pictures of the Arctic," ts. ms., 1905, ODHS 460, pp. 192-93.
84. William Richards to E. Evarts, 5 May 1823, ABCFM 19.1, vol. I.
85. Ship *Zephyr*, New Bedford, for example, 27 November 1842 and 15 January 1843, ODHS 306.
86. Morrison, 17 November 1844, MSM log 343; Griffin, *Brother's Keepers*, discusses the "Tom Starboard" tract, p. 109.
87. Thomas French, *The Missionary Whaleship* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), 105.
88. Rev. George Patterson, *Missionary Life Among the Cannibals: Being the Life of the Rev John Geddie . . .* (Toronto: James Campbell, 1882), 42.
89. Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty*, 120.
90. Coan, *Life in Hawaii*, 64.
91. Tinker to his sister, 28 April 1832, quoted in LRF/9A.
92. Ship *Bengal*, Salem, Mass., 12 May 1833, Essex Institute (Salem, Mass.), 91; Baldwin to C.M. Fowler, 19 November 1835, quoted in LRF/9A; Andrews to A.S. Cooke, 17 October 1843, quoted in LRF/9B.
93. Ship *Columbus*, Fairhaven, 5 October 1851, for New Bedford, PPL C726/1851j; a more remote example in May 1839: the Salem bark *Emerald*, anchored in Ampanan, Lombok Islands (Sulu Sea), Essex Institute, group 47, microfilm reel 8.
94. Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, 151.
95. *Ibid.*, 419f., 454f.
96. Ship *Columbus*, Fairhaven, 1851-52, 21 September 1851, PPL C726/1851j.
97. Ship *Roman*, New Bedford, 6 and 8 March 1844, MSM 792. For other such pledges: ship *Ocmulgee*, Holmes Hole, MA, 1847-48 (anti-swearing), ODHS 204; ship *James Maury*, New Bedford, 1868-72, ODHS 1001; Capt. Charles Wetherby Gallett, *A Life on the Ocean* (Honolulu: Hawaiian Gazette, 1917), 50.
98. E.W. Clark to American Seamen's Friend Society, 4 December 1829; *The Sailors Magazine and Naval Journal* 2 (August 1830), 363-64.
99. Diell's career may be followed in his letters in subsequent issues of *The Sailors Magazine*; "Records of the Oahu Bethel Church," in the S.C. Damon papers (HMCS), include the separation of 21 May 1837.
100. Bingham to Anderson, LMS, 1 June 1837, ABCFM 19.1, vol. 8.
101. Davis, *Nimrod of the Sea*, 93-94.
102. Bark *Baltic*, New Bedford, 10 October 1856, PPL log B197/1856j.
103. The best source on Damon is the file of his correspondence, including many letters of thanks, in HMCS. See also Hall, *Arctic Rovings*, 141; W.P. Marshall, *Afloat on the Pacific, or Notes of Three Years Life at Sea . . .* (Zanesville, Oh.: Sullivan and Parsons, 1876), 118.
104. Blanchard to Rev. Baldwin, n.d., but 1848, Non-Missionary Letters 1820-1900, "B" file, HMCS.
105. Baldwin letter of 7 December 1843, quoted in LRF/9B. In general, such temperance boarding houses were not a success. On this see Judith Fingard, *Jack in*

Port: *Sailortowns of Eastern Canada* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1982), 235ff.

106. Coan, *Life in Hawaii*, 64-65; Coan claimed 200 volumes in his reading room.

107. The deed is in CWM, box 22; failure is noted in Caroline Ralston, "The Beach Communities," in J.W. Davidson and Deryck Scarr, eds., *Pacific Island Portraits* (Wellington: A.H. and A.W. Reed, 1976), 89.

108. Frances M. Calkins, New London, to Damon, 3 December 1856, is an excellent example of concern with details of pillowcases, sheets, etc. Damon Coll., box III, HCMS.

109. D. Trumbull to Damon, 18 November 1846, Damon Coll., box II, HMCS.

110. L.H. Gulick to Damon, 12 February 1858, and enclosure; Damon Coll., box III, HMCS.

111. For two enthusiasts who thought much more should be done, and their suggestions, see Rev. John Harris, *Zebulon: or, the Moral Claims of Seamen Stated and Enforced* (Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, 1837), and Francis Wayland, *The Claims of Whalemén: a Discourse Delivered Before the New Bedford Port Society* (Lecture delivered 20 November 1842) (New Bedford: B. Lindsey, 1843).

112. Albert Peck, "Deep Water Cruising or My Experience as a Sailor," 1856-63 (vessel unnamed), ODHS 820, p. 128.

113. Davis, *Nimrod of the Sea*, 199.

114. Allen, *Children of the Light*, 181; Harold D. Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862* (Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1867), 45.

115. Cyrene M. Clarke, *Glances at Life Upon the Sea . . .* (Middletown, Conn.: C.H. Pelton, 1854), 74.

116. Dibble, *History*, 101, 127 (both quoted).

117. Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987).

118. Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 183.

119. Garratt, *To Live Among the Stars*, 44.

120. Sione Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875* (Canberra: Australian National Univ. Press, 1980), 37.

121. Augustus Earle, *A Narrative of a Nine Months' Residence in New Zealand in 1827 . . .* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1832), 167-68.

122. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*; Francis X. Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization: A History of the Caroline and Marshall Islands in Pre-Colonial Days, 1521-1885* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1983); David Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar: A History of the Island of Pohnpei to 1890* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1988).

123. Phillips, *Protestant America*, 243.

## Chapter 8. Whalemén's Women, Whalemén's Wives

1. Stan Hugill, *Songs of the Sea: The Tales and Tunes of Sailors and Sailing Ships* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), 121.

2. Alan Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact: An Account of the Invasion of the Pacific, 1767-1840* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).
3. Foster Rhea Dulles, *Lowered Boats: A Chronicle of American Whaling* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1933), 63.
4. Joan Druett, "Those Female Journals," *The Log of Mystic Seaport* 40:4 (Winter 1989):115-25; and "More Decency and Order: Women and Whalemen in the Pacific," *The Log of Mystic Seaport*, 39:2 (Summer 1987):65-74. See also her *Petticoat Whalers: Whaling Wives at Sea, 1820-1920* (Auckland, New Zealand: Collins, 1991).
5. Margaret S. Creighton, "The Captain's Children: Life in the Adult World of Whaling, 1852-1907," *The American Neptune*, 38:3 (July 1978):203-15; Lisa Norling, "Contrary Dependencies: Whaling Agents and Whalemen's Families, 1830-1870," *The Log of Mystic Seaport*, 42:1 (Spring 1990):3-12.
6. Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Beetle Hough, *Whaling Wives* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953); Lawrence, *Captain's Best Mate*.
7. See for example, the works of Robert C. Suggs, *The Hidden Worlds of Polynesia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1962) and *Marquesan Sexual Behavior* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966). Further bibliography may be found in Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*.
8. Ormond Wilson, *From Hongi Hika to Hone Heke: A Quarter Century of Upheaval* (Dunedin, New Zealand: McIndoe, 1985), 65.
9. A summary of the remarks of Cook and others who encountered the Arioi on Tahiti may be found in Bengt Danielsson, *Love in the South Seas* (New York: Reynal, 1956), ch. 8.
10. Hezel, *First Taint of Civilization*, 206.
11. Captain David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean in the United States Frigate Essex, in the years 1812, 1813, and 1814*, vol. 2 (1822; reprint, New York: 1970), 21 and 59.
12. John d'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 7, 107.
13. Ship *Hanover*, New Bedford, 25 September 1803, PPL H297/1802j.
14. Ship *Zephyr*, Providence, R.I., 19 September and 1 November 1816, MSM 839.
15. On Hawaii, still the standard work is Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1; it should be used in conjunction with later works such as Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1968). Many detailed accounts of the regulation struggle exist; for example, Bradley, *American Frontier in Hawaii*.
16. Bark *Hesper*, New Bedford, 29 April 1833, ODHS 118.
17. Ship *Bowditch*, Warren, RI, 26 April 1847, PPL B785/1846j.
18. Ship *Ann Alexander*, 29-30 January 1848, ODHS 394.
19. Bark *Avola*, New Bedford, 2 and 12 February, 13 March 1873, KWM 26.
20. Among the many works on Arctic whaling, see Bockstoce, *Whales, Ice, and Men*.
21. Bark *Fortune*, New Bedford, 26 December 1851, PPL F745/1850L.
22. Ship *Frances*, New Bedford, 7 February 1851, ODHS 994. It was Perkins's twenty-fourth birthday.

