

The Reminiscences of Captain Thomas Chatfield

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Transcribed by David Churbuck
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Thomas Chatfield was a whaling captain, an officer in the Union Navy during the Civil War, and then a mariner and sailmaker in the Cape Cod, Massachusetts village of Cotuitport. He was born in 1831 and died in 1922. He wrote this memoir of the first thirty-four years of his life in 1905 for his four daughters. Printed copies are now available for sale on Amazon.

Reminiscences of Captain Thomas Chatfield

Cotuit, Massachusetts

Cotuit, Mass. Mch.13, 1904.

Children: You have asked me to jot down the principal incidents of my somewhat varied life, and something in the nature of a history of my ancestors. I am afraid it will be anything but satisfactory, either to you or myself. Most of it must be from memory – some, even, tradition – and with my limited school education, both spelling and grammatical construction faulty.

I was born at Riverhead, Kent, England, May 30th, 1831, of British yeoman stock, and am – probably – of pure Anglo-Saxon blood. My paternal grandfather, John Chatfield, held the lease of a farm called Harris Lodge – a part of a manorial estate near Riverhead, which lease had descended from father to son for (May 30, 1831) nearly two hundred years; and was – a few years ago – still held by his son Jesse. In addition to cultivating his farm he was also Bailiff of the estate, a manorial office, having in part the functions of both a superintendent and a county sheriff of the present day; that is, he had a general oversight of the estate, saw that the tenants managed their lands in accordance with their leases, settled minor disputes between tenants, and cited those to appear before the manorial grand jury who committed more serious offences. This, together with the fact that he brought up a family of twelve children, gave them all a fair English education, and left some property, would go to show that he was among the superior men of his class.

Of my grandfather's numerous family, three – John the eldest, and Walter the youngest, and my father Nicholas – came to America during the period between 1830 and 1840. John and Walter located in Illinois, not far from Fort Dearborn, on the site of which Chicago now stands. Both died soon after arrival. Walter died childless. John left six sons – presumably the numerous Chatfield in the middle west are descended from those six sons.

My parents with their six sons came to America in 1834, and located in Cornwall, Orange County, New York, and spent the remainder of their lives in that place, dying, Mother in 1880, Father three years

later. Both were eighty at their death, and both are buried in the Presbyterian cemetery at Cornwall-on-Hudson.

Of the children, Walter, John, William, Nicholas, Thomas and George, who were born in England, and Mary Elizabeth, Howard and Norman, born in America, seven are now living. Walter died as a result of an accident when thirteen years old; William some years ago somewhere between sixty-five and seventy; John is now not far from eighty; Norman sixty-two or sixty-three.

My mother's maiden name was Susanah Nye. I know but little of her antecedents, except that she was one of a numerous family, and that her father cultivated a piece of land, and was called a market gardiner. He must have been a man of good standing, as he have his children a good English education, and that in an age when there were no public schools in England, and people were obliged to educated their children at their own expense. As an illustration of the longevity of our race, all four of my grandparents died at over eighty years of age, and two of them were over ninety at the time of their death.

As a boy, my earliest recollectioNs are of picking stones, weeding the garden, getting brush wood from the clearings near home, and in assisting my mother in such ways as a boy may while Father was at work in the tanneries, at his trade, and also as chore boy among the farmers near our home. At the age of ten or twelve I went to work in the cotton factories, of which there were several small ones not far from our home one at Montana and two at Maadne [Moodna]. Previous to going to work in the factories I had attended the very inferior public schools of that day; in all about six months. I continued working in the factories until I was past sixteen, 1847, when, having become thoroughly disgusted with factory work, and everything connected with it, and seeing no prospect of ever getting away from it, I ran way, with three dollars which I had earned at overwork, and the suit I had on at the time. (And right here, children, let me say I had not at that time – and now an old man, looking back, I see no reason to complain of my parents. They had landed in America with a large family of young children, with very little means, had been caught in the financial depression of 1837, hard times followed, such as I hope you will never be called on to face. It was impossible for them to avoid getting behind. They were struggling to bring up their family in a respectable way, and to provide something for their own old age. All the children must assist in this, and factory work was probably the best paying work for a boy of my age.)

I walked to Newburgh, took the night steamer for Albany, for which I paid one of three dollars; took another name, to hide my identity, and found myself, the next forenoon, (Sunday) standing on the bridge spanning the canal basin, having had no supper, no breakfast, and no place to sleep the night before; and right here I had my first experience in facing the world alone. A boy much bigger than myself attempted to pick my pocket. He did not succeed. On the contrary he found himself a very badly thrashed boy in a very few minutes. That was one of the very few times when the lessons learned in our boys' boxing club stood me in good stead.

The schooner Highlander of Barnstable, Aaron Nickerson Master, and your great uncle, Roland T. Nickerson, Mate, was that morning lying not far from the bridge, ready to load for Boston and they have me permission to work my passage to that port. We anchored in Deep Hole; and the crew, as was usual, came ashore. Your uncle Roland took me home to your great-grandfather's, Seth Nickerson, who – after spending an active life as master of Grand Bank sailing vessels – had retired from the sea, and was farming in a small way. He wished me to stay with him, help him with his fall work, spend the winter and attend the district school. Working at the work, such as getting out wood and preparing for use, feeding and milking the two cows, helping your grandmother about the house work, and at the same time getting the benefit of three months' schooling, in addition to the six months I had previously received before I left my own home.

The next spring, 1848, I went in the schooner Highlander – your great uncle Horace master, and his brother Mate again – and continued in her – trading principally between Albany and Boston – until November, when I shipped for a voyage to the Pacific Ocean in the whaling ship Massachusetts of Nantucket. Your great uncle Seth Nickerson Jr. was Master and with him he had your aunt Rosilla and their three children Benjamin, Carlton, and Baby Ella, who died before we had been out from home a year.

We left Edgartown, where we fitted, the latter part of November, and proceeded direct for Cape Horn, looking for whales during the passage, but not stopping to cruise for them; neared stormy Cape Horn the latter part of January (midsummer in the southern hemisphere) under full sail with a fair wind – a very unusual thing – proceeded north, and made our first port at Callao, Peru, during the month of April, where, in the usual order, we should have filled our water casks, laid in a stock of vegetables, gave the crew three days' liberty ashore, and proceeded to cruise for whales; but fate changed all that. To digress, it may seem strange to you – and to others at this time – but there was nothing strange about it to the seafaring men of that day: Scurvy was the seaman's worst enemy. It being before the day of canned food, they were compelled to subsist on salted food; and a continuous diet of salted food produced scurvy within a limited time. So it was necessary to feed the men on fresh food, and give them a run ashore not less than twice a year.

At Callao we first heard of the discovery of gold in California, and found the foreign population of the port and city in a state of wild excitement. Practically the whole of them were as eager to get to the gold fields as our people were to get to the Klondike a few years ago. Among these foreigners were a hundred – I think one or two over a hundred who had left New York the previous fall, landed at Chagres, worked their way across the Isthmus to Panama; and finding it impossible to go north, had taken the English coasting steamer to Callao, (An English company maintained a line of small steamers between Panama and the South American ports at that time.) and there waited and watched for some ship that they could charter to take them to San Francisco.

Your Uncle Seth caught the fever (gold fever), abandoned the whaling voyage, chartered the ship to those men, and made a new contract with the crew by which they agreed to work the ship to San Francisco, then go to the mines and dig for gold, the terms being these: The ship to furnish tools and provisions at San Francisco; the cost of getting them to the mines to be paid first from the gold procured; then one-third of the remainder to be the ship's part; and the balance (2/3) to be equally divided among the men, shipkeepers included, the division to take place once a fortnight. Whether this contract was legal or not I do not know. There were no courts in San Francisco, and it would have made little difference if there had been. One case grew out of it. The man was a minor whose parents lived in Woods Hole. The father sued for the boy's (man's) share of the catchings on the ground that the boy being a minor he could not make a contract that was binding. The court (Mass. Court) took the same view; and the ship's owners were compelled to pay the same as if he had been aboard when the cargo was caught.

We cleared out the between decks, built rough bunks, got the crowd aboard, and left Callao not far from the first of May, and reached San Francisco during the month of June, 1849, and anchoring in Yerba Buena Cove, among a multitude of craft of all sorts, from a first class ship to a ship's long boat, and nearly all abandoned where they lay, among them the then famous pirate Brig Marie Odell – and pirate she looked from the end of her jibboom to her taffrail. It was during this passage from Callao that Baby Ella died. We put the little lady in a tight box, scraped up rum enough from the passengers to fill it, put that in a cask, packed it with lime, and secured it on the taffrail. I watched with the little lady for two nights while they were getting the materials for preserving her. The ship was infested with rats, and they kept me busy driving them away from her. Occasionally Aunt Rose would come out her room, in her night clothes, look at her dead baby, put her arm around me and say "Oh, dear! What should be do if you were not here to help us." Poor woman: how I pitied her, all alone along one hundred and forty men! only two (Return [Rhotire?] Sturgis and myself – a boy -) that she knew anything about, and your uncle Seth, who was all broken up over their loss. All the men treated her with respect; but still she was one woman all alone. We dropped anchor late in the afternoon, too late to land passengers that night; and then pandemonium reigned until morning. There was no quarreling – it was just a hundred and odd men who had been under strain for several months reaching their destination and free from all home restraint letting themselves loose. There must have been considerable liquor drunk, and it was songs of all descriptions; cheers, yells, laughter and jollity of the roughest sort. Next morning we commenced landing passengers and their luggage, and then the fun began; fun for us who had no responsibility, but I imagine very little fun for Uncle Seth. We would load a boat with luggage and those it belonged to, and two of the crew would run them ashore. Sometimes both men would bring the boat for another load, oftener but one man, occasionally none. The boat would be set adrift and both men would wander away, and that would be the last seen of them. When all the passengers were landed, just nineteen out of as crew of thirty-two were left. The next day we sent down topgallant mast, moored the ship with both anchors, got tools and stores ready for an early start next morning, when we started for the mines, passing one night among the tulier and mosquitoes on the San Joaquin River, reaching Stockton (head of navigation) the following forenoon. Uncle Seth so far with us, there he engaged transportation for our stores – not for us, we walked – to the mines on the Macalame River sixty miles inland from Stockton. There were but two places on the direct route where water was to be had; one, a water hold nine miles from Stockton; the other at the crossing of the Colovaras River twenty-five miles further inland. The

remaining twenty-five miles there was no water except by going some four miles for it – this to the Colovaras River, which ran parallel to the trail at that distance for some miles. The hind wheel of one of the wagons broke down some distance above the crossing, and the teamster had to go back to Stockton to get another, taking one of the pack mules to carry the wheel. That detained us for two days, and I tramped that four miles three times – foot sore as I was – for water while he was gone. Others tramped it too.