23. Bark *Cavalier*, Stonington Conn., 19 February 1850, MSM 18.
24. R. Gerard Ward, ed., *American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790-1870*, vol. 3, "Dominica" (Ridgewood, N.J.: Gregg, 1966), recording an account in the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* for 10 February 1851.
25. Bark *Reaper*, Salem, Mass., 23 February and 8-11 March 1839, Essex Institute, Salem, log 1637, reel 3.
26. Ship *Parachute*, New Bedford, 17 February 1857, University of Washington Library, Seattle.
27. Bark *Covington*, Warren R.I., p. 42 (undated, but 1858), PPL C873/1856j; later visit is recorded in "Deep Water Cruising," a memoir written by Peck at a later time, ms. at ODHS 820.
28. Ellen K. Rothman, *Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 48.
29. D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 77, 84.
30. Karen Lystra, *Searching the Heart: Women, Men and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 58, 76.
31. Bark *Albion*, New Bedford, 5 August 1868 PPL A337/1867j.
32. John A. Chapman, letter to wife, 3 October, year not indicated but 1888 or 1889, aboard brig *Eunice H. Adams*, ODHS ms. 56, box 16, series C.
33. Bark *Sunbeam*, New Bedford, 23 July 1869; the article in question appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1866, according to McGuire, ODHS 618.
34. Bark *Montgomery*, 20 May 1859, ODHS 656A.
35. Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982) 29; see also p. 155.
36. Elaine Tyler May, *Great Expectations: Marriage and Divorce in Post-Victorian America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980), 111.
37. D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 145; Ruth Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1982), 91-2 (discussing early twentieth-century conditions).
38. D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 87.
39. See, for example, Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1990), 80, 131.
40. Stephen Curtis, *Brief Extracts from the Journal of Voyage Performed by the Whale Ship Mercury . . . 1841-1844* (Boston: Samuel Dickinson, 1844), 34.
41. Bark *Wave*, New Bedford, 15 April 1852, PPL W355/1851j.
42. Ship *Samuel Robertson*, "Nov/Dec 1843," ODHS 1039.
43. Earle, *Narrative of a Nine Months' Residence*, 49-50. Earle, who was later official artist with Fitzroy's expedition on the *Beagle*, was referring to British, not American whalers, but I have found no reason to discriminate between British and American sailors when it comes to interaction with native societies.
44. Benjamin Doane, *Following the Sea* (Halifax: Nimbus, 1987), 152.
45. Bark *Cavalier*, Stonington, Conn., 27 February 1850, MSM 18.
46. Commercial Agent to Dept. of State, 1 July 1847, U.S. Dept. of State, Consular Archives, microcopy T 428/7 (British West Africa, St. Helena).

47. Robert Jarman, *Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas in the Japan . . .* (n. p.: privately printed, 1838; copy at ODHS), 201.
48. Captain Peter Dillon, *Narrative and Successful Pursuit of a Voyage in the South Seas . . .*, vol. 1 (1829; reprint, New York: Da Capo, 1972), 251; Eric Ramsden, *Marsden and the Missions: Prelude to Waitangi* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1936), 71.
49. Porter, *Journal*, 2:59-60.
50. John Hebley (pseud. for James Hoberley), "Autobiography," ts. of ms., Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.
51. Ship *Chelsea*, New London, Conn., 1 January 1834, MSM 371.
52. Bark *Avola*, New Bedford, 3, 12 February, 26 June 1873, 9 April, 16 and 23 July, 1876, quoted in Kenneth R. Martin, "Whalers' Tales of Kosrae and Pohnpei," *Glimpses of Micronesia and the Western Pacific* 27:4 (December 1987): 6-13, from KWM 26.
53. Charles Lane, letter to cousin, undated but c. 1856, aboard bark *Henry Taber*, ts. of ms., ODHS ms. 56, box 43, series L.
54. Ship *Sharon*, Fairhaven, Mass., 29 September 1858, PPL S531/1856j.
55. Gale Huntington, *Songs the Whalemens Sang* (New York: Dover, 1970), 150.
56. On pirate communities, see B.R. Burg, *Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition: English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1984)
57. Bark *Favorite*, 31 July 1856, ODHS 160; ship *Plover*, 23 June 1864, PPL P7315/1862L.
58. Bark *Helen Mar*, 23 February 1873, ODHS 128.
59. Bark *Brighton*, 1 October 1857, PPL B856/1855L; ship *Meridian*, Edgartown, Mass., 10 January 1830, PPL M561/1829; ship *Vigilant*, London, 23 November 1831, National Library of Australia, Canberra.
60. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 18:49 (12 February 1861).
61. U.S. Consul, Port Louis, Mauritius, to Dept. of State, 29 May 1872, Dept. of State records, microcopy M462/5. Note that "sodomy" in the nineteenth century included masturbation as well as anal/oral sex. D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 122-26.
62. Ship *William and Eliza*, New Bedford, 13 May 1857, ODHS 674; on the subject in general, Julie Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids: Women who Dressed as Men in the Pursuit of Life, Liberty, and Happiness* (London: Pandora, 1989).
63. Damon quoted by Stanton Garner in Introduction to Lawrence, *The Captain's Best Mate*, xvi.
64. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1977), 6.
65. Herschel Island wintering is discussed in Bockstoce, *Whales, Ice and Men*, ch. 11.
66. Bark *Alice Frazier*, New Bedford, 18 October 1852, ODHS 666.
67. Susan A. McKenzie, diary, 1869-75, ODHS Ms 56, series M.
68. Ship *Tiger*, Stonington, 12 July 1849, MSM 38.
69. Ship *Eliza F. Mason*, New Bedford, 16-18 December 1854, ODHS 995.

70. Affidavit, 25 December 1864, American Consular Records, Tahiti, D/S M465/3.
71. Schooner *Pedro Varela*, New Bedford, 1885, KWM 168.
72. Bark *Josephine*, New Bedford, 1903-5 and 1905-7, ODHS 633A; a clipping accompanying these logs on microfilm 289 discusses Roza and also notes that the ladies of New Bedford gave Mrs. Smith a considerable reception on the occasion of her setting sail on another cruise in 1911.
73. Bark *Merlin*, 12 April 1872, KWM 401.
74. *Whaleman's Shipping List and Merchant's Transcript* (New Bedford), 13:4 (27 March 1855), reprinting article in Dover, Me., *Observer*.
75. Bark *John P. West*, New Bedford, dates noted, MSM 78.
76. See note 74 above.
77. Bark *E. Coming*, New Bedford, 24 March, 23 May 1861, 18 April 1862, and other dates noted, KMW 503.
78. Bark *Louisa*, New Bedford, 6 and 13 May 1866, ODHS 944A/B.
79. Bark *Cicero*, New Bedford, 25 December 1880, PPL C568/1880j.
80. Doane, *Following the Sea*, 144.
81. Ship *Commodore Morris*, New Bedford, 5-6 March 1873, PPL C734/1870j. The man was restrained with the assistance of several officers from the *Ticonderoga* who were visiting on board.
82. Ship *Frances Henrietta*, New Bedford, 27 May 1857, PPL M3932/1852j. See ch. 4.
83. Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, 554-55.
84. Creighton, "Captain's Children."
85. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 38:10, 19 April 1881.
86. Bark *Ohio*, New Bedford, 16 February 1859 and 12 January 1861, ODHS 19. Creighton, "Captain's Children," 206, adds the inexplicable remark that "only one child on these whalers died at sea," i.e., Sarah Baker.
87. Ship *Ocean Rover*, Nantucket, 17-18 October 1859, ODHS 376A.
88. Bark *Bertha*, New Bedford, 24 April 1890, ODHS 94.
89. Eliza Pitts Chase, letter to "Friend Elijah," 24 November 1851, ODHS MS 56, box 19, series C.
90. Doane, *Following the Sea*, 164.
91. Ship *Trident*, 2 October 1863, MSM 634.
92. Ship *Ocean*, New Bedford, 23 June 1860, ODHS 1069.
93. Bark *Cynosure*, Stonington, dates noted, MSM 37.
94. Ship *Eliza Adams*, New Bedford, 4 February and 15 April 1873, and 23 May 1875, ODHS 940.
95. Bark *Benjamin Cummings*, Dartmouth Mass., 24 November 1854, ODHS 46.
96. Bark *Baltic*, New Bedford, 31 October 1856, PPL B197/1856j.
97. Ship *Eliza F. Mason*, New Bedford, 18 October 1855, ODHS 995.
98. Bark *Cape Horn Pigeon*, Dartmouth, Mass., 4 July 1855, PPL C237/1854j.
99. Warren P. Tobey, *Cabin Boy's Log*, 39.
100. Clara Kingman Wheldon, "Life at Sea with Pen Pictures of the Arctic

. . . ,” ts., ms. 1905, summer 1869 (fire for the men), other two incidents undated, ODHS 460.

101. Bark *Greyhound*, New Bedford, 20 August 1893, PPL G845/1892L.
102. Bark *Nautilus*, New Bedford, 28 March 1870, PPL N3145/1869j.
103. Ship *Eliza F. Mason*, New Bedford, 16 December 1854, ODHS 995.
104. Ship *Tiger*, Stonington, CT, 17 September 1876, MSM 38.
105. Norling, “Contrary Dependencies.”
106. Bark *E. Corning*, New Bedford, 14 January 1862, KWM 503.
107. See Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1982), ch. 1.
108. Linda Grant De Pauw, *Seafaring Women* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), 107-8.
109. This point is made by Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, and amplified by such works as Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990), and Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1981).

#### Chapter 9. The Festive and the Ceremonial

1. Ship *Illinois*, New Bedford, 1845-47, ODHS 1005 A/B. See also ship *Iowa*, Fairhaven, 3 July 1854 (violin, tin drums, beef bones for an orchestra), PPL I64/1853j.
2. Ship *Arab*, Fairhaven, 18 July 1843, ODHS 435; bark *Cicero*, New Bedford, 16 July 1881, PPL C568/1880j.
3. Ship *Arnolda*, New Bedford, 1852-53, ODHS 619A.
4. Ship *China*, New Bedford, 30 August 1832, ODHS 737.
5. Ship *Charleston*, New London, 5 October 1845, ODHS 602.
6. Bark *President*, Westport, Mass., 11 January 1844, PPL P9335/1843j.
7. Bark *Sunbeam*, New Bedford, 22 October 1860, ODHS 685.
8. Ship *India*, New Bedford, 22 April 1844, KWM 561; ship *Tiger*, Stonington, Conn., 26 July 1846, MSM 38.
9. Ship *Canada*, New Bedford, 29 August 1846, ODHS 200.
10. Ship *Marcia*, Fairhaven, 8 August 1833, ODHS 736.
11. Ship *Elizabeth*, New Bedford, 21 October 1847, KWM 77.
12. Jeremiah S. Wills, letter of 5 September 1854, ODHS MS 56 box 88 series W.
13. Willie E. Burbank, journal, t.s. of m.s., bark *Tamerlane*, New Bedford, 28 November 1877, ODHS 648.
14. Bark *Cape Horn Pigeon*, Dartmouth, Mass., 3 October 1854, PPL C237/1854j.
15. Ship *Sea*, Warren R.I., 1 April 1853; the officers played jokes upon one another, but the captain was clear winner by serving doughnuts to the mates—filled with cotton. PPL C726/1851j (this log is bound with that of the *Columbus*, 1851-52).

16. Ship *Saratoga*, New Bedford, 22 February 1854, PPL S2438/1852j.
17. George William Douglas, *The American Book of Days* . . . , 2nd ed., 613-18; also H.S. Sickel, *Thanksgiving, its Source, Philosophy and History* (Philadelphia: International Printing, 1940). From another perspective, Capt. W.D. Phelps' wife, Lussanna, wrote regularly to her husband during his extensive California voyages of 1841-43 and 1845-48; in her letters, which survive in a family collection, Thanksgiving was not only regularly observed each year but occupied a position second only to Christmas in her family's view.
18. Ibid.
19. Bark *Mary and Susan*, New Bedford, 29 November 1877, PPL M3938/1877j.
20. Bark *Iowa*, Fairhaven, 25 December 1854, PPL 164/1853j.
21. Ship *Julian*, New Bedford, 25 December 1847, KWM 404.
22. Bark *Mary and Susan*, New Bedford, 25 December 1877, PPL M3938/1877j.
23. Bark *Merlin*, New Bedford, 25 December 1868, KWM 401.
24. Ship *Tiger*, Stonington, 25 December 1845, MSM 38.
25. Bark *Ocean Rover*, Mattapoisett, 25 December 1861, ODHS 376A.
26. Ship *George and Martha*, New Bedford, 25 December 1821, PPL G3474/1821j.
27. Bark *Barnstable*, New Bedford, 25 December 1860, KWM 553.
28. Steam bark *Belvedere*, San Francisco, 25 December 1884, ODHS 235A.
29. Bark *Clara Bell*, Mattapoisett, 25 December 1855, MSM 164.
30. Schooner *Emeline*, Mystic, 25 December 1843, ODHS 147.
31. Bark *Pioneer*, New Bedford, 25 December 1871, ODHS 42.
32. Ship *Florida*, Fairhaven, 25 December 1854, ODHS 762.
33. Ship *Sea*, Warren, R.I., 24-25 December 1852, PPL C726/1851j.
34. Ship *Junior*, New Bedford, 1857-58, NBFPL 357; Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 198-99.
35. Ship *Nimrod*, New Bedford, 25 December 1858, KWM 159.
36. Ship *Charleston*, New London, 1 January 1845, ODHS 602.
37. Ship *Napoleon*, New Bedford, 1 January 1856, PPL N216/1855j.
38. Ship *George and Susan*, New Bedford, 1 January 1846, NBFPL 270.
39. Bark *Hesper*, New Bedford, 1 January 1834, KWM 609.
40. Bark *Stella*, New Bedford, 1 January 1860, PPL S824/1855j.
41. Bark *Canton Packet*, New Bedford, 1 January 1853, ODHS 108.
42. Ship *Houqua*, New Bedford, PPL H774/1835j; ship *South Carolina*, New Bedford, KWM 411, both 4 July 1836.
43. Ship *Orion*, Nantucket, 4 July 1831, PPL 0692/1829j.
44. Bark *Lancer*, New Bedford, 4 July 1871, KWM 610.
45. Steam bark *Narwhal*, San Francisco, 4 July 1894, ODHS 1079. The *Thrasher* (KWM 588) and Jesse H. Freeman (ODHS 1080) record similar festivities the following year.
46. Bark *Cape Horn Pigeon*, Dartmouth, 4 July 1866, ODHS 371.
47. Bark *Clara Bell*, Mattapoisett, 4 July 1856, MSM 164.
48. Bark *Tropic Bird*, New Bedford, 4 July 1882, ODHS 189.
49. Bark *Avola*, New Bedford, 4 July 1871, KWM 26.
50. The date of this comment, 4 July 1862, is clear, as is the author. The

vessel, however, is not; journal of several voyages filed with bark *Cachalot*, New Bedford, PPL C199/1854j.

51. Bark *Sea Shell*, Warren, R.I., 4 July 1853 and 1854, PPL SH4392/1853j.

52. Ship *Lancer*, New Bedford, 4 July 1865, PPL L247/1865L.

53. Ship *Magnolia*, New Bedford, 4 July 1837, ODHS 285.

54. Bark *Smyrna*, New Bedford, 4 July 1855, ODHS 644.

55. Ship *Samuel Robertson*, New Bedford, appendix pages, but clearly 4 July 1842, ODHS 1039.

56. Ship *Bowditch*, Warren, R.I., 4 July 1850, and bark *Covington*, also Warren, 4 July 1853, both PPL B785/1846j, apparently by the same log keeper. Another example: ship *Oregon*, Fairhaven, 4 July 1855, ODHS 574.

57. Ship *Eliza Adams*, New Bedford, 4 July 1876, ODHS 266.

58. Bark *Minnesota*, New York, NY, 4 July 1868, ODHS 98A.

59. Ship *Milton*, New Bedford, 4 July 1871, ODHS 420.

60. Ship *John Howland*, New Bedford, 4 July 1859, ODHS 969 C/D.

61. Lewis Saum, "Death in the Popular Mind of Pre-Civil War America," in David E. Stannard, ed., *Death in America* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), 30.

62. Stanley French, "The Cemetery as Cultural Institution . . .," in Stannard, *Death in America*, 69-91.

63. Ship *Canton*, New Bedford, 17 August 1863, ODHS 279.

64. Steam bark *Belvedere*, San Francisco, 31 May 1885, ODHS 235A.

65. Bark *Willis*, Mattapoisett, 6-7 August 1857, ODHS 874.

66. Ship *Martha*, Fairhaven, 11 October 1854, ODHS 365.

67. Ship *California*, New Bedford, 25 September 1883, PPL C153/1881j.

68. Ship *Franklin*, New Bedford, 30 June 1854, PPL F831/1853j.

69. Bark *Midas*, New Bedford, 20-22 August 1859, PPL M627/1857L.

70. Ship *Governor Troup*, New Bedford, 16-17 September 1863, PPL C456/1862j.

71. Both St. Paul inscriptions are quoted in log of ship *Charleston*, New Bedford, 16 December 1844, ODHS 602.

72. Notes with log of ship *John Howland*, New Bedford, 1858-62; Pierce was log keeper and 2nd mate of this voyage, and promoted to first mate on the next voyage, on which he was killed, ODHS 969.

73. Bark *Roscoe*, New Bedford, 1859-60, ODHS 162; the tragedy occurred in February, but was not written of in the journal. The incident is further reported in the *Whalemen's Shipping List*, 17 April 1860. The voyage was abandoned, and the mate brought the *Roscoe* home.

74. Steam bark *Thrasher*, San Francisco, 29 March 1895, KWM 588; steam barkentine *Newport*, 29 March 1895, quoted, and 18 June, ODHS 950.

75. Bark *Awashonks*, New Bedford, 3 October-24 November 1861, PPL A964/1860j.

76. Bark *Bertha*, New Bedford, 24 April 1890, ODHS 94; bark *Ocean Rover*, Mattapoisett, (which reported details of death on *James Maury* and provided spirits to preserve the body), 14 October 1859, ODHS 376A.

77. Bark *Concordia*, Sag Harbor, 13 June 1856, MSM 502.

78. Bark *Marcella*, New Bedford, 5-13 July 1852, ODHS 34.
79. Steam bark *William Baylies*, San Francisco, 24 May 1899, ODHS 230.
80. Bark *Montezuma*, New Bedford, 9-10 March 1852, PPL M781/1852L.
81. Ship *Chandler Price*, New Bedford, 17-28 April 1856, PPL C456/1854L.
82. Ship *Roman*, New Bedford, 9 May 1852, KWM 176 (the body was not recovered).
83. Ship *Niger*, New Bedford, 5 and 12 October 1872, ODHS 269.
84. Bark *Spartan*, New Bedford, 2 February 1871, ODHS 1064.

## Chapter 10. Waterfront Havens and the Honolulu Riot of 1852

1. Hohman, *American Whaleman*, 102-04. See, in general, Stan Hughill, *Sailortown* (New York: Dutton, 1967).
2. Lionel B. Cholmondeley, *The History of the Bonin Islands . . .* (London: Constable, 1915); Charolotte M. Salwey, *The Island Dependencies of Japan . . .* (London: E.L. Morice, 1913), ch. 3; W.G. Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan, 1834-1858* (London: Luzac, 1951), 17-20.
3. John H. Schroeder, "Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Precursor of the Old Steam Navy," in James C. Bradford, ed., *Captains of the Old Steam Navy* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1986), 3-25.
4. Ship *Montezuma*, New London, Conn., 26 March 1859, PPL M781/1857j.
5. Hughill, *Shanties from the Seven Seas*, 52. A useful introduction to the coast in midcentury may be found in Jay Monaghan, *Chile, Peru and the California Gold Rush of 1849* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1973).
6. Madam Gashee's is featured in the shanty, "Round the Corner Sally" (see, for example, Hughill, *Shanties*, 390); Faulkner, *Three Years on a Whaler* mentions the American Restaurant, 47.
7. [Thomas H. Bennett], *A Voyage from the United States to South America, Performed during the Years 1821, 1822, and 1823 . . . and of an Eighteen Months Cruise in an Nantucket Whaleship*, 2nd ed. (Newburyport, Mass.: Herald Press, 1823), 20-21.
8. T. Robinson Warren, *Dust and Foam, or Three Oceans and Two Continents* (New York: Scribner, 1859), 361-62.
9. Hartman, *Seas Were Mine*, 39.
10. Caswell, *Sketch of the Adventures*, 55.
11. Curtis, *Brief Extracts from the Journal of A Voyage*, 21.
12. Ship *Chelsea*, New London, 20 November 1831, MSM 371. A comparable account, but one that adds memories of Paita's jail in 1832, is Torrey, *Torrey's Narrative*, 87.
13. J.C. Mullett, *A Five Years' Whaling Voyage, 1848-1853* (1859; reprint, Fairfield Wash.: Ye Galleon, 1977), 43.
14. Ship *Nye*, New Bedford, 1844-1848, appended ship's accounts, KWM 293.
15. Principal sources for the account which follows are the *Polynesian* (Honolulu), 13 November 1852; the *Friend* (Honolulu), November and December 1852; Thomas G. Thrum, "When Sailors Ruled the Town," *Hawaiian Almanac and Annual for 1921* (Honolulu, 1921), 62-68; and William C. Parke, *Personal Reminiscences of*

William Cooper Parke, *Marshal of the Hawaiian Islands, from 1850 to 1884* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1891).