We got started again, and reached our destination two days later – five days from Stockton. We unloaded at the top of the hill overlooking the famous Macalame Bar; at least two thousand feet below, and at a grade of about forty-five degrees. From there we got to the grade to the bottom of the hill as best we could during the day; set up our tent, and got ready to look up a claim and commence mining operations. There must have been a hundred or more men at work on that bar at the time; and the next day being Sunday many came to our tent to make our acquaintance; and sturdy, straightforward fellows mostly, nearly or quite middle-aged; and, as we afterwards found out, most of them with families which they had left at home while they had come to the gold fields in hopes to gather a few thousand dollars to make it easier for those they had left at home. But among these honest fellows were another element, smaller in number but not so safe to live among. Men of generally loose morals, gamblers, and a few who might be called desperate characters. So the better, and more numerous, element had decided to organize a local government by electing an alcalde and sheriff; and the election was to be held that afternoon. There were two candidates for alcalde – Mr Binney, an American, (a quiet, hard working miner, the candidate of the better element) who did not want the office; the other, a German. They called him Dr, and claimed that as an educated man he was the better fitted for the position. He did not appear to have much to do; spent most of his time in the liquor saloon, smoking his big Dutch pipe, and associating with that sort. Ben Stahl, candidate for sheriff, was a small, determined looking man, proprietor of the saloon, and reputed to be not a bad fellow, as the world views it. The right to vote did not depend on length of residence. The fact that our tent was up and we were prepared to go to work was all sufficient. So the twelve of us, all that were left of our company, were declared voters. Mr Binney was elected Alcalde; and Stahl, as a matter of course, Sheriff and so the government was organized; and a very efficient government it was I assure you, not troubled by statutes, precedents, or red tape of any kind; but just governed by Common law; common sense law, or French leave whichever you will, but backed by the best sentiment of the community. Sufficient, amply sufficient, to keep the disorderly element in subjection. The process was very simple. I was present at two trials. Court was held under a spreading oak tree. Mr Binney would leave his work, call four or six of the nearest miners, and go to the tree. The sheriff would be there with the accused and the accuser. Each would state his case, such witnesses as they had would testify. Mr Binney would ask a few questions – very pertinent questions they were, and then give the case to the jury – no particular number was necessary – and they would decide as to the question of guilt or innocence. If he was not guilty the accused man was told to go – sometimes admonished to be more careful in future. If the verdict was guilty, Mr Binney would announce what he considered a just penalty, and ask the jury to give their opinions. I believe they always agreed with him. Then Sheriff Stahl would proceed to execute the penalty. Only three penalties were possible: hanging, flogging or banishment; quite often both flogging and banishment. The first one I witnessed was that of a mean-looking little Mexican. He was accused of robbing a tent while its owner was absent. The case seemed to be clear; and Sheriff Stahl immediately threw his lariat over the limbs of

the tree, enclosed both wrists in the loop, then two of the jury tautened it so as to take a portion of his weight, but not lifting him from the ground – just enough to render him helpless, then the sheriff dropped his pants, rolled up his shirt, and with the other end of the lariat gave him twenty-one lashes, then dropped, unrolled his shirt, adjusted his pants, cast off his wrists, and to him to git and to git quick. The fellow wobbled off, looking very sick. The other was a big fellow – Irish, I think – quarrelsome and ready to use his fists on the slightest provocation, or no provocation at all. He had just given a much smaller man a terrible beating. A dozen or more of the miners took him there, and then notified Sheriff Stahl: someone Mr Binney; and a pretty big crowd collected under the tree. The same proceedings gone through with, the verdict was banishment. I think the miners anticipated the verdict; for, as the sheriff took the trail with his prisoner, twenty (perhaps, thirty) men surrounded them, armed with tin pans, and any other thing that would make a noise, and they marched him out of camp to a tune as discordant as you ever heard or can imagine. Then he was told to git and git quick, which he did, sure that if he ever returned to that camp while any considerable number of the same men were there he would be shot at sight, and no fuss about it.

Now, children, don't get the idea that these honest fellows enjoyed this sort of thing. On the contrary they dreaded it. They were forced to leave their work to attend to it. There was always the chance of their making a mistake, and there was always the possibility of some desperado creating a case which would make it necessary to hang, which they dreaded beyond measure. But men must protect themselves wherever they be; that is a law of nature. I think I am right in saying that no hanging ever took place on Macalame Bar, and very few anywhere at that period. The twelve of us that kept together until we reached the mines took up a claim and got to work the day after the election, and kept at it steady for the next two weeks. Then we made the first dividend, which proved to be the last. Mr Sturgis first weighed out an amount sufficient to pay the cost of transportation; then the one-third belonging to the ship, and the balance, into twelve equal parts, of which each of us had one: as I remember, about eighty dollars each: not a large sum considering the cost of living; but as the ship furnished food the cost of food did not concern us. The following Monday morning only seven reported for work, five had disappeared, and we never saw any more of them. Thursday morning five reported, two more had gone. I and one other went to the claim and commenced work expecting the others to follow, which they did not do. We two worked perhaps two hours, then went back to the tent to see what was up. Mr Sturgis and the two men sat there. Evidently they had been talking. He got up and said: "Well, boys, the jig is up, each one must shift for himself." And walked out of the tent, and I did not see him again for a week, and none of the rest at all. A week later Mr Sturgis, passed me on the trail to Stockton; he was on a horse, I on foot. I looked around for a couple of days, and then having reached the conclusion that places mining for gold meant very hard work and very poor pay, and that the wear and tear on humanity was entirely out of proportion to the profit, so I packed my kit (blanket and one change) tool a little food, a Dutch gin bottle of water, and took the trail for Stockton on the way to San Francisco and the ship. I have a very clear remembrance of that tramp. It was a good two hours job to climb the hill to the place where we had unloaded the teams, three weeks before, and tired and leg weary I was when I reached it: but I kept going on what I supposed was the trail to the Colovaras Crossing; but there were lots of trails besides, and I got into the wrong one, which led away to the left. I must have tramped some four or five miles before I realized I was lost. What was more, I knew that there was no certainty of finding my way back if I tried; but as it was a well beaten trail I was sure it led to some place of

importance. So I kept on. Night overtook me, but I kept going. I saw a camp fire a few hundred yards to the right, which I reconnoitered, hoping to find it to be a party of Americans; but it was a party of Mexicans; about a dozen, all armed with lassos tethered. I did not like their looks (It was dangerous walking into a strange camp at night. One never could tell what his reception would be), so I kept on. Either I lost the trail or else it ran into a dry gulch, full of rocks and stones – bad walking at night – so I gave it up, rolled myself in my blanket intending to wait for daylight. Perhaps I dropped asleep. I don't know. The coyotes were howling in all directions and it was rather lonesome. It must have been about ten o'clock, perhaps later, when I was startled by hearing a horse leaping up the gulch. It was risky hailing a man under the circumstances, but I was anxious to find out where I was, so concluded to take the risk. He pulled up short when I hailed. I asked if there was an American ranch near. He answered, in a scared voice, "ranch Americans?" I said Yes, and he pointed the way he had come and, as near as I caught his words, said "A keke a melice" and before the words were out was off up the gulch full gallop. I think he was glad to be quit of me. I gathered up my blanket, and after tramping a short half mile turned a sherd of the hill and there, a few hundred yards off, was a bonfire, with men around it, plainly Americans; a good sized building, and a corral for animals. It was a halting station called the Double Springs. I walked up to the fire, told the men who I was, where I came from, and where I was going. They made me welcome, invited me to share their supper, which was just then ready (at 12 o'clock night), and to bunk in with them; but did not enlighten me as to who they were or what their business was. I have always thought they might have been vigilantes, on the trail of some desperado, as they were all well armed and mounted. There were eight in the party. I have sometimes wondered if it was the party of Mexicans whose camp I had reconnoitered earlier in the evening that they were after. They were off and away as soon as it was light enough to see a trail. I learned that the Double Springs was about twenty miles from my starting point, and that the Colovaras Crossing was some twelve miles distant. So my deviation had only increased my tramp by about two miles. So far my route has been through woods, and over timber, rough and hilly, with a descending slope.

The remainder of the way would be across the Selana plain with a slight dip of only a few feet near the city of Stockton forty-two miles, with only one, possibly two, places where water was to be had. The Colovarus Crossing thirty, and the water hole nine miles from Stockton respectively. I got some breakfast, filled my Dutch gin bottle (substitute for canteen) and started. The route was perfectly level and shackles, and the dust light, powdery, red stuff. Walk as easily as possible, it would rise in a thick cloud to above the waist; and a misstep would send it overhead and fill the mouth and nostrils at every breath. Not a breath of air, and the heat in the neighborhood at ninety – this the whole way to the water hole near Stockton thirty-three miles. I reached the Colovarus Crossing soon after noon. This was an important station. Everyone from Stockton went by the single trail to that point, then spread out by different routes to the interior. The building was large, and capable of accommodating at least about fifty. No beds. Everybody slept on the floor in a blanket during the rainy season, and under the trees in the dry season. (There was a narrow fringe of trees on the banks of the river.) There were two corrals: one about 200 feet square, for horses and pack mules; the other some two or three acres, for the rounding up of cattle. The people consisted on the proprietor, cook, a couple of helpers, and some six cattle men (Vaqueros) mostly Mexicans. I remained the rest of the day, and the night. I was tired and foot-sore. First I went to the river close by; stript, shook my clothes thoroughly to rid of as much of the dust as possible, took a bath, then went and lay under the trees the rest of the day (and night). There

were three or four men not belonging to the ranch, and evidently traders, halted like myself – one appeared to be a naturalist. He had several specimens, big spiders, ugly-looking fellows, I think he called them tarantulas; several of the friendly little lizards that used to run over us in our sleep; and others of a similar sort. He caught a horned toad that afternoon: an ugly looking thing with a circular body, a vicious looking head set on a neck at two inches long, which he held erect, and slim legs not less than three inches in length. They said that his bite was poisonous. He put him in a jar and poured alcohol over him. All his specimens were in alcohol. I got an early breakfast, filled my bottle, and started. (The river at that time – the last of July – was only as large as the Little River in this village.) Then we crossed it, going up, the volume of water was equal to twice that in the Marstons River. The ranchman told me that it never failed entirely and that in the rainy season it was quite often full to the banks, some ten or twelve feet above its bed.