16. All references to and quotations from Parke, *Personal Reminiscences*, are from pp. 10-18 and 35-44.

17. The jury was composed of Julius A. Anthon (foreman), John C. Bullions, James K. Turner, Thomas Spencer, W.A. Aldrich, C.S. Bartow, J.B. Cleveland, H. Smith, Benjamin Clough, and A.C. Edwards (list published in the *Friend* and Parke). Turner and Spencer were names of contemporary whaling masters, though neither had a vessel at Honolulu in 1852. H. Smith might have been master of the *Warren*, *Splendid*, or *General Scott*: all had masters listed simply as "Smith" in the shipping list published in the *Friend* for December, as well as in the standard reference work, *Whaling Masters* (Federal Writers' Project, W.P.A. of Massachusetts; New Bedford: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1938). A.C. Edwards was probably master of the *Nathaniel P. Talmadge*. The only clearly identifiable masters are J.B. Cleveland of the *Julian*, and Benjamin Clough of the *Niagara*, which vessel sailed on the tenth.

18. The *Friend*, November 1852.

19. The *Friend*, December 1852.

20. Edward D. Beechert, *Honolulu: Crossroads of the Pacific* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1991), 62.

21. Ship *Benjamin Tucker*, New Bedford, 7-13 November 1852, NBFPL 105, reel 12.

22. Bark *Manuel Ortiz*, New Bedford, 11-24 November 1852, ODHS 1118.

23. Bark *Canton Packet*, 8-12 November 1852, ODHS 108.

24. Bark *Cossack*, New Bedford, 10-12 November 1852, ODHS 92.

25. Ship *California*, New Bedford, 10-11 November 1852, KWM 509.

26. Ship *South Boston*, Fairhaven, 10 November 1852, ODHS 761.

27. Sampson, *Three Times Around the World*, 57-58.

28. Allen to State Department, 31 December 1852, D/S M144/5.

29. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1, p. 311.

30. *Ibid.*, 305-21; p. 307 includes a table of arrival of whaleships.

31. *Ibid.*, 387, but see also 336.

32. On Honolulu's population, see Gavan Daws, "Honolulu in the Nineteenth Century: Notes on the Emergence of Urban Society in Hawaii," *Journal of Pacific History* 2 (1967):77-96.

33. Richard A. Greer, "Honolulu in 1847," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 4 (1970):59-95, provides a comprehensive picture on which these remarks are based. Stan Hugill, *Sailortown* (New York: Dutton, 1967), 271-77, provides a colorful view of Honolulu, including a somewhat exaggerated description of the riot based upon Parke.

34. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1, 311.

35. A good introduction is Gavan Daws, "The Decline of Puritanism at Honolulu in the Nineteenth Century," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 1 (1967):31-42.

36. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1, 161.

37. *Ibid.*, 126, 161-63, 172-73.

38. Daws, "Honolulu," 89.

39. Richard A. Greer, "Trouble on the Waterfront," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 22 (1988):20-32, particularly p. 27.
40. Abell to K. Wyllie, Hawaiian Minister of Foreign Relations, 27 December 1845, D.S M144/2.
41. Greer, "Trouble," 28-9; Daws, "Puritanism," 37-38.
42. Daws, "Puritanism," 32.
43. See ch. 5.
44. Robert C. Schmitt, "Early Crime Statistics of Hawaii," *Hawaii Historical Review* 2 (1966):325-32.
45. Daws, "Decline of Puritanism," 37.
46. Daws, "Honolulu," 82-82.
47. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1, remains a standard source, but should be supplemented by more recent works such as Daws, *Shoal of Time*, or Edward Joesting, *Hawaii: An Uncommon History* (New York: Norton, 1972).
48. *Weekly Argus*, 17 November 1852 (in addition to other holdings of relevant newspapers, a convenient collection is to be found in the reports of the British Consul in Hawaii, at FO 58/73, Public Record Office, London).
49. Richard A. Greer, "Oahu's Ordeal: The Smallpox Epidemic of 1853," *Hawaii Historical Review* 1 (1965):221-42.
50. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991).

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# Index of Whaleships

Whaleships mentioned in the text or notes are listed below. Where specific voyages are concerned, each is listed separately, together with rig at the time and homeport. Where the vessel's log or journal has been used, an index number is given in column five. This number corresponds with that given in the essential reference work for such studies, *Whaling Logbooks and Journals, 1613-1927: An Inventory of Manuscript Records in Public Collections*, by Stuart C. Sherman, revised and edited by Judith M. Downey and Virginia M. Adams (New York: Garland, 1986). Further data on the voyage concerned may be obtained from that volume. Where the log or journal was consulted but does not appear in *Whaling Logbooks and Journals* (usually because the log was acquired by the relevant public collection after that compilation was completed), the notation "unlisted" is given. Dashes in column five denote mention of the vessel concerned in a source other than its own log or journal. The abbreviations NB and SF are used for New Bedford, Massachusetts, and San Francisco.

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Abigail	ship	NB	1863	—	71
Addison	ship	NB	1856-60	111	90
Adeline	ship	NB	1856-60	126	77
Adeline	ship	NB	1869-74	130	98
Aeronaut	ship	New London, Conn.	1837	—	169
Agate	brig	NB	1840-41	158	211 n 46
Albion	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1829-30	169	141
Alfred Gibbs	ship	NB	1859-64	213	28, 41
Alfred Gibbs	bark	NB	1870-72	218	46
Alfred Tyler	bark	Edgartown, Mass.	1840s	—	96
Alice Frazier	bark	NB	1851-55	223	149

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Alice Knowles	bark	SF	1906-8	232	23
Alpha	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1850-52	251	30, 38
Alto	bark	NB	1854-57	265	37, 46, 80, 198 n 43
Amazon	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1848-52	273	97
America	bark	Mattapoissett, Mass.	1855-58	(unlisted)	37
Anaconda	bark	NB	1857	—	88
Andrew Hicks	bark	NB	1871, 1894	—	165, 171
Ann Alexander	ship	NB	1845-49	336	87, 138
Annie Ann	bark	NB	1871	—	69
Ansel Gibbs	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1860	—	95
Arab	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1842-45	392	158
Arab	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1845-49	393	
Arabella	ship	NB	1849-51	400	200 n 14
Archer	ship	NB	1846-47	407	36
Arnolda	ship	NB	1852-53	423	158
Arnolda	ship	NB	1859-63	425	199 n 49
Arnolda	bark	NB	1876-80	431	56
Athol	bark	St. Johns, New Brunswick	1845-47	—	151, 152-3
Atkins Adams	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1858-59	454	14
Atlantic	ship	Bridgeport, Conn.	1835-37	455	216 n 61
Atlantic	bark	NB	1865-68	467	37
Atlantic	bark	NB	1865-68	468	37
Aurora	bark	NB	1865-70	495	22
Avola	bark	NB	1870-74	506	106, 139, 146, 166
Awashonks	bark	Falmouth, Mass.	1853	—	55
Awashonks	bark	NB	1860-62	515	170
Balaena	steam bark	SF	1894	—	165
Baltic	bark	NB	1856-58	529	153
Barclay	ship	NB	1834-37	536	211 n 46
Barnstable	bark	NB	1857	—	59
Barnstable	bark	NB	1860-64	552	162
Bartholomew Gosnold	bark	NB	1876-80	560	22
Bartholomew Gosnold	bark	NB	1881-85	561	82, 198 n 32
Beaver	bark	Hudson, N.Y.	1840	—	25
Belle	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1857-62	567	97, 98
Belvedere	steam bark	SF	1884-85	580	162, 197 n 19
Bengal	ship	Salem, Mass.	1832-35	592	126, 210 n 44

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Benjamin Cummings	bark	Dartmouth, Mass.	1854-59	596	153
Benjamin Franklin	bark	NB	1863-65	602	65
Benjamin Tucker	ship	NB	1851-55	616	184
Bertha	bark	NB	1887-91	626	152, 170
Bertha	bark	NB	1905-7	629	23
Betsey Williams	ship	Stonington, Conn.	1849-51	646	45
Betsey Williams	ship	Stonington, Conn.	1858	—	25
Bingham	ship	Mystic, Conn.	1847	—	120
Black Eagle	bark	NB	1852	—	185
Bogota	brig	NB	1842-43	658	46
Bowditch	ship	Warren, R.I.	1846-49	668	138
Bowditch	ship	Warren, R.I.	1849-52	672	166
Braganza	ship	NB	1856	—	171
Brandt	ship	NB	1849-52	681	197 n 19
Brighton	ship	Dartmouth, Mass.	1855-59	690	147
Brunette	bark	Falmouth, Mass.	1842-43	698	122
Cachalot	bark	NB	1854-55	726	224 n 50
California	ship	NB	1851-54	738	23, 48, 184
California	ship	NB	1881-85	747	169
Callao	bark	NB	1865-70	772	46, 48
Canada	ship	NB	1846-48	790	22, 160, 199 n 44
Canton	ship	NB	1862-66	805	225 n 63
Canton	bark	NB	1907-14	—	150
Canton Packet	ship	Bristol, R.I.	1832-34	824	120
Canton Packet	bark	NB	1845-49	825	98
Canton Packet	bark	NB	1849-53	826	28, 164, 184
Canton Packet	bark	NB	1857-61	827	28
Cape Horn Pigeon	bark	Dartmouth, Mass.	1854-55	828	77, 154, 160
Cape Horn Pigeon	bark	Dartmouth, Mass.	1866-67	832	165
Caroline	ship	NB	1842-43	(unlisted)	87, 216 n 61
Cassander	ship	Providence, R.I.	1842	—	90
Cassander	ship	Providence, R.I.	1844-46	845	90
Catalpa	bark	NB	1875-76	849	21
Catharine	ship	New London, Conn.	1843-44	858	120, 216 n 76

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Cavalier	bark	Stonington, Conn.	1848-50	870	47, 139, 144
Chandler Price	ship	NB	1854-57	893	171
Charles	ship	NB	1845-49	906	83
Charles Colgate	schooner	New London, Conn.	1875-77	925	36
Charles Phelps	ship	Stonington, Conn.	1842-44	944	36
Charleston	ship	New London, Conn.	1844-47	997	159, 164
Chelsea	ship	New London, Conn.	1831-34	1010	13, 145, 176
China	ship	NB	1832-33	1024	233 n 4
China	ship	NB	1852-55	1037	28
China	ship	NB	1859-64	1039	20
Cicero	ship	NB	1856-60	1053	211 n 52
Cicero	bark	NB	1880-81	1060	151, 158
Clara Bell	bark	Mattapoisett, Mass.	1855-58	1069	14, 162
Clarice	bark	Edgartown, Mass.	1871-74	1076	94
Clarice	bark	Edgartown, Mass.	1878-82	1080	22
Clarice	bark	NB	1841-45	1085	40, 59
Clematis	ship	New London, Conn.	1854-56	1100	22
Cleone	bark	NB	1858-61	(unlisted)	43
Clifford Wayne	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1837	—	82
Clifford Wayne	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1841-44	1110	60
Columbus	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1851-52	1132	217 n 93
Commodore Morris	ship	NB	1870-73	1152	151-2
Commodore Preble	bark	Lynn, Mass.	1850s	—	122
Concordia	bark	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1855-58	(unlisted)	170
Condor	ship	NB	1850-53	1176	122
Contest	ship	NB	1868-70	1216	43
Coral	ship	NB	1842-44	1224	211 n 44
Cossack	bark	NB	1850-53	1277	84, 184
Courier	ship	NB	1838-42	1285	96
Covington	bark	Warren, R.I.	1853	—	166
Covington	bark	Warren, R.I.	1856-59	1307	220 n 27
Cowper	ship	NB	1855	—	150
Cynosure	bark	Stonington, Conn.	1845-47	1321	145, 153

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Daniel IV	—	England	1820s	—	109, 132
Draco	bark	NB	1847-50	1407	36
E. Corning	bark	NB	1860-65	1429	150-1, 156
E. Nickerson	schooner	Provincetown, Mass.	1853-54	1441	122
E. Nickerson	schooner	Provincetown, Mass.	1857	—	152
Edward	ship	NB	1840s	—	216 n 69
Eliza	bark	NB	1869-73	1504	56
Eliza Adams	ship	NB	1852-53	1509	55, 79
Eliza Adams	ship	NB	1872-75	1515	153, 197 n 18
Eliza Adams	ship	NB	1872-76	1517	121, 166
Eliza F. Mason	ship	NB	1853-56	1524	25, 149, 154, 155, 197 n 19, 211 n 53
Elizabeth	ship	NB	1847-51	1536	160
Ellen	bark	Edgartown, Mass.	1852-56	1554	208 n 85
Ellen Rodman	schooner	Fairhaven, Mass.	1877	—	95
Emeline	schooner	Mystic, Conn.	1843-44	—	162
Emerald	bark	NB	1852	—	177
Emerald	ship	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1853	—	17, 207 n 58
Emerald	bark	Salem, Mass.	1838-40	1571	29, 38, 217 n 93
Emigrant	bark	Bristol, R.I.	1840s	—	100
Emma	bark	NB	1847-50	1588	29, 83
Endeavour	bark	NB	1854-57	1607	78
Era	schooner	NB	1900-01	1624	42
Erie	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1832-33	—	145
Eugenia	bark	NB	1852	—	81
Eunice H. Adams	brig	Edgartown, Mass.	1888-89	—	220 n 32
Euphrates	ship	NB	1844	—	117
Fabius	ship	NB	1857-62	1707	96
Falcon	bark	NB	1881	—	152
Fanny	bark	NB	1856-58	1734	202 n 61
Favorite	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1835-36	1740	98
Favorite	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1855-57	1741	147
Florida	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1854-58	1761	163
Florida	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1858-61	1762	104
Florida	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1858-61	1763	213 n 83
Fortune	bark	NB	1850-54	1790	139
Frances	ship	NB	1850-52	1805	121, 139

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Frances Henrietta	bark	NB	1855-57	1816	59, 152
Franklin	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1845	—	90
Franklin	ship	NB	1853-55	1829	169
Gay Head	ship	NB	1852-56	1861	46
Gay Head	bark	NB	1882-87	1869	59
George	ship	NB	1832-34	1890	208 n 7
George and Martha	ship	NB	1821-22	1897	162
George and Susan	ship	NB	1845-48	1930	164
George Henry	bark	New London, Conn.	1860	—	95
George Washington	bark	Falmouth, Mass.	1837-38	1963	197 n 19
George Washington	ship	Wareham, Mass.	1857	—	85
Georgia	ship	New London, Conn.	1833-35	1974	51
Globe	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1823-24	—	52, 75, 119
Globe	bark	NB	1850	1993	78
Globe	bark	NB	1869-72	2004	29, 55, 88
Golconda	ship	Bristol, R.I.	1835-38	2006	99
Governor Troup	ship	NB	1862-67	2062	42, 169
Grampus	steam barkentine	SF	1894	—	165
Greyhound	bark	NB	1892-97	2091	156
Hadley	bark	NB	1872	—	94
Hamilton	ship	Bridgeport, Conn.	1845	—	120
Hannibal	ship	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1827-28	2126	45
Hannibal	ship	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1850	—	216 n 69
Hanover	ship	NB	1802-4	2131	219 n 13
Hector	bark	Warren, R.I.	1845-47	2172	29
Hector	ship	NB	1852-56	2170	99
Helen Mar	bark	NB	1871-76	2178	147
Helen Mar	bark	NB	1876-80	2180	93
Henry Kneeland	ship	NB	1851, 1854	—	160
Henry Taber	bark	NB	1856	—	146
Hercules	bark	NB	1870	—	149
Heroine	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1852	—	183
Hesper	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1844	2288	138, 164
Hesper	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1843	—	82
Hibernia	ship	NB	1843	—	82

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Hope	bark	NB	1854	—	47
Hope On	bark	NB	1881-83	2329	25, 94, 205 n 21
Horatio	ship	NB	1877-81	2337	20
Houqua	ship	NB	1835-37	2348	8, 47, 164
Illinois	ship	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1845-47	2390	41, 158
India	ship	NB	1843-45	2398	223 n 8
India	ship	NB	1847-48	(unlisted)	48
Iowa	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1853-56	2414	161, 223 n 1
Isabella	bark	NB	1852-55	2432	88
Israel	ship	NB	1843-45	—	71
J.D. Thompson	bark	New London, Conn.	1868-69	(unlisted)	48-9, 95
James Edward	ship	NB	1855-57	2480	79
James Maury	ship	NB	1859	—	152, 170
James Maury	bark	NB	1868-72	2492	217 n 97
Janus	ship	NB	1835-37	2504	65
Japan	ship	London, England	1832-33	—	145
Jasper	bark	NB	1839-40	2526	27
Java	ship	NB	1848-52	2537	210 n 14
Java	bark	NB	1867-72	2543	95-6
Jesse H. Freeman	steam bark	SF	1894-96	2550	224 n 45
Jireh Swift	ship	NB	1854	—	149
John and Edward	ship	New London, Conn.	1838	—	82
John Carver	bark	NB	1863	—	76
John Dawson	bark	NB	1854	—	209 n 24
John Dawson	bark	NB	1864-66	2596	3
John Howland	ship	NB	1858-62	2612	167
John Howland	ship	NB	1864, 1869	—	65, 125, 154
John Palmer	—	England	1827	—	109
John P. West	bark	NB	1862	—	78
John P. West	bark	NB	1882-84	2619	150
Josephine	bark	NB	1903-5	2674	149
Josephine	bark	NB	1905-7	2676	149
Julian	ship	NB	1847-50	2693	161
Julian	ship	NB	1852	—	227 n 17
Junior	ship	NB	1852, 1856	—	81, 185
Junior	ship	NB	1857-58	2697	52, 163
Jupiter	schooner	SF	1851	—	139
Karluk	steam brigantine	SF	1894	—	165