A short distance – say two miles – from the river I met with what under the circumstances was a rather serious disaster. I stumbled, dropped my bottle, broke it and lost my water, with a twenty mile tramp to the water hole; the only place where it was possible to get a drink short of Stockton, thirty (nearly) miles away, and the heat and dust as bad – well, I won't try to describe it. I reached the water hole late in the afternoon, only to find it a bed of baked clay; but someone had dug a circular hole a few inches in diameter at the lowest point, but swarming above it was a perfect cloud of insects, bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, and many other kinds that I cannot name. But I was sure there was water in that hole else the insects would not be there; and it seemed as though I must have some of it. So, at the risk of getting stung, but in order to avoid disturbing the bees as much as possible I lay down, and drew myself to the hole. And sure enough there was water, thick with clay, like a cup of cocoa, a few inches below. First I attempted to dip some in my hand, but the motion irritated the bees. So I very gently put my head into the hole until my shoulders rested on the rim, and so could just reach the water with my mouth. Two or three swallows of the stuff were enough, it also ran into my nostrils, and that set me coughing, which set the bees in a roar. I got stung a few times, but on the whole got off pretty well. Bad as the water was it refreshed me considerably, and from this point there were a few trees and not much dust. I reached Stockton some time after dark – say ten o'clock – went straight to the river and drank – I should say – at least a half gallon of water. I was hungry too, having eaten only a cake of hard bread and a little jerked beef since morning; but I was much more inclined to roll myself in my blanket and lie down than to hunt up a supper. A few yards off was a small camp fire with four men sitting around it. So, feeling lonesome, I went where they were, hoping for a welcome. There were fully armed and evidently under some excitement. They looked at me sharply, asked who I was and what I was doing there; and then, I suppose seeing I was only a boy, took no further notice of me. Soon after three of them rolled in their blankets, the other keeping watch. Shortly before daylight tramping of horses and jingling of spurs woke me. The three men jumped up, and all four joined a party of horsemen that had halted a few yards off. There were about a dozen in all. They had dismounted: and in their midst was a short, sturdy man securely bound. This I plainly saw by the light of a torch which one of the party held. They talked together a short time, then backed a cart under one of the big trees that grew on the river bank, hoisted the bound man into it, adjusted the lariat – which one had thrown over a limb – around his neck. [2.7.06]

. He made no resistance, and said nothing. I had seen enough. I walked off a short distance and sat down, keeping my eyes in another direction. In the course of twenty minutes, perhaps half an hour, I heard them ride away, and I went back. Nothing but the cart was left, and day was breaking. I was told during the day that the man the vigilantes had made an end of was called Dublin Jack, a notorious robber, who was known to have committed one murder, and was suspected of having committed several more. Lynch law – but what would you do? They were honest men forced to protect themselves against the dangerous element, with no courts, no jails, or any means of confinement; so they acted under the police power which is an inherent right; protected themselves, and did as little injustice as possible under the circumstances. After all, I have never been able to understand why men such as juries are composed of could not adjudicate a case to the full as well, with the evidence before them, in simple form, as the same men could in a jury room after listening for several hours to the hair splitting questions and special pleading of a lot of barristers, each only concerned in gaining a verdict to enhance his own reputation as a successful lawyer.

At Stockton I found a small schooner, of about fifty tons carrying capacity, just finished unloading and about ready to leave for San Francisco. She was formerly a pilot boat belonging to New Bedford. Her name was the Favorite. She had been brought out by a former whaling captain, Wheldon by name. (He had commanded the ship Washington, of New Bedford, and your uncle Horace was mate with him.) There was a story in circulation concerning Captain Wheldon: A big merchant sighted the Favorite on the passage, and ran to her to see what manner of craft that was out there in the broad ocean. Finding that the little craft was able to take care of herself, the big ship's captain, as is usual, asked what the longitude was. Getting the correct answer, he asked Wheldon where he kept, and got the quick reply: "In the seat of my pants" and so they parted. But when they both arrived at San Francisco the big ship captain found himself abandoned by his whole crew; and, finally, in his utter helplessness, abandoned the ship himself, while the little Favorite was in active demand as a river freighter, and was a bonanza in herself. This is the story as I heard it at the time. It sounded just like Wheldon. Captain Wheldon agreed to give me a passage to San Francisco, and put me aboard the Massachusetts for the sum of twenty dollars; and two other men came soon after, paying the same; and two days after I jumped aboard the good ship Massachusetts, glad to get back to what was then my home. I found aboard Aunt Rosilla and her two children Benjamin and Carlton, Mr. Gardner the Mate, Jordan the black cook, and one man – a boy about my own age – who had remained as ship-keeper when the rest of us went to the mines. Mr. Gardner appeared to have grown morose, and apparently took no interest in anything about the ship. I think he had been drinking. Uncle Seth either had an inkling that all was not right with the gang, or had become suspicious and had gone to the mines to look after the ship's interests. That he found was that Mr. Sturgis had been to Stockton, invested all the funds of the ship-keepers and ships in goods, and set up a trading store – for his own account – at a mining camp not from Macalame Bar. That he did was to stick close to that store for some days until the larger part of the goods were sold, take what money he could get out of Mr. Sturgis, not all, as I remember, and return. I think Uncle Seth and Mr. Gardner quarreled, for Mr. Gardner went ashore, and did not come aboard again until we were ready to leave port. The man – a boy – left also; but one of the mining gang, Dempsey, drifted back a few days later. So, that phase of the voyage ended, the next thing was to save the ship, if possible, by getting away from San Francisco, and down to the Sandwich Islands. Uncle Seth was ashore every day for about three weeks looking for men who would ship for the islands. In the meantime I, with the help of Dempsey, and

an occasional lift from Jordan and two men whom Uncle hired, sent up the topgallantmasts, crossed the yards, bent sails and in other ways got the ship ready for sea. By that time Uncle Seth had succeeded in getting three men – half crippled, sick-looking fellows they were – who had become played out in the mines, and were glad to get back to the islands and they, with Mr. Gardner, who came aboard again, made eight. We couldn't get the anchors out of the mud with that crew; but the crew of a Genoese ship, which had anchored near us the day before, came aboard and hove them up for us. Then we made some sail, and Uncle steered while the rest of us got the anchors on the bow. We made a fairly quick passage, anchoring at Lahaina, the second principal port, in not much over a fortnight after leaving the Golden Gate. Mr. Gardner, Dempsey, and the three half-cripples, left the next day for good and all. Uncle Seth, Aunt Rose and the two children went ashore to live while we were in port. Jordan and myself were left to keep ship. We lay here waiting for the Artic fleet to arrive, which would not be so many days – during October, when we expected to obtain a crew and resume our whaling voyage. Uncle Seth shipped three native sailors, and sent them on board. With them I painted the spars from truck to deck, and also the bends, and did other small work. About forty of the fleet came to Lahaina among them the ship Menkar of New Bedford, Captain Norton. He and his officers Joseph Bearse, Sumner Warner and James Snow: first, second, and third mates, had got at variance with each other: and all three left the Menkar and shipped with us. The ship Richmond of Cold Spring, Long Island, had been wrecked in the Artic that season, and part of her crew. Among them were her four boat steerers and the cooper. They all shipped with us, so we had in all some twenty-two men. Then several deserters got on board, and hid themselves in the hold. Of course we knew they were on board, and how many there were of them, but it was not through the correct thing to harbor deserters. So they kept out of sight of the officers. I had been rated fourth mate, so was one of the officers. We filled our water casks, got a stock of potatoes, and were ready for our cruise. Seth said I must go with him, and get Aunt Rose and the children aboard, and on the way told me that he had shipped all the men that had appeared themselves, and asked me if I thought I could find enough to make up our complement – thirty-two – which I told him I certainly could do. So we brought Aunt Rose and the children aboard. We got underway, and stood off between the islands in the direction of Honolulu. Then the stowaways came out, and instead of only thirty-two we mustered thirty-five. The next day we landed the three extra men at Honolulu, and then proceeded on our cruise. We cruised down toward the Equator looking for sperm whales, and in a westerly direction, using up the time until it was time to go north for the Artic whaling season in May. We lay of several islands, trading with the natives chickens, hogs, cocoanuts, bananas, oranges, and any kind of fruits – this to feed the men on fresh food as long as possible to ward off scurvy: for while north it would be all salt food. We lay one day off Ocean Island. This island is small – say six or eight miles long by half as broad; being so small the people form one community; consequently there are no tribal wars; there is no anchorage; but it is just a lump of land, a couple of hundred feet high, set in the fathomless ocean, and no other land within from two to three hundred miles. There are no large trees fit for making big canoes. The small ones which they use are made up of thin slabs of wood, not much bigger than a sheet of letter paper, sewn together with some sort of fibre, and so neatly as to be practically water tight. They were small, of course, but of good model, buoyant and capable of keeping the sea in very rough weather. They showed good mechanical ingenuity, and were evidence of a high order of native intelligence. Perhaps in consequence of there being no war among them, the natives were a very gentle people; but because of their isolation there was always the danger of the island becoming overpopulated. This was avoided by a custom which I believe was peculiar to that island alone. At least I never heard of it at any other. When the population had reached

a certain number, the reigning chief – king we called him – established the Tabu; and then no woman was permitted to bear more than two children until the people had been reduced to a certain number, when the Tabu was taken off. This to prevent famine. This I learned from a white man – an American, perhaps English – an educated man who had evidently failed of a career at home, and had cast his lot among the natives of Ocean Island.