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Karluk	steam brigantine	SF	1904-6	2706	22
Kathleen	bark	NB	1880	—	38
Lady Amherst	ship	London, England	1833-36	2762	216 n 61
Lagoda	bark	NB	1860-64	2787	37
Lagoda	bark	NB	1864	—	209 n 24
Lagoda	bark	NB	1868-73	2788	46
Lagrange	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1854-57	(unlisted)	44
Lalla Rookh	ship	NB	1837-40	2797	46
Lamartine	—	Havre-de-Grace	1847	—	119
Lancer	ship	NB	1865-68	2805	166
Lancer	bark	NB	1869-72	(unlisted)	224 n 44
Lapwing	ship	NB	1860-63	2812	28
Liverpool	ship	NB	1839	—	23
London Packet	ship	NB	1838-40	2900	97
Louisa	bark	NB	1866-67	2918	222 n 78
Louisa	bark	NB	1869-74	2921	96
Louisa	ship	New York, N.Y.	1828-31	2927	211 n 53
Louisa Sears	bark	Edgartown, Mass.	1856-58	2928	27, 79
Lucy Ann	ship	Greenport, N.Y.	1844-47	—	36
Magnet	ship	Warren, R.I.	1846	—	122
Magnolia	ship	NB	1834-38	2962	166
Magnolia	ship	NB	1840s, 1852	—	99, 182
Manuel Ortiz	bark	NB	1851-54	(unlisted)	184
Marcella	bark	NB	1850-52	2982	68-9, 170
Marcia	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1833-34	2994	160
Martha	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1838-41	3079	94
Martha	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1852-57	3083	99
Martha	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1856-60	3084	123, 168
Mary and Susan	bark	NB	1877-81	3116	162
Mary Ann	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1859-63	(unlisted)	35
Mary O. Hume	steam brig	SF	1890-92	3127	199 n 44
Mary Frazier	bark	NB	1871-76	3150	197 n 18
Massachusetts	ship	NB	1860-65	3163	60
Matilda Sears	bark	Dartmouth, Mass.	1869-73	3167	21
Mattapoisset	brig	Westport, Mass.	1881-84	3174	79
Mattapoisset	bark	Westport, Mass.	1862-64	3183	22
Mentor	ship	New London, Conn.	1833	—	127
Mercator	ship	NB	1848, 1855	—	89, 98
Mercury	ship	NB	1841-42	—	176
Meridan	ship	Edgartown, Mass.	1829-31	3230	39, 147
Merlin	bark	NB	1868-72	3235	150, 161
Metacom	ship	Bristol, R.I.	1837-41	3254	44

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Midas	ship	NB	1842	—	169
Midas	ship	NB	1845-46	3263	15
Midas	bark	NB	1857-60	3266	169
Millinoket	bark	Warren, R.I.	1848-52	3277	29
Milo	ship	NB	1849-51	3280	21
Milton	ship	NB	1851-54	3289	55-6
Milton	ship	NB	1851-56	3290	55-6
Milton	ship	NB	1869-73	3295	167, 171
Millwood	bark	NB	1842-44	—	44
Minerva	ship	NB	1859-60	3308	48
Minerva	bark	NB	1869	—	95
Minerva Smyth	ship	NB	1859	—	123
Minnesota	bark	NB	1868-72	3320	167
Montezuma	ship	NB	1852	3349	171
Montezuma	bark	NB	1840s	—	214 n 19
Montezuma	ship	New London, Conn.	1857-61	3351	226 n 4
Montgomery	bark	NB	1858-60	3353	141
Montreal	ship	NB	1850-53	3370	29
Montreal	ship	NB	1857-62	3373	94
Morning Star	bark	NB	1898-1901	3398	92
Morrison	ship	New London, Conn.	1844-46	3404	125
Mount Vernon	ship	NB	1850	—	95
Mount Wollaston	ship	NB	1853-57	3411	13, 14
Nantasket	ship	New London, Conn.	1844	—	127
Nantucket	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1844, 1846	—	24
Napoleon	ship	NB	1855-58	3422	122
Narwhal	steam bark	SF	1894	3441	165
Nathaniel P. Tallmadge	ship	Poughkeepsie, N.Y.	1836-40	3459	90, 113
Nautilus	bark	NB	1869-74	3468	23, 156
Navigator	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1851	—	152
Navy	ship	NB	1859-63	3480	29
Nelson	—	England	1830	—	215 n 50
New England	bark	New London, Conn.	1851-54	(unlisted)	28, 35
Newport	steam barkentine	SF	1893-96	3515	170
Niagara	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1852	—	227 n 17
Niger	ship	NB	1870-74	3522	171
Niger	ship	NB	1886-90	3526	22

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Nimrod	ship	NB	1848-49	3534	124
Nimrod	ship	NB	1857-61	3537	163
Nonpareil	brig	SF	1855-56	3556	89
North America	bark	New London, Conn.	1837-39	—	35
Nye	bark	Dartmouth, Mass.	1844-48	3584	176-7
Ocean	ship	NB	1859-64	3595	149, 153
Ocean Rover	bark	Mattapoissett, Mass.	1859-62	3617	152, 162
Ocmulgee	ship	Holmes Hole, Mass.	1847-50	3623	217 n 97
Ohio	bark	NB	1858-62	3641	152
Omega	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1856	—	123
Ontario	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1835	—	98
Onward	ship	NB	1863	—	1
Oregon	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1853-57	3700	215 n 56
Orion	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1829-32	3703	47, 116, 124, 165
Orray Taft	bark	NB	1869	—	55
Osceola	bark	NB	1859-61	3729	46
Ospray	bark	NB	1859	—	141
Pacific	brig	Nantucket, Mass.	1829	—	119
Pacific	ship	NB	1855-59	—	43, 44, 103
Pacific	bark	NB	1867-68	3775	196 n 4
Palestine	bark	Salem, Mass.	1839-42	3785	27, 98
Palmetto	bark	NB	1872-75	3788	82
Parachute	ship	NB	1838-40	3803	39
Parachute	ship	NB	1856-59	(unlisted)	140
Parana	brig	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1840s	—	131
Pedro Varela	schooner	NB	1885	3822	149
Perseverance	bark	Fayal, Azores	1862-63	3840	57
Phenix	ship	NB	1847-51	3880	46
Phenix	ship	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1840	—	123
Philip	ship	Greenport, N.Y.	1851	—	198 n 33
Pioneer	bark	NB	1869-71	3910	163
Plover	ship	NB	1858-62	3947	200 n 14
Plover	bark	NB	1862-64	3949	44, 147
Pocahontas	ship	Falmouth, Mass.	1834-35	3950	88
President	bark	NB	1865-69	3979	103
President	bark	NB	1869-71	3982	80
President	bark	NB	1878	—	24
President	bark	Westport, Mass.	1843-44	3994	159

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Rapid	ship	NB	1858	—	77
Reaper	bark	Salem, Mass.	1837-39	—	220 n 25
Richmond	bark	Providence, R.I.	1844-47	4080	14-15, 197 n 17
Rifleman	bark	London, England	1839	—	112
Roman	ship	NB	1843-45	4118	37, 127
Roman	ship	NB	1850-52	4123	171
Roscoe	bark	NB	1846-49	4156	97
Roscoe	bark	NB	1859-60	4159	170
Samuel Robertson	ship	NB	1841-45	4128	225 n 55
Samuel Robertson	ship	NB	1841-46	4129	18, 19, 31, 39, 40, 48, 43, 166
Sarah	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1831-32	—	13
Saratoga	ship	NB	1852-56	4270	161
Saratoga	ship	NB	1857-60	4273	98
Sea	ship	Warren, R.I.	1852-53	4277	39, 163
Sea Breeze	bark	NB	1853-56	4280	77, 206 n 24
Sea Fox	bark	Westport, Mass.	1869-71	4299	68
Sea Queen	bark	Westport, Mass.	1879	—	31
Sea Ranger	bark	NB	1869-74	4316	80
Sea Shell	bark	Warren, R.I.	1853-56	4325	46-7, 166, 211 n 51
Sharon	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1841-45	4339	39, 40
Sharon	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1845-46	4340	40
Sharon	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1856-59	4343	146
Shepherdess	bark	Mystic, Conn.	1848-51	4353	40
Shepherdess	bark	Mystic, Conn.	1855	—	150
Siren Queen	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1854-55	(unlisted)	121
Smyrna	bark	NB	1853-57	4364	166
Smyrna	bark	NB	1853-57	4365	55
Solomon Saltus	bark	Fall River, Mass.	1848	—	129
South Boston	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1851-54	—	43, 184
South Carolina	ship	Dartmouth, Mass.	1835-37	4398	165
Spartan	ship	Nantucket, Mass.	1830	—	39
Spartan	bark	NB	1869-72	4412	69, 171
Speedwell	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1857-61	4415	203 n 92
Splendid	ship	Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.	1846	—	100
St. George	ship	NB	1867	—	76
St. Peter	ship	NB	1846-49	4438	207 n 59
Stamboul	bark	NB	1871	—	112, 165

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Stanton	ship	Fairhaven, Mass.	1828-30	4456	214 n 21
Stella	bark	NB	1855-60	4469	164
Sunbeam	bark	NB	1860-64	4490	159
Sunbeam	bark	NB	1868-71	4497	141
Superior	bark	Sag Harbor, N.Y.	1848	—	3
Susan	ship	NB	1841-42	4518	198 n 32, 204 n 16
Tacitus	ship	NB	1845	—	119
Tamerlane	bark	NB	1877	—	160
Tenedos	bark	New London, Conn.	1844	—	88, 99
Thomas Pope	bark	NB	1859-62	4590	83
Thrasher	steam bark	SF	1894-95	4599	170, 224 n 45
Three Brothers	ship	NB	1864	—	117
Tiger	ship	Stonington, Conn.	1845-46	4608	216 n 69, n 78
Tiger	ship	Stonington, Conn.	1845-48	4609	36, 124, 149, 162
Toward Castle	—	England	1830	—	110
Trident	ship	NB	1859-64	4624	74-5, 152
Triton	bark	NB	1860-63	4641	46
Tropic Bird	bark	NB	1881-83	4664	166
Tuscaloosa	ship	NB	1840-44	4674	94
Tuscan	—	England	1825	—	111
Vesta	brig	Edgartown, Mass.	1845-46	4753	21
Vigilant	bark	NB	1870-74	4763	211 n 53
Vigilant	ship	Sydney, Australia	1831-35	4764	147
Walter Irving	schooner	Provincetown, Mass.	1856-57	4796	22
Walter Scott	ship	Edgartown, Mass.	1858	—	98
Wanderer	bark	NB	1878-80	4803	49-50
Wave	bark	NB	1851-54	4855	143
White Oak	bark	NB	1844	—	95
William and Eliza	ship	NB	1856-59	4902	148
William Baylies	steam bark	SF	1899	4923	170
William Baylies	steam bark	SF	1906	4927	96
William Gifford	bark	NB	1872	—	68

Vessel	Rig	Homeport	Year	Sherman Log #	Page
Willis	bark	Mattapoisett, Mass.	1857-58	4969	168
Winslow	ship	NB	1823	—	125
Xantho	bark	NB	1860s	—	23, 154
Young Phenix	ship	NB	1849-53	5003	89
Zephyr	ship	—	1815-17	(unlisted)	138
Zephyr	ship	NB	1839-43	5012	125
Zephyr	ship	NB	1843-47	5014	21
Zone	bark	Fairhaven, Mass.	1855-58	5017	44

# General Index

- Abell, Alexander G., 64, 188  
Adams, John Quincy, 134  
Adamson, Thomas, Jr., 10-11, 71  
African-American seamen, 32-41, 45,  
50, 90, 120; pay and promotion of,  
34; as boatsteerer, 36  
alcohol, 15, 96, 115, 138; laws against,  
109, 138; trade in, 113-14  
Allen, Elisha H., 84, 179, 185  
American Board of Commissioners for  
Foreign Missions (ABCFM), 108, 109,  
118, 127  
American Seaman's Friend Society, 127,  
128  
Andrews, Lorrin, 113, 120, 121, 123, 126  
Anjer Roads (Java), 55  
Arctic Ocean, 81, 139, 148-49, 161, 165,  
168  
Armstrong, Rev. Richard, 181  
Ascension. *See* Pohnpei  
Ashley, Clifford, 8, 9, 11, 97, 103, 105  
Atwater, Dorance, 68  
Australia: Albany, 82; Fremantle, 170;  
Sydney (Port Jackson), 85, 98, 108,  
115, 152  
Austral Islands: Rimatara, 112  
Azores, Azoreans, 12, 41, 42, 45, 48,  
70, 120; Fayal, 65, 72, 92  
Baldwin, Dwight, 118, 120, 126, 129  
baleen, 1, 3  
Ballenas Bay, Baja California, 169  
Barbados, 69  
Bay of Islands. *See* New Zealand  
Bering Strait, 3, 149, 170  
bethel movement, 126-28  
Bingham, Hiram, 109, 117, 128  
Bird, P. Gould, 117  
bone. *See* baleen  
Bonin Is., 93, 96, 174  
Brind, William D., 110  
British and Foreign Sailors Society, 129  
British Navy, 84, 92  
Browne, J. Ross, 13, 38  
Buchanan, Ebenezer, 120  
Bullen, Frank, 37, 45  
Bunker, Charles, 78, 79  
Buzacott, Aaron, 107, 112, 119  
Caldwell, Alfred, 74  
California, 44, 85, 95, 186  
Canary Is., 21, 151  
Cape Town, 80  
Cape Verde Is., natives of, on whale-  
ships, 33, 41-5, 49, 54, 70, 120, 142;  
Bravo, 42, 95; Fogo, 95; São Tiago,  
51; St. Jago, 94

- Card, Denison, 71, 86  
 Caribbean, 22  
 Caroline Is., 118  
 Carroll, William, 80  
 cat-o'-nine-tails, 29  
 Celebes Is., 141  
 Chamberlain, Levi, 119  
 Chatham Is., 49, 90, 93, 95  
 Chile: Arica, 175; Atacama, 89; Coquimbo, 175; San Carlos (Chiloe I.), 120; Talcahuano, 80, 90, 99, 145, 148, 153, 171, 175; American hospital at, 129; war with Peru, 89  
 Church Missionary Society, 108  
 Civil War, U.S., 3, 4, 7, 8, 54, 66, 86  
 Clendon, James R., 82  
 Coan, Fidelia, 126  
 Coan, Titus, 124, 126, 129  
 Comoro Is.: Johanna, 93; Anjouan, 170  
 Cook, Pardon, 33  
 Cook Is.: Mangaia, 115; Rarotonga, 90, 106, 112, 115, 119  
 Cover, J.C., 12  
 Crozet Is., 88, 162  
 Cuffe, Paul, 33
- Dabney, Charles W., 65, 70, 71, 206 n 31  
 Dabney, John B., 65  
 Dabney, Samuel W., 65, 72  
 Damon, Rev. Samuel C., 128-30, 148  
 Darling, Ralph, 109-10  
 Davis, John, 114  
 death and burial: at sea, 40, 43, 47, 151, 167-72; on land, 74  
 Diell, Rev. John, 127-28  
 Dominica. *See* Marquesas, Hiva Oa "donuts," 160  
 Douglas, Rev. Thomas, 125  
 Drummond's I. *See* Gilbert Is.  
 Duff (missionary vessel), 108
- Earle, Augustus, 133, 144, 220 n 43  
 Ecuador, Guayaquil, 71, 174  
 elephant sealing, 36, 68, 84, 131, 162
- Fairfield, George H., 66, 79  
 Falkland Is., 66-67; Port Stanley, 44, 174
- Fayal. *See* Azores  
 Fiji Is.: Lauthala, 66; Rotuma, 25, 47, 116; missionaries in, 106  
 firearms, used in trade, 15, 97, 113; used aboard whaleships, 55-56, 58, 59-60, 91, 94, 149  
 Fitnam, Thomas, 68, 82  
 flogging, 18-19, 25-31, 39, 58, 59, 211 n 46; abolished in 1850, 25, 30-31, 59; examples of, 38, 40, 48, 56, 76, 78, 79, 83, 97, 98, 161, 198 n 43  
 Forbes, Cochran, 113, 117, 120  
 Fornander, David, 100  
 Foucault, Michael, 31  
 French Polynesia. *See* Austral Is., Marquesas Is., Society Is., Tuamotu Is.  
 Friend (Honolulu), 72, 83, 118, 121, 128-29  
 Froberville, Paul, 82
- Galapagos Is., 25, 96, 152  
 Gardner, Abraham, 125  
 Geddie, John, 125  
 Gibraltar, 80  
 Gilbert Is. *See* Kiribati  
 Griffiths, Hollier, 23, 82  
 Guam. *See* Mariana Is.  
 Gulick, L.H., 129
- Haight, Samuel, 65  
 "hailing," 71  
 Havana, 73  
 Hawaiian Is., 4, 90, 115; Europeans resident at, 108, 124, 148, 190; France and, 187-88; legislation in, 109, 186, 187, 188, 189; Ministry of Interior, 46, 116; missions to, 108, 189; prostitution in, 138, 186, 188-89; whaling and the economy of, 112-13, 185-86, 188  
 —Hawaii, Hilo, 15, 70, 71, 81, 103, 112, 124-25, 129, 155, 177; Kealakekua Bay, 117, 138  
 —Maui, 90, 113; Lahaina, 71, 75, 109, 112, 117, 118, 120, 126, 138, 177, 186; hospital at, 73; seamen's chaplain, 112; whale taken off, 123  
 —Oahu, 90, 145, 153, 174; smallpox ep-

- idemic, 183, 191; Honolulu, 17, 70, 71, 73-4, 76-7, 83, 96, 98, 112, 155, 163, 177; Admiralty Court at, 148; chapel at, 127, 128, 129-31, 186; foreign militia, 182, 183, 190; fort at, 72, 96, 177-78, 182, 190; hospital at, 73, 130, 179, 189; municipal government of, 190; native police, 178, 179, 189-91; riot of 1852, 177-85, 189, 190, 193; Royal Hawaiian Theater, 189; temperance movement at, 115, 118
- Hawes, John H., 67
- Hazelwood, David, 106
- Herschel I., 149, 161, 165
- Hervey Is., *See* Cook Is.
- Hickling, Thomas, 71
- Hobart, Tasmania, 24, 60, 83
- Hogan, William, 75
- Hohman, Elmo, 7, 10, 12, 92, 102, 105
- holidays: Christmas, 151, 156, 161-63; Easter, 161; Fourth of July, 67, 165-67; New Year's Day, 164; Thanksgiving, 161; Washington's Birthday, 67, 161
- homosexuality, 22, 147-8
- Hudson Bay, 42, 95
- Isle de France. *See* Mauritius
- Japan, 3, 47, 117; Hakodate, 67, 77, 140, 174
- Jenkins, Jonathan, 85
- Johanna. *See* Comoro Is.
- Jones, Thomas ap Catsby, 109
- Juan Fernandez I., 25
- Judd, Gerritt P., 119, 181
- Kamchatka, 3, 46, 90, 101
- Kamehameha I, 187
- Kamehameha II, 187
- Kamehameha III, 178-79, 181, 187
- kanakas, 45-50, 54, 89, 115-16, 142, 168, 169, 174; promotion of, 46, 48; U.S. laws and, 72
- Kekuanaoa (governor of Oahu), 178, 181, 182, 183
- kerosene, 1, 4-5
- Kingsmill Is., 48, 149, 155
- Kiribati: Gilbert Is, 138; Tabiteuea (Drummond's I.), 46-7; Banaba (Ocean I.), 46; Nonouti (Sydenham I.), 96; Line Is., 99
- Labrado, 95
- Ladd, John, 179-80, 189
- Ladrone Is. *See* Mariana Is.
- Larkin, Thomas, 72, 85
- Lindsey, Benjamin, 66
- Line Is. *See* Kiribati
- Liverpool, U.S. consulate at, 73
- London Missionary Society (LMS), 106, 107-9, 118, 129
- Loomis, Maria Sartwell, 117
- Lord Howe I., 47, 93, 98
- Lovejoy, John, 75
- Madagascar, 44, 140; St. Augustine Bay, 47, 99, 143, 165
- Malays, on whaleships, 48, 95
- Mangaia. *See* Cook Is.
- Manila, 95
- Maori, 46, 97, 108, 110, 144, 147
- Mariana Is. 25, 95, 111; Guam, 48, 93, 95, 111, 146; Truk, 93
- Marquesas Is., 15, 22, 96, 118, 145; Hiva Oa (Dominica), 104, 139; Nuku Hiva, 41, 93, 102, 137, 143
- Marsden, Samuel, 109-10
- Marshall Is., 137
- Mauritius: Port Louis, 66, 69, 79, 82, 100, 163
- Mcaskill's I. *See* Pohnpei, Pingelap
- Mediterranean, whaling in, 3
- Mellen, W.R.G., 85
- Melville, Herman, 33-34, 36, 43, 193; *Billy Budd*, 33; *Moby Dick*, 33, 45, 50, 121-22, 158, 191, 216 n 67; *Omoo*, 33, 45; "The Gees," 33; *Typee*, 33, 146
- merchantmen, merchant ships, 8-9, 10, 30, 88, 89
- Merrill, William, 67
- Mexican War, 187
- Miles, William, 86
- Miller, Thomas, 70, 81
- missions, missionaries, 93, 105-34, 137
- Monterey, California, 72, 87