Shortly afterwards we made Pleasant Island, at daylight. We were becalmed some four miles off the north shore; and we raised a school of sperm whales going to the eastward, lowered our boats and gave chase. We followed them until the ship was hull down, and more than hull down. When finding that we could not overtake them, pulled leisurely toward the ship. It was hot enough, and we tired enough to want to pull leisurely, you may be sure. When near enough we found that the ship was surrounded by a large number of canoes; and then how we did pull to reach her; but, as it turned out, it was not necessary. No one of the islanders was aboard except a big, brawny negro – American probably – who, judging by the authority he exercised, was an attaché of some big chief. When he came on board Aunt Rose had gone directly to him and told him she wished he would not let any of the natives come aboard until the boats had returned; and he ordered such as were already there into their canoes, and to lay off from the ship. Brave, gentle Aunt Rose. Instead of hiding herself in her stateroom she remained on deck with only eight of the ship's company, and strange negro aboard, and a hundred natives within a stone's throw. Pleasant Island is large, not less than twenty miles long, perhaps more, and was inhabited by two tribes who were hereditary enemies, and constant war between them. Consequently they were not considered so safe as the natives of some of the other islands; being accustomed to plundering each other, they might easily be tempted to capture and plunder a ship in as helpless a condition as the Massachusetts was while the boats were away. I had quite a talk with the negro during the day, and the impression he left on my mind was that of a big, brawny gentleman in a black skin. We bought all the natives had to sell, and a breeze springing up filled away on our cruise.

Later we lay off Stranger Island. This island is large, somewhat mountainous, and evidently of volcanic origin. It had two good harbors, and capable of accommodating a limited number of ships, and under different conditions would have been frequently visited by them. As it was, only a few ventured to enter the northern harbor, and seldom or never the one on the opposite side of the island. The conditions were: the northern was narrow, especially at the entrance, and lay nearly or quite due north and south. Consequently the trade wind – northeast trade wind – blew more inward than outward, so it was easy to enter; but it was only when the trades varied to the east that a ship could get out; for there was not room enough to tack. The southern harbor was, for the same reason, difficult to enter but easy to leave. In addition to this the island had a bad name. It was believed more than one missing ship had been plundered, burnt, and the crew made away with at Stranger Island. It stood entirely alone, was not one of a group.

The government of Stranger Island – as I learned it – resembled the government of England during the earlier feudal ages. That is, several chiefs more or less powerful, had jurisdiction over certain portions of the island; while King George – as he was called – in addition to his local chieftainship, was overlord of

the whole. Just how much authority he exercised I did not learn. He was a kindly man, and friendly to strangers, living as he did on the shore of the northern harbor, he liked to have ships enter it. The next most powerful chief, Kau-ka – ruled over that part of the island in which the southern harbor was. He was represented to be a morose, suspicious man, much given to raiding the territory of his neighbor chief, and entirely capable of plundering a ship, but also of destroying both her and her crew to obliterate all evidence. It was this chief Kau-ka who some six or eight years before had tried to capture the ship Washington of New Bedford. (The Captain Wheldon whom I alluded to as master of the Pilot Boat Favorite, which took me from Stockton to San Francisco, being at that time master, and your Uncle Horace mate) while she was lying in the northern harbor. It would seem that some sort of political upheaval was in progress at the time, for Chief Kau-ka was able to bring a number of his followers into King George's territory and besiege that ship for a week, using every means in his power to capture her; but he didn't succeed in harming her. Captain Wheldon was a resourceful man, and understanding that the ship was in an unsafe position laid his plans. He hoisted his boats to the end of the davits, then surrounded the ship with large, empty casks, which he slung outside, and level with the ship's rail. The strings being tugged in the bung holes were out of reach from the outside. These casks presented a smooth, round surface to the natives, so that it was impossible for them to board the ship with the armed crew ready to repel them. So Kau-ka, being no fool, did not attempt to board her. What he did was to take possession of a hill, and spatter the deck with bullets at long musket range. At the end of the week he either became disgusted, or else King George was able to drive him off. He gave it up, and retired to his own dominions. Still, King George was anxious to get that ship out of the harbor; and what he did was to send a body of natives into the mountains, where they cut a tree as huge as they could handle, with forked branches, to act as grapnels, and of wood heavy enough to sink of itself. To this they attached line enough to reach out of the mouth of the harbor and into deep water, where they sank it. Then they came on board. The crew hove up the anchor, and then the natives double banked themselves, seizing the line, passing up the opposite side in an endless chain, warped the ship out through the entrance and up to the sunken tree, keeping up her headway until it was reached, when King George cut the line. In the meantime the crew had loosed the topsails, leaving a single man at each of the bunt gaskets: and when the line was cut, the sails were sheeted home and hoisted all three at the same time; and within two minutes the ship was standing off shore in safety. King George immediately ordered the natives into their canoes, shook Captain Wheldon's hand, jumped into his own canoe, and then they gave the ship God-speed with cheer after cheer in their native language. This I learned from your Uncle Horace more than once during the voyage I sailed with him.

There two ships in this harbor, as we could see when off the mouth; and Uncle Seth concluded to go in with a boat, with a view to deciding whether to make our spring port at that place or further west. After talking with the captains of the ships he decided not to do so; but we went ashore to pay our respects to King George; but found that he was not at home. We did pay our respects to his queen, however; a little, sweet-faced, native lady, every inch the queen as she was. She received us sitting under a tree surrounded by her maids of honor, tried to entertain us with her very few words of English; and when she realized that she had failed to make us understand her eyes sparkled, and her quiet little laugh was pleasant to see. In about ten minutes she dismissed us very graciously; stood up, and waited in that position until we had entered our boat, when she turned, and in company with her maids disappeared among the trees.

We had taken three small sperm whales since leaving Lahaina, and it was time to prepare for our season in the Artic. So as soon as we got on board we steered away for the island of Ascuncion, one of the Marianas group, where we made our spring port, filled our water casks, got a stock of wood, game and fruit, and gave the men their usual three days' liberty. The island of Ascuncion is large, fertile, and mountainous – in a sense – but clothed with verdure to its highest point; and was at that time inhabited by a kindly disposed, intelligent race of native brown men. Just what they may be now, after a number of years of first Spanish, and latterly German, rule, I should not like to say. We made our port in a harbor on the eastern side. A narrow strip of deep water between the land and the broad coral reef which protected it on the ocean side (about five hundred feet wide – and a short mile long – good harborage for four to six ships at a time, but being so narrow must moor, that is with anchors close to the reef, and a hawser from stern to shore) where they could lay in security, and in perfectly smooth water and, as the trade wind blew directly across, easy to enter and leave. This harbor was – is – maintained by a small river which discharges a volume somewhat exceeded that of the Marstons Mills River, freshening the water sufficiently to prevent the coral insect from working that width. This stream also furnished excellent water, a great consideration. We lay here perhaps three weeks before proceeding north. The landing where our hawser was secured, was a strip of land only a few feet above sea level – perhaps an acre in extent – and back of it an abrupt clay cliff, with several paths running diagonally up its face. On the landing was one large, substantially built boat house. In it were six finely moulded war canoes, each capable of carrying some forty men. (The island was inhabited by three sovereign tribes, who were not seldom at war with each other.) On the brow of the cliff were about a dozen native houses, in one of which lived the local chief; and scattered about in the rear a number of other houses.

This chief was one of the finest specimens of physical manhood I ever saw. Perhaps six feet tall; slender, straight as an arrow, lithe as a cat, and with a bright, pleasant face. He could speak a few words in English. I used to like very much to sit and talk with him. Poor fellow! When I was there four years later the leprosy had wrecked him. Both feet were gone; one leg nearly to the knee; and some of the fingers from one hand. But he was the same cheerful fellow as he was when at his best. The reef was a very wide one – half a mile in some places, and nearer a mile in others. Along it were scattered a number of keys (islands); some mere dots, other from one to three acres; most of them bearing cocoanuts, and most of them inhabited. Occasionally one would bear a breadfruit tree, but not often. On one of these was a remarkable structure, which clearly proved that a much more powerful race had inhabited the island in the dim, distant past. The key did not exceed a half acre. The structure was about one hundred and fifty by two hundred feet. In its center was what appeared to be an altar, some twelve feet square, about six feet high; the top formed of two flat stones, which completely covered it; the sides two feet thick, with an opening some eighteen inches wide and five feet high; and a stone which must have been used to close the entrance lying in front of it. The enclosure built of basaltic stones, laid without cement, about eight feet thick and ten feet high, with a parapet waist high around the outer edge of the top, and many of these stones weighing not less than ten tones, and the only possible place to get them not less than eight miles distant, where there was a basaltic cliff some two hundred feet high close to the water, where they must have been quarried. And the quarrying was so well done as to prove the quarrymen were fully as skillful as the quarrymen of the present day. The natives when I was there had no knowledge, not even any tradition, as to who built it, or when it was built; and they held it such dread –

or reverence perhaps – that no one of them was ever known to have put foot on the key. The general appearance was that of a temple and fortification combined.

It was while we were at Asuncion that I saw what I consider a fine piece of statesmanship. A New London ship came in a short time after we arrived. Among her crew were Tahite natives: big, strong fellows, whom I presume held in contempt what they considered the inferior natives living nearer the tropics. While on shore – on liberty – they got into a dispute with the islanders. Just what the trouble was I never knew; but all at once there was a great outcry on the brow of the cliff, and those Tahitians were coming down the cliff with a crowd of the islanders chasing them with clubs and stones, which they were throwing at them. The Tahitians were putting up a good fight. All had got hold of a club, and occasionally one would turn, knock an islander over, and run again. Four or five of us jumped into a boat lying at the gangway, and started ashore to the rescue. We had no trouble in staving the islanders off. They had no quarrel with us, and they recognized our right to serve the ship's men. Only one of the Tahitians was badly hurt. He was knocked down and laid out by a big stone which had hit him on the side of the head, and nasty hole it had made in it. We thought it had finished him; but he got over it. By that time one of the New London ships arrived, and we put him in that and the mate who was in the boat took them aboard their own ship. The pilot, only an English common sailor, but a man of brains for all that, said "This will not be the last of this affair", and immediately started in a canoe, up the reef where the reigning chief lived. He was gone one night. The following day we saw twelve war canoes coming down the reef. In one sat a man not much past middle age, dressed in royal robes, and surrounded by six fine looking fellows, armed with muskets. The whole retinue couldn't have consisted of less than two hundred men. Apparently they took no notice of the ships, passed under our hawsers, and landed near the boat house: took the six handsome war canoes out of the house, and put them into the water, burnt the boat house, shot at the few natives who showed themselves on the brow of the cliff, took the canoes in tow and then came alongside of the ship. In the meantime the pilot had instructed Uncle Seth as to what would be a suitable present (good will offering), and had us (the ship's company) ranged up amidships to receive his majesty; and that native chief – King as we called him – came over the gangway, quiet, alert, complete master of himself, and complete master of the situation, and this is what he said as interpreted by the pilot: (I put it into my own language.) "You will tell the captain that I regret very much that my people have been provoked into committing this breach of hospitality. I have punished them; and I will leave two of my young men aboard each ship who will see that nothing of the kind happens again during your stay." I consider that a very fine piece of statesmanship. He didn't ask the captain if he was satisfied. He had adjudged the case according to his own judgment. Then he took his present, made a single gesture of acknowledgement, passed over the side, and went aboard the New London ship, where I suppose the same ceremony was gone through with. Two days after we left the place, and started for the north to battle with the snows and sea of the Arctic.

While at Asuncion I became interested in the Tabu. While on shore one day with the pilot, we spent an hour or two at the house of intelligent native, and while there another native called, and asked for the loan of some implement. (I forget what it was.) that had been left in his care. The man pointed to it, and the caller immediately turned and went away without a word. I asked the pilot why he did so, and he

called my attention to a spear of grass attached to the article by a peculiar knot, and told me that it was Tabu. Of course that piqued my curiosity, and between the two – the pilot interpreting – I believe I got a very correct idea of its significance. I already knew that it was universal throughout all Polynesia, but just what it meant I did not know. It was not loyalty to either chief or tribe. It had nothing to do with their religious views, and they had no superstitious dread of it. Its influence seemed to be purely moral. For instance, a native wishing to leave any article – no matter where – would attach a spear of grass to it, and it was Tabu, and no other native would ever dream of taking it from the place where the owner had left it. The spear of grass being a sign that it was neither lost or abandoned, but on the contrary that the owner intended to recover it for his own use. So far the Tabu was common to all. Chiefs according to their rank exercised it for the benefit of the community. For instance, a subordinate chief finding that some article of necessity was scarce, game, breadfruit, etc. would tabu it, and then no member of his section of the tribe would sell either to any one outside of his jurisdiction; but a superior chief might annul it. Another use was also made of it. A native rendering some extraordinary service to the tribe – or section of the tribe – might be granted Tabu and if for the tribe as a whole the reigning chief granted it, from that time his person was sacred throughout the whole tribe. It granted no privilege, and conferred no authority, but no tribesman other than the chief granting it, might so much as lay a finger on him in the way of violence. A subordinate chief might grant Tabu within his jurisdiction. I was told that this was very sparingly used; that for long periods no one was Tabu. After I understood this it was easy to understand how the population of the little isolated Ocean island was kept within limits. Every woman was Tabu after bearing two children. No man might hold intercourse with her.

We made a quick passage to the latitude of 30 deg. No. Then finding that we should get into Behring Sea too early, passed through the Korean Straits, and spent a month in Japan Sea looking for right whales. We met with little success; as my memory serves me, took two small ones; but we had lots of stormy weather when we couldn't lower the boats. We saw many junks and numberless fishing boats; clumsy looking craft as we viewed them, but capable of keeping the sea to the full as well as we were. This you must remember was the year 1850 – three years before Commodore Perry's expedition – when he made the famous treaty – and the policy of the Japanese at that time was absolute non-intercourse with foreigners. Consequently we did not go very near the land. Very shy the crews of the boats and junks were when near enough to be seen from the land; but not nearly so shy when farther from shore. We boarded several, got fish from boats, and tried to get sugar – of which we were short – but did not succeed in getting any sugar. Either they had none, or could not understand what we wanted, or what is just as likely, did not dare to trade with us for fear of its coming to the knowledge of the authorities: but the conclusion I reached was that if the nation as a whole were as manly a lot as those seafaring men were the Japanese were not a people to be despised: and when the war with Russia broke out I felt sure that Russia would discover it to her cost.

We sailed on our second voyage in September 1851 for the North Pacific. This time going by way of Cape of Good Hope. Touched at the Western Island and also at the Cape de Verde Islands on the way out, sighted the island of Tristan Da Cunha (in mid-ocean) and some twelve hundred miles east of Cape of Good Hope fell in with a large school of sperm whales. (Cows and calves). We had got two, and Uncle Horace had killed a third – and under ordinary circumstances should have got two or three more, for Uncle Seth was fast to another – when we discovered that the ship was much farther away than she ought to have been, and increased the distance at the rate of some five or six miles an hour. (It seemed

that we all discovered this at the same time). Uncle Horace, instead of trying for another whale, stuck a red flag on a ten foot pole into the one he had killed, and started with oars and sail in an effort to overtake the ship. A hopeless task unless the ship stopped, for she was going faster than the boat could row. Uncle Seth cut from his whale and started for the ship too: Uncle Horace a mile or more in the lead. Of course it was useless for me – a third mate – to chase the ship. If neither the captain or the mate could overhaul her certainly neither of us could. So I signaled the third mate (Mr Holmes) to tow his whale to me, when we tied the two together, then waifed them and hunted in a circle of a mile for the one Uncle Horace had killed. I presume that Uncle Horace in his haste had not properly secured the waife, and it had worked out with the action of the sea. At any rate we could not find it. By this time the whales were out of sight in one direction, and the ship and the two boats in the opposite. Mr Holes and myself made fast to the two dead whales, set out sails so as to be seen as far as possible, and awaited developments: and this was the situation: the Cape of Good Hope twelve hundred miles to the eastward (the nearest available land); each boat had from three to four gallons of water, and each boat a bag – say a bushel – of bread; and we might cut enough flesh from the whales to last us until it putrefied; and we were not far from the track of the ships bound to and from China and the East Indies, and might fall in with one. And this is what happened aboard the ship: the cooper (an Irishman, not much past middle age, a good man – he owned a small interest in the ship) was also ship-keeper; and of course when all the boats were away she was under his control: and it was his place to keep the ship within easy reach of the boats as long as possible; and in case the boats got out of sight to go to the point where they were last seen and then stop, leaving them to find their way back. Now, a whale ship is always hove too on the starboard tack when the boats are to be lowered to enable the three on the port side to get away with the least risk; and this was what was at that time – but it left the ship headed in the opposite direction from that which the whales were going. What the ship-keeper should have done was to ware ship and follow the boats. What he did do was to lose his head, brace forward the main yard, set the mainsail and stand away to the westward, getting more and more rattled all the time; and she must have gone at least twenty miles. Then, no one seemed to know how, the bend sails caught aback, threw the ship around, and there she lay, with all sail flat against the masts – and the whole gang lost in mid-ocean, and scared out of their senses; and so Uncle Horace boarded her the middle of the afternoon. He braced the yards around and started on the back track, picked up Uncle Seth, and reached us at dark. We took the whales alongside, hoisted up the boats, and were glad to get to the supper table. But the strain had told on Uncle Seth. He was terribly excited, and what a rating he gave me for not finding that third whale.

The next morning we cut in the whales, filled away on our course to the eastward, glad that all was well with us. We stopped one day at the island of St. Paul's, midway between the Cape of Good Hope and Australia, where we caught several barrels of excellent fish. I think these fish are the fattest and finest flavored I ever ate, the larger about five pounds in weight. St. Paul's, Amsterdam, the two composing the group, are solitary, the nearest land (the Bourbon Islands) being several hundred miles to the north. Amsterdam has no harbor, or anchorage near it. Both are in a sense mountainous, and about twenty miles apart. St. Paul's had an excellent harbor for small vessels – evidently the mouth of an extinct submarine volcano – with an entrance for vessels drawing ten feet. There was at that time a few men (fishing gang) belonging to Mauritius, a small vessel coming twice a year to remove their catch. Close to the shore was a hot spring five feet in diameter, throwing a central jet some three feet high. Crow fish

were abundant. You could take one from the water, boil him in the spring, and have a lunch all within a half hour. Off the east end of Australia, but some distance south of it, we took a large sperm whale. Uncle Horace struck him just before sundown, and he kept out of our reach until after dark. Then I got within reach of him. It was too dark to use ordinary precautions, so I struck, and then hauled right up alongside and killed him there and then. It was a risky thing to do; but he was a valuable prize, and so I took the risk; but glad as Uncle Seth was to get a big sperm whale, he gave me a sound rating for doing so.

The next day we cut the whale, and then kept away on our course to the eastward, reached Van Diemen's Land (since re-named Tasmania), the point where ships turn to the north between Australia and New Zealand, three hundred miles to the eastward. There is a peculiarity about this part of the ocean. A triangle formed by Australia, New Zealand and the Auckland Islands – the latter a hundred miles south-westerly of New Zealand – is subject to frequent dry gales. Something in the formation of the land, I presume, causes them. We took another large sperm whale soon after passing Tasmania, got him alongside at dusk, and before morning were caught in one of those dry gales. Of course we couldn't cut, and it is not easy to hold a big whale alongside ship in a heavy gale. What we did was to make two whale lines fast to his flukes, and ware out a hundred fathoms with the ships and port just forward of the fore-rigging. In that position the whale acted as a drag, and the oil made a slick that broke the seas, and we lay in that position drifting north forty-eight hours, when the gale blew itself out, and we cut the whale and continued our course. A week later we made our spring port at Waganui (Manga Nui), New Zealand. Waganui is a safe land-locked harbor, capable of accommodating some twelve or fifteen ships, with room to swing at the anchors. The settlement consisted, at that time, of perhaps twenty dwellings, an out-fitting establishment kept by one Capt. William Butler, and a big liquor place where the crew held high jinks, and obtained the where withall to create lots of trouble. But there was good water within easy reach, and Captain Butler furnished good, fresh beef and excellent onions and potatoes; and – aside from old Flavius' rum shop – it was a good place to give the men the necessary three days' run ashore. We remained here some ten days, perhaps a fortnight, then left, bound straight for the north Pacific, and passed between the Society and the Fiji Islands, and on through the numberless Islands of Polynesia, until we reached the latitude of 50° 00 north off the passage into the Okhostk Sea. As we had made a quick passage, we were too early for the Behring Sea fishing; so Uncle Seth concluded to enter the Okhostk, and spend a month or six weeks before going farther north. This was some time in April – we left the Okhostk – for we found whales in plenty, and by the middle of September the ship was full of oil and bone, and we were ready for the voyage home. Of course we had the usual amount of bad weather, and much sea to contend with; but we had our home crew, well trained, and under good discipline; and under such circumstances, though hard work is not unpleasant, instead of coming home by the way of the Sandwich Islands and Cape Horn, Uncle Seth concluded to come by way of the Indian Ocean and Cape of Good Hope, making our fall port at Hong Kong; and we brought as far as Hong Kong the captain and sailing master of a French ship wrecked in the Okhostk that season. We finished our business at Hong Kong, crossed the China Sea, passed through the Strait of Sunda, then across the Indian Ocean, straight for the Cape of Good Hope. It was midway of the Indian Ocean that we fell in with the largest school of sperm whales that anyone aboard had ever seen. The ocean was fairly alive with them in every direction. We took five cows. The taking of these would have scattered any school other than this one, that I ever saw, but they did not appear to notice it – a little commotion in the immediate