- Morning Star* (missionary vessel), 117  
Mozambique Channel, 170
- Nantucket, 2-4  
*National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 33  
Nauru (Pleasant I.), 139  
Navigator Is., 15  
New Bedford, 2-5, 8, 62, 159, 173; Collector of Customs in, 70; Marine Bible Society, 127; Whalemens' Mission, 127  
New Guinea, 95  
New Hebrides Is. *See* Vanuatu  
New Zealand, 46, 108, 109, 112, 113, 117, 133, 139; Bay of Islands, 75, 82, 94, 98, 110, 174, 184; Waikouaiti, South Island, 110, 113  
Niue, 117  
Nome, Alaska, 96  
Norfolk I., 83, 174  
Northumberland Inlet, 95  
Nott, Henry, 118  
Nuku Hiva. *See* Marquesas Is.
- Oakford, Samuel, 68  
Ocean I. *See* Kiribati, Gilbert Is.  
Okhotsk, Sea of, 3, 146; Ayan, 169; Shantar Bay, 94  
Oki I. (Japan Sea), 171  
Orton, Joseph, 110
- Panama, 59-60  
Parke, George E., 178-79, 181, 182, 183  
Peel I. *See* Bonin Is.  
Percival, Capt. John, USN, 109  
Perry, Commodore Matthew Calbraith, USN, 174  
Peru: Callao, 86, 153, 175; Lima, 153, 175; Paita, 66, 74-75, 77, 148, 152, 153, 175-77; Tumbes, 67, 71, 90, 175, 211 n 52; war with Chile, 89  
Pike, Nicholas, 69, 76  
Pitcairn I., 152  
Pitman, Charles, 106, 112, 115-16  
Pleasant I. *See* Nauru  
Pohnpei (Ascension), 46, 47, 90, 117, 129-30, 139, 144, 146, 174; Pingelap (Mcaskill's I.), 106, 139  
Polynesian (Honolulu), 17, 182
- Porter, Commodore David, USN, 137, 138, 145  
Port Louis. *See* Mauritius  
Portuguese, 38, 41-4, 72. *See also* Cape Verdeans; Azoreans  
Pratt, Abner, 66  
Pratt, George, 106, 114  
Pritchard, George, 111, 114  
Pylstaert's I. *See* Tonga
- Raiatea. *See* Society Is.  
Rarotonga. *See* Cook Is.  
Rice, Elisha E., 77  
Richards, William, 109, 125, 126  
Ringgold, Fayette M., Arica (1852-53), 81; Paita (1853-62), 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 66, 77  
Royle, Henry, 119  
Roys, Capt. Thomas Welcome, 3
- Sabbath, 121-23, 158  
Samoa, 45, 114, 117; Upolu, 37, 114, 120; Apia on Upolu, 85, 94, 100, 114, 174; chapel at, 129; Pago Pago, 114; Savai'i, 106; Tutuila, 94  
Sandwich Is. *See* Hawaiian Is.  
San Francisco, 4, 68, 72, 73, 87, 132, 148  
Santa Catarina (St. Catherine's), Brazil: 66, 82, 95  
Savage I. *See* Niue  
Savory, Nathaniel, 174  
Scoresby, William, Jr., 122  
Severance, Luther, 179  
Seychelles Is., 69, 100  
Shankland, Thomas, 83-84  
*Shenandoah*, C.S.S., 206 n 34  
shipping agents, 9, 10, 11  
Sierre Leone, 95  
Simpson, Alexander, 115  
Singapore, 84  
slavery, whaling and, 19, 36, 44, 87  
slops, slop chest, 6, 9, 10, 11, 70  
"slush," 40, 45, 202 n 61  
Smith, Morgan L., 76  
"smoking ship," 59, 99  
Smyley, Capt. W.H., 66  
Society Is.: Arioi association, 137; Moor-

- ea, 115; Tahiti, 68, 114; missionaries at, 107, 108, 111, 118; Wilke's Harbor, 111; liquor on, 116; Papara, 114; Pa-peete, 174; Raiatea, 15, 111  
 sodomy. *See* homosexuality  
 Solomon Is., 94  
 Spaulding, Ephraim, 126  
 steerage, 13  
 Stevenson, Robert Louis, 104  
 Stewart I., Bass Strait, 88  
 St. Helena, 37, 49-50, 79, 92, 93, 152, 174  
 St. Paul I., Indian Ocean, 169  
 Sydenham I. *See* Kiribati, Gilbert Is., Nonouti  
  
 Tahiti. *See* Society Is.  
 temperance movement, 15, 113-18  
 Temple, Lewis, 33  
*Thaddeus* (missionary brig), 108  
 Timoney, E.M. Baron, 67  
 Timor, 40, 97  
 Tinker, Reuben, 126  
 tobacco, 6, 11, 37, 38, 99; used in trade, 15, 113, 145, 162, 165  
 Tonga, missions and, 133; Pylstaert's I. ('Ata), 114; Tongatapu, 145, 171, 174  
 "total institution," 1, 17, 35, 102, 105, 134  
 Tristan da Cunha, 48-49, 93  
 Tuamotu Is.: Raroia, 102  
 Turner, George, 111-12  
 Turrill, Joel, 8  
 Twain, Mark, 90  
  
 U.S. consular representatives and whalemen: 11, 24, 59, 61, 62-86; duties of, 63-64, 67; appointment of, 64-66; commercial agents, 63  
 U.S. courts, and whaling, 31, 60  
 U.S. Navy, 38, 84; U.S.S. *Cyane*, 87; U.S.S. *Dolphin*, 109; U.S.S. *Peacock*, 109; U.S.S. *Vandalia*, 84, 179  
  
 Vanuatu (New Hebrides), 111, 125; Tanna, 145  
 venereal disease, 137  
  
 Ward, Charles, 29, 83  
 Watkin, James, 110  
*Weekly Argus* (Honolulu), 191  
 Wells, Lemuel, 82  
 whaleboats, and use of, 8, 9, 16, 94-5  
 whalemen, abandoned (marooned), 24; advances to, 6, 10, 11, 70; boredom and, 88; card playing, 20, 159; desertion, 24, 28, 49, 63, 87-104 (defined, 92); discharge of, 9, 12, 24, 57-61, 62-3, 67-72, 89, 91; exchange of, 24, 91; fighting, 35, 44; legal protection of, 63-64, 69, 72, 73, 82, 84, 92, 204 n 2 (and *see* U.S. Consuls); literacy of, 7-8; outfit, 10; pay, 5, 6-7, 8-9, 11-12, 34, 57, 60, 63, 69-72, 81, 89, 91; racial displacement of, 49; recruitment of, 7-10; religion and, 105-33; Sabbath and, 120-22; scrimshaw, 121, 158; shipping fees for, 11; shipping paper, 57, 62, 67, 68, 75, 79, 81, 94; sick and destitute, 73-5, 77; skill levels, 7-8; smoking, 20; suicide, 147; swearing, 20, 155; swimming, 93; use of foreign language 20, 43, 44-5, 196 n 4; whistling, 20  
*Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* (New Bedford), 66, 83, 103-4  
 whale oil, 4-5; transshipment of, 57, 67-8, 83  
 whales, stocks of, 1, 88  
 whaleships, ceremonies of, on departure, 159; children aboard, 125, 150-54, 162, 170; cost of, 5; crew list, 6, 63; crew size, 1, 6; "crossing the line," 143, 160; dressed with flags, 163, 165; food, 13-16, 56, 59, 68, 80, 81, 153, 162-63, 165-66; "gam" between, 141, 160; insurance on, 9, 10, 69; integration aboard, 3-4, 40, 48-50; living arrangements aboard, 12-13; log required aboard, 19; mutiny on, 28, 52, 163; sabotage or firing of, 28, 52, 55, 103; supplies of ("recruits"), 15, 113, 176-77; survey and condemnation of, 9, 69, 80; temperance aboard, 113-15;

- watches aboard, 16; wives of masters aboard, 36, 135-36, 148-57, 160, 170; women serving aboard as crewmen, 85, 148; wrecks of, 9, 84-85, 119
- whaling, American, history of, 2-6; steam, 4; profitability, 5; technology, 16; Sabbath and, 121-23
- White, William, 117
- Williams, Henry, 110
- Williams, John (missionary), 111
- Williams, John B. (U.S. consul, Bay of Islands), 75
- Williams and Haven, 84
- Winslow, Charles, 66, 74-5
- wives. *See* whaleships, wives aboard
- Zanzibar, 29, 46, 69, 83