vicinity, that was all. The whales were around us all day, and we heard them blowing during most of the night: but in the morning none were in sight. We managed to save about one hundred barrels of oil by using everything that would hold a few gallons, and starting some fifty barrels of water, which compelled us to stop at St. Helena to refill. There is no harbour at St. Helena, and the surf roars on the beach all round the island; but there is good anchorage on the north side directly in front of the town, which lies in a valley commencing at the water, and gradually ascending to the top, which is several hundred feet high. It does not exceed a half mile in width, and at the shore is enclosed by a precipitous bluff on each side, both bluffs strongly fortified; and in fact there seemed a gun on every spot where there was room which could be reached. Near the head of the valley is the famous Longwood, the residence of Napoleon Bonaparte, when he was a prisoner (in exile) after the Battle of Waterloo, and where he died. There being no harbour where ships might lay at wharfs, all cargo must be landed from lighters. This is effected by means of a moderately long mole (breakwater) which runs not quite parallel to the shore, and reaches deep water some two hundred feet from the beach, forming a canal where small boats may enter and land in safety: the lighters lying at mooring buoys, their cargoes being swung into the mole by means of large derricks. As this island could never be used as a naval station, unless a harbor was first built by means of breakwaters cut on the anchorage – the same as the harbor of Cherbourg, France, was built – the only use to which it seems likely ever to be put is as a sanitarium – and at that time there were two regiments stationed there for that purpose.

We lay at St. Helena four days – as I remember – filled our water casks, got a small amount of fresh food, and then left on our passage, straight away home, where we arrived in March 1853; just eighteen months after leaving Edgartown in September 1851. This time we left the ship at Wood Hole, where we were relieved by a gang from Nantucket, who discharged the cargo into small vessels that carried it to Nantucket, after which the ship was towed to the same place to be refitted for another voyage.

In engaged for another voyage in the same position of second mate, the owners not deeming it prudent to advance so young a man to the position of second in command with the possibility of some accident leaving the ship in his charge, with the responsibilities which a shipmaster, voyaging in the Pacific, was compelled to assume in those days. The following month, April 19th, 1853, your mother and myself were married. The ceremony being performed by Ferdinand G. Kelley, Justice of the Peace, at his home in Centerville: and after spending a part of the summer with my parents, in Cornwall, we returned to this place, which has been our home ever since, now fifty-two years the coming April. It was decided that your mother should live with her parents while I was gone, supposedly for three years. We sailed from Edgartown, where the ship's fittings were put on board, this time early in the fall. Your Uncle Horace master, and a William Bunker mate, Charles C. Holmes third mate again, and your Uncle Bethuel G. Handy as one of the boat steerers. We took the route by way of Cape of Good Hope, and the south side of New Holland (Australia) touched at the Western Islands (Azores) and the Cape de Verde, lay off one day at St. Paul's to catch a quantity of fish, took two wright whales off New Holland, and made our spring port at Manga Nui, New Zealand, probably in February or March 1854, where we remained the usual length of time, filled water, got a stack of potatoes and onions, fed the men on fresh beef, and gave them the usual three days' liberty ashore, and with only the usual amount of trouble – the result of old Flavius' strong whiskey, or whatever strong drink it was he kept. One incident connected with old

Flavius' bad whisky may amuse you. Among the crew were two New York Irishmen, Donely and Scanlan by name: both hard drinkers, and Scanlan something of a pugilist, who prided himself on his ability to take care of himself on any and all occasions. Both were in the mate's watch, and consequently were on shore leave together. Of course when the mate's watch were on liberty, and the second mate had charge of the ship, and it was my business to see that all liberty men were aboard before dark. One day, the boat steerers brought all on board except Donely and Scanlan, and reported that both were in Flavius' establishment, and wouldn't come aboard until they were good and ready. So there was one of two alternatives: either I must bring them on board, as the guard would scoop them into the Culahouse in the early evening, and the magistrate would fine each from five to fifteen dollars – the sum dependant on the amount of trouble they had given the guard. Then there was the chance that if I failed to bring them aboard the crew might come to the conclusion that it was from fear of Scanlan's fighting powers, and that wouldn't do at all. So ashore I went, left my two men with the boat, and walked some three hundred yards up the slope to old Flavius'. Now there was a general understanding that the hardened old sinners (some in every crew) would mob any office who attempted to take any man out of Flavius' establishment against the man's will: and I believe it had been done a few times. So I was not at all sure as to my reception: but I went in. There sat my two men among some dozen others belonging to the half dozen other ships then in the harbor. The first thing I noticed was that old Flavius looked frightened. Then he closed the port through which he passed the liquor to his guests, thus shutting himself out from the guests' room, safe from disturbance that might take place. However I had no trouble. There was some black looks, and one fellow got on his feet, but sat down again immediately. My men hesitated a moment, then seeing no movement made by the others quietly walked out, and down to the boat. It was when we got to the ship that the fuss took place. Neither were in a condition to climb up the ship's side, so I went to the open gangway, called for a rope which I put under Donely's arms, and the men hauled him on board. Scanlan showed fight, said he wasn't going to be hauled aboard by a rope, so I was obliged to handle him somewhat rough. While he was being hauled up Donely plunged headfirst overboard again: so he had to be hauled into the boat, and the process repeated. While I was roping Donely, Scanlan came to the gangway, and with a "There you go you old devil" tumbled the mate headfirst out of the gangway – a fall of about eight feet – Had the old mate reached the boat head-first it might have hurt him severely. As it was he fetched up on my back – or rather hips – rolled over, and landed on his feet, and was not hurt at all. But Oh, wasn't he scared. All he could say was "My Got! He pitched me overboard!" By that time I'd had enough of drunken men for one day, so I followed Donely up the side quick, and had Scanlan's hands and feet in irons and him in the ship's run in a very few minutes. In the meantime the other men had got Donely below, and all was quiet for the night, and before the captain came aboard. It was at Manga Nui that I learned something of the capabilities of the Australian Boomerang when in the hands of a native Australian. One was employed by Captain Butler to assist in slaughtering hares, and he was always ready to show his skill for a piece of tobacco. The implement is made of hard wood, and is shaped much like a common pickaxe – not quite so much curve – with both ends flattened, and is about three feet long: and the wonder of it! That native, common savage, would place himself about seventy-five feet from a small building, and throw that boomerang at an angle of about some twenty degrees, and with a few degrees of elevation to overcome gravitation, and the thing would go squirming through the air, curve round that building, and reach the ground within a few feet of where the man stood. He would also throw it into the air, up, and it would curve over backwards, reaching the ground near his feet. He would also throw it straight away with a reasonable certainty of hitting a mark the size of a man: and I was told that he was no more

expert than the average Australian native (not the New Zealander: they knew nothing about the boomerang.)

We finished our stay at Manga Nui, and then left straight away for the Ochotsk Sea, passed between the Society and the Fiji groups, most of the Carolinas, and the Mulgranes, and so on north towards the ice, snows and the summer whaling ground.

One whaling voyage differs little from another, except in occasional incidents. We entered the Ochotsk Sea at the usual time year (April), had the usual experiences with the spring gales, floating ice bergs, snow storms, and later in the season fogs: but the whaling was very different from what it had been two years before. Then whales were plenty. They had been disturbed but little, and were easily captured. But during the year 1853 there had been not far from three hundred ships in the sea, and allowing them twenty whales each – not a large average – there had been, at least, six thousand killed: and as whales certainly do not breed more than once a year – and seldom have more than one calf at a birth (I never saw more than two, or perhaps three, pair of twins in company with a cow), it is easy to understand what havoc had been done. Added to this, the fact that the whales had become shy and difficult of approach, it is easy to understand why we left the sea in September with only half a cargo, and why it was necessary to continue the voyage another year in order to complete it. We left the Ochotsk Sea during the month of September, having met with no incident worth recording, made the four thousand mile passage to the Sandwich Islands without accident, and reached the Port of Hilo, Island of Hawaii (formerly Owyhe) about the first of November, 1854. There we received our first letters from home, fourteen months after leaving home, and the news of your (Millie's) birth on the twenty-first of the previous March.

The harbor of Hilo furnishes safe anchorage for from fifteen or twenty ships the size of whale ships: but it would need extensive protective works to make it safe for ships to live at wharves. The ocean swell created by the north east trade winds heaves round the projecting reef, and on to the beach in front of the town, so that it is at times unsafe to land boats. At those times we were obliged to land in a small lagoon at the head of the harbor, and some two miles from the town.

It was at this time that I witnessed the eruption of a volcano on Mauna Loa, said to be the seventh or ninth in size in the world – and a splendid sight it was, and one which I can find no language to describe except in very general terms. The eruption was not from the mouth of the old crater, that is from the top of the ridge (for Mauna Loa is not a cone) and is said by those who had made measurements to be one and a quarter mile in diameter, but the one I saw broke out from the side of the mountain, some distance from the top, and was a deep rent a half mile in length, out of which the hot lava poured in a continuous stream, which flowed in nearly a direct line toward the town and harbor. The people were almost sure that it would destroy both: but it proved otherwise. The edge nearest the town (the stream at that point was about one and one-quarter miles wide) passed about two miles back, doing no damage to either, and continued some seven miles further, where it reached the ocean at a point called East

Cape, and plunged off from the bluff some two or four hundred feet directly into the ocean: and when it had stopped flowing, it had extended East Cape some hundred feet into the ocean. This lava stream was very interesting, the crust cooled the whole length, forming a tunnel through which the molten mass flowed, and in a short time became hard enough to walk over, and through the numberless cracks and holes one could see the liquid mass surging on towards the sea: and it was a common practice for people to dip an iron spoon full of the liquid, and allow it to cool in the spoon as a souvenir of their visit.

The ancient crater from which the eruptions usually came is situated on the top of the mountain, which at that point is a long ridge, with the trade winds blowing directly across it: and after an eruption quantities of lava are found in the form of finely spun glass (or what resembles spun glass), evidently blown into that form by the wind. Mr. Coan, the missionary located at Hilo showed me a number of tufts, some nearly black – and running through the different shades to silvery white, and in texture ranging from fine human hair to that of a horse. The natives call it Pele hair. Pele being, in their ancient mythology, the goddess of the volcano. It seems strange when we remember that the volcano which recently destroyed St. Pierre, Martinique was also called Pele, and it would be interesting to know whether the natives of the Sandwich Islands and the Caribs of the West Indies had a common origin, a common language, and a common mythology.

We finished our business at Hilo, then went to the leese of the island to a place called Taai, for a stock of potatoes. There is anchorage at Taai, but no harbor, ships must get away whenever the wind shifts to the southwest, which it frequently does during the winter season.

We stopped there one night, then proceeded to Honolulu, lay off twenty four hours while the captain went ashore to finish his business, and mail our last batch of letters home. Then away again, down through the many islands of the Polynesian groups, touching at both Ocean and Pleasant Islands, making our spring port at Ascension, four years after we had been at the same, when your Uncle Seth was in command of the ship. Quite a number of changes had occurred among the inhabitants during the four years. The reigning chief was still alive, but we saw nothing of him. Nassopee (the war chief) had reached a higher grade, and no longer lived near the harbor. One of the young men that the big chief had left onboard as a guard (his English name was Billy Barlow) was now war chief in place of Nassopee; and that splendid young fellow, the leprosy had got in its work on him, and his leg was eaten away to a pointed stump half way between the ankle and knee. The toes and part of the other foot was gone, and also some of the fingers of one hand. Still he was the same jolly, good-natured fellow, making no complaint, only once he showed signs of feeling. It appeared that there were prospects of a war with a neighboring tribe: and in alluding to it he looked at his helpless hand and feet, and said "I can't go." Then his voice broke: but he recovered himself in a minute. It was fate, that was all. Of course conversation was limited to signs, and his few words of English.

We filled water, got wood, laid in a stock of fruits, then left and proceeded on our way to the Ochotsk Sea again, dropped anchor, and spent two days in the harbor of Guam, then belonging to Spain, and used as a convict island, now a possession of the United States – very much to the disadvantage of the

natives, I am sure. Here near the harbor is – or was fifty years ago – one of those ancient works which are found in so many of the Pacific Islands, of which the present race of natives neither know who built them, or for what purpose they were built. It consists of an avenue some one hundred feet wide, and several hundred feet long, bordered on each side by a number of concrete pillars, made of some light gray material, very durable, some twelve meters in diameter and some twelve feet high. They were assembled in groups of four on a concrete base some six feet apart, the four forming a square. On top was bowl made of the same material, uniting the four pillars, and forming a capital of not less than ten feet in diameter, shaped like a saucer, but deeper. The groups were some fifty to seventy-five feet apart. Some were standing erect, and were in good condition. Others had toppled over, and lay in a broken mass, partially buried in the soil. As my memory serves me there were about thirty groups. The Spanish priest who looked after the spiritual welfare of the convicts told me that no one knew who built them, or for what purpose they were built: and that the natives had no tradition concerning them. Their origin is lost in the dim and misty past.

We left Guam after a forty-eight hour stay, and entered the Ochotsk Sea in due time. Nothing unusual occurred worthy of note during the season. We took enough oil to make a fair cargo, but not enough to fill the ship, then left the sea during September, and made our fall port at Hilo, remained the usual three weeks. This time we had a few cases of scurvy, two bad ones, whom we were compelled to carry ashore on stretchers: but they got over it, and all joined the ship again before sailing. We went to Taai and got a stock of potatoes, then sailed on our cruise, intending to use up some four months looking for whales, then stop at Manga Nui, as our last port before reaching home. It was while on this cruise that I had my premium tussle with a whale. We were off the north coast of New Zealand, and at daylight we were in the midst of a school of sperm whales. They proved to be a school of young males. Sixty barrel bulls – whalemen call them – such as the old bulls, who will tolerate no interlopers in their harem, had driven out of the herd: and being young, active, and full of fight are dangerous fellows to deal with. It was blowing half a gale, and the sea was so rough that it was a question as to whether it was safe to lower the boats. But we were after oil, and so decided to try for it. I struck, or rather your Uncle Bethuel, who steered my boat, struck a whale in a few minutes after we were clear of the ship, getting in one iron only. There is always two irons (Harpoons) ready, and the boat-steerer (harpooner) is expected to strike the whale with both; but, as in this case, is not always able to do so. The first iron is attached to the end of the line, the other to one end of a short warp, the other end having a hawline in it through which the main line passes and is only of use if the first iron pulls out of the whale. In striking, the boat got half full of water, and I dropped off a hundred fathoms in order to bail out the water, secure the sail, and get ready for the fight, which from the fact that the whale instead of running remained in the same place, was standing on his tail showing his head and part of his body out of water, pirouetting round and so bringing his eye to bear in all directions, making for his enemy. I was sure I had on my hands. We hauled up to within ten fathoms – the usual distance – got the second iron into the crotch, then took the oars ready for action: and just at that time the fellow got his eye on the boat. He did not hesitate a second but made his rush at once. Had the sea been smooth I might have dodged him, and perhaps killed him as he passed, but it was too rough for that, and he came quick, jaw dropped, head above water, at an angle of forty degrees, and over the boat he came. All I could do was to drive the second iron and the lance deep into his ugly head, for I didn't want those sharp things in the water with us. He snapped his jaws together, cutting the boat into two pieces, rolled over on one side, smashing one half with his head, and

threw the other half in the air with his jaw, making kindling wood of both. The first thing I discovered was that my feet were entangled in the line, or perhaps the lance warp, and that if he started to either run or sound it would be the last of me. You may be sure I doubled myself up, and with my hands cleared the line from my feet quick. Then I looked around for my men, and could see only three, Bethuel and the after oarsman (Martin) were not in sight. I gave an oar to each of the three men, and directed them to swim off to the mate's boat which was lying five hundred yards distant: all the time the whale was thrashing about striking with his flukes snapping his jaws, sometimes underwater for a few seconds. After seeing the three men started towards the mate's boat I looked again for Bethuel and Martin, and I saw Martin clinging to a piece of the boat's bow still being enough to hang him up, and Bethuel (hardly able to keep afloat) with his feet within a few inches of the whale's nose. I called him to swim off at right angles to the whale, but he did not seem to understand. So I looked around for another oar, and found two which I put under his arms. This gave him confidence, and he started after the other three men. Then I looked to see how Martin was faring. (The whale had settled under water, and it was more fearful) and found that he had climbed onto the piece of boat, and with a piece of wreckage was paddling off to leeward, submerged to the waist, but still making some headway. I learned afterwards that when the men left the boat Martin (Who could not swim or thought he couldn't) had clinched Bethuel, and they had gone down together, and that Bethuel had a hard struggle to break away from him, which he finally did by getting his knees against Martin's breast and then straightening out. Then both came to the surface. Martin found that he could swim, and reached that piece of boat. Bethuel so exhausted that he could hardly keep afloat until I gave him the oars. The men being safe, it was time for me to look out for myself. Just then I heard the whale blow close behind me, and he was so near that when I started to swim with the first stroke, the sole of my foot came in contact with the edge of his flukes. I naturally looked behind me, and there was that tail ten feet in the air, and apparently right on head, and it came down like a flash, and struck the water with a noise as a clap of thunder, and the spray and foam completely buried me. I overtook Bethuel and Martin, and kept with them until we reached the boat, all pretty well exhausted and all pretty sick from the effects of the saltwater we had in our stomachs. Poor Mr. Bunker, he was a timid sort of man, and the first words I heard him say were: "My God, Mr. Chatfield, I didn't dare come any nearer. It would not do to get two boats stove and both crews drowned." Which was true enough. We went to the ship, which was a short distance off, and after talking it over concluded it was too rough to risk any more boats. So we ran down with the ship, and tried to kill the whale from the bows: but he settled and let the ship go over him, and in a short time he started off to windward, and we soon lost sight of him for good and all.

We made port at Manga Nui, got water sufficient to last us home, and a small stock of vegetables, and then left bound for Cape Horn, and home. We had taken no oil during the cruise, and had no great expectations of taking any on the passage. The home run was made in fair time: and nothing worthy of notice occurred during the passage. We anchored at Edgartown sometime in June 1856. Uncle Horace and myself left for home as soon as we anchored, the rest remaining aboard until the ship reached the bar at Nantucket, where her cargo was taken out, and the ship towed in to refit for another voyage: and Millie, dear, you were twenty-seven months old when I first saw you.

Soon after reaching home I was, on the recommendation of Uncle Horace and Uncle Seth, offered the command of the ship for another voyage: and after spending a part of the summer with my parents, in Cornwall, sailed in the following September. My youngest brother Norman, then a lad of fourteen, going with me. I took the route by way of the Cape of Good Hope, and the south side of New Holland, making my first port at Manga Nui. On the way out I took the largest sperm whale I ever saw: a grey-headed old bull who had evidently been driven out of some herd by a younger and more vigorous rival. His teeth were worn down, and a portion of them were in elevated condition. Evidently he had made a fight for continued supremacy, for his jaw was twisted out of shape, and there were a number of scars, not long healed, about his old head. He made no trouble when struck, or on being killed. Perhaps he was tired of life, who knows? He made one hundred and nine barrels of oil. It was said that the largest sperm whale taken by a Nantucket ship made one hundred and forty barrels. It is a good one that makes eighty or ninety barrels. I spent the usual three weeks at Manga Nui, gave the men liberty, got water and vegetables, and then sailed direct for the Ochotsk Sea, which we entered at the usual time (April). The winter had evidently been a severe one, for the ice floes were exceptionally heavy, and very much more large in extent: and the snows were deeper on the shore. The ship got caught in the pack and lay several days with no water in sight. There was nothing to do but furl all the sails, and wait for the pack to separate, which we did. When the pack stacked up I worked the ship out of it and round it to the north shore of the sea, where in company with two or three other ships I found some open water and a few whales, two of which I got. In getting the first one I had an experience worth telling. There was plenty of ice about, single cakes, and packs of from one to twenty acres in size, with an equal area of open water. All four boats were down. I myself in one of them and the mate – I think it was – struck a whale. As usual the whale made for the pack. The third mate fastened to him before he reached it, and the inexperienced fellow kept his line tight, ran his boat against the ice, and damaged it so badly that he was barely able to keep afloat until he reached the ship. The whale ran into the middle of the pack, and then lay still in an open hole a few square rods in extent. I told the mate to hold on to his end of the line, while I traveled over the ice with a view of killing the whale where he lay. At first I took the hand gun, forty pound in weight: but I quickly gave that up, for I found it necessary to jump from one cake to another, and if I should happen to slip between them that forty pound gun would carry me to the bottom without fail. So I put the gun back into the boat, took my hand lance, and worked my way across the ice to where the whale still lay. I could not reach him: but a small loose cake, big enough to bear me, lay within reach. I was bound to make sure of killing him: so I got on that small cake of ice, pushed it close to him, and without letting the lance leave my hand, set it deep into his vitals. Of course the whale had his body up, and threw his tail into the air, and he sent that cake of ice up edgewise: but, fortunately, the side on which I was, tipped towards the pack, and so a moderate jump landed me.

on firm ice. Then the whale dove and came up to windward of the pack, and spouted thick blood. Then I knew that the whale would be dead in a short time: and I went back to the boat, told the mate, William G. Folger, to cut his line: and with the second mate Mr. Holmes, to work round the pack, secure the whale, while I would go to the ship, work her up through the ice and pick them up. It was thickening fast, and spitting snow when I reached the ship, and the boats were more than a mile away: and what with the tacking to windward, and the running off to avoid the floes more than three miles. I got all sail on, went to the masthead with my glasses, and managed to avoid getting the ship jammed in the ice, and also to keep run of the boats. But it was not easy. The snow was increasing all the time, and the wind was increasing too. But I reached them just before dark, and by that time the snow storm was so thick one couldn't see a thousand yards: and so we were glad enough when the whale was fast

alongside and the boats on the cranes, for by that time it was blowing half a gale. It was a blinding snow storm, and had I been fifteen minutes later I should not have found the boats at all: and they would surely have perished if I hadn't, for the storm continued most of the next day, and it was freezing. It was a close shave for those twelve men: but that is one of the risks of Artic whaling. The ice fields were closing up fast and the ship entirely safe for the ice field was so large, and would soon be so compact that no swell could rise, and the ship could not move. So I set a quarter watch after furling all sail, and securing the helm. The rest went below, got supper, then turned in for the night, tired, but well satisfied with our day's work.

The ice field being unusually heavy and much more extensive, continued to hamper us much longer than usual: but as it continued to work to the southward we found some clear water on the north shore: but the havoc which the large fleets had made in the last five years had reduced the number of whales to such an extent that few were to be found, where in former years we had found them in plenty, and they had become very shy and hard to approach. However, I got one more, making three, by sometime in June; and nothing of note occurred during the remainder of the season: and by the middle of September I had taken nine hundred barrels of oil, and fifteen thousand, five hundred pounds of excellent bone, the bone alone which I shipped home that fall bringing nearly sixteen thousand dollars. As it was then time to leave the sea I filled water, got a stock of wood, and sailed for the Sandwich Islands, making port at Hilo once more. Here I discharged the third mate, Donely. Both he and Scanlan – the two we had trouble with at Manga Nui the voyage before were with me again. They were good men when out of the reach of liquor, but troublesome when they could get it. Both had been drunk and troublesome when we were at Manga Nui in the spring. Donely being an officer, and consequently having more opportunity, was drunk all the time we were in port: so crazy drunk a part of the time that I was obliged to confine him, and he had so disgusted the officers, and got the illwill of the crew that it was best to get rid of him. I shipped a Mr John Wells in his place, who was with me the rest of the voyage. I gave the men their three days' liberty, got a six months' stock of water, then went to Lahaina, where I found the ship Abraham H. Howland bound home, and shipped the bone by her. I should have gone on my cruise from Lahaina, but I had broken the main curting of my windlass gear while in the Ochotsk, and while I had it fixed temporarily it would have been giving out continually, and I really needed a new curting to replace it, for a good windlass is a prime necessity in cutting whales. So I went to Honolulu, left the ship in the offing and went ashore to see what I could get, but could not find what I wanted: so I couldn't see any other way but to go to San Francisco, leave the ship off the port in charge of a pilot, go ashore, get myself a new curting made, then return to the ship and put it in place myself, which I did. While I was ashore Captain Frank Folger, formerly of Nantucket, but then a member of a firm of ship merchants, tried to persuade me to bring the ship in and market the cargo at that place. As it turned out, it would have been to the advantage of the voyage to have done so, but the financial depression of 1857 had so reduced prices that it looked otherwise to me, and then I should have utterly demoralized my ship's company. Every ship (whale ship) that had made port at San Francisco up to that time had ruined the voyage. So I declined, got my curtings, went back to the ship, then cruised down the coast and off Cape San Lucas until it was time to make our spring port, which I did again at Hilo.

We remained at Hilo some three weeks, gave the men their three days' liberty, filled water, and then proceeded to Taai for the usual stock of potatoes. Old Mauna Loa was in action again, but this time the lava flowed from a seam on the opposite side of the mountain, and the lava reached the ocean some ten miles south of Taai, and about half way between that place and the harbor of Karakakoa, famous as the place where Captain Cook, the explorer, lost his life. The histories of that voyage say that he (Capt. Cook) was murdered: but a grizzled old native, still intelligent, and a man of consequence among his own people, told me a different story. From his point of view it was an execution for cause, which I can well believe. I will give his story as I understood it, and I feel that I understood it correctly.

“There was an ancient tradition to the effect that in the distant past a venerated old chief had sailed from the harbor of Karakakoa, telling his people that he would return after many ages in a canoe so big that trees would grow out of it upon which he would spread his sails, and that he would come for their good.” So, when Capt. Cook anchored, the natives – sure that their traditional old chief had returned – were jubilant, and prepared to receive him with great joy. But Captain Cook made the usual mistake of men who hold themselves superior to their fellowmen of other races. He did not trust the men he was dealing with, but left orders with his lieutenant not to allow any natives to come alongside the ship while he was ashore. But the natives, knowing nothing of these orders did launch their canoes, and put off to the ship in considerable numbers: and not understanding the orders to keep at a distance from the ships, some of them pressed alongside. Then the ships fired upon them, sinking some of the canoes and killing a number of their occupants. This act changed conditions entirely. Joy and gladness were changed to hate and suspicion. The canoes retreated to the shore, and the natives that were ashore surrounded Captain Cook and his companions, and after two or three hours excited talk (I am sure it was in their eyes a trial) their chiefs ordered him to be executed: but they did not massacre his companions. On the contrary, both history and native tradition say they were allowed to return to the ships, which soon left the bay, and very much to the natives' relief, I am sure.”

We got our stock of potatoes, then proceeded to Honolulu, where leaving the ship in the offing I went ashore, mailed letters home, communicated with the owners of the ship, and received a letter from them directing me to take the ship to San Francisco the following fall: and there, with the advice of the firm of Moore and Folger to market the cargo, refit the ship for another year's cruise, which I did. We proceeded direct from Honolulu, entered the sea of Ochotsk at the usual time (April): found the ice fields wide in extent and very heavy, and whales very scarce and shy. It was not until June that I took the first one. In the meantime we had worked round east of the larger packs to the north shore, and then westward into Tausk Bay: and here several incidents occurred which may interest you. Tausk Bay (if the name is spelled right) is formed by a bend in the main land some twenty miles or more long, and some ten miles deep, with several moderately large islands lying across the mouth, with a depth of water averaging fifteen fathoms, but with the exception of a few spots shoaling gradually to the beach. The largest island (called by the whalemens Bowhead Island) perhaps is two miles long. The inside shore consists of a smooth gravel beach in the form of a crescent, backed by a cliff some twenty feet high, and has deep water close to the shore. I describe this island particularly, because it was in connection with it I observed the tremendous power of floe ice when effected by the wind or current. We had ploughed our way through heavy packs some three to five miles, hoping to find the bay free of ice, and also to find

whales. Instead we found much ice not packed but in floes ranging from single small cakes to small packs an acre or two in extent, with open water all through between them, and no whales. There were about a dozen ships in company, the ship Phenix, your Uncle Bethuel in command, one of them. The ice in the bay soon began packing, and in a day or two we were all immovably jammed. I was about one mile from the crescent-shaped beach of Bowhead Island, jammed so solid that cakes a foot thick would split and slide up on the larger and heavier ones, the pressure was in towards this crescent-shaped beach, and the ice slid up on the beach until the cliff stopped it, and formed an inclined plane on which more would continue to slide until it reached the top, then over into the woods, leveling the trees, some over a foot in diameter: and that continued for, perhaps, two days until the pressure ceased, and the crushing noise could be heard a long distance. Just what causes these ice rips I am not prepared to say. Wind, at a distance, may have something to do with it: but I think that undercurrents acting on the deeper drought floes is more likely. The pack slacked up within a week, and lanes of open water and open packs formed, but a fresh breeze set in directly towards the land. Then most of the ships anchored, and got a pummeling in consequence, lost their copper sheathing from the bows, and one – the Two Brothers of Mattapoisett – had a hole stove on the bluff of her bow. I had an experience of anchoring among drifting ice once and had no desire to have it again if I could avoid it. So I kept underway until I discovered a large cake, perhaps an acre in extent, and in parts six feet high, drifting into the light where I knew the water shoaled gradually to the beach. Then I dropped the ship up against it: not windward but quartering: and sent the men with the kedge anchor and hooks, and with hawsers secured the ship to this big cake. The with head sails taken in and after sails aback twisted the cake around and brought the ship directly under the lee in a perfectly safe position, the big cake preventing the smaller ones from reaching us. Mr Folger (mate) was frightened. He thought the ship would ground, and the ice would crush her. But I told him that ice five feet above water was thirty feet below the surface, and would ground before the ship would. In some conditions the ship “Two Brothers” would have been lost beyond question: but the captain was a resourceful fellow, and not easily scared – and the ship was what seamen called tender, easily heeled over – The first thing he did was to get a small sail over the hole, which checked the inflow, then hove up his anchor, and got the ship alongside a big cake of ice, punctured holes in it, secured his cutting tackles to it, hove them taut, broke out cargo from the injured side, and pressed it to the opposite quarter: and so with the help of the water (she was half full by this time) got the hole well above the surface, replaced the broken plank, caulked, sheathed and coppered it, and after pumping the ship out and restoring the cargo, she was as good as new. You must keep in mind that the sea is always smooth in these extensive ice fields, else such a thing as that could not be done). The big cake ice that I was fast to did not ground. The wind moderated: then I cast off and went into a small snug harbor near by, and lay there, in company ship for a week or more. By that time the ice had drifted out of the bay, and we were troubled with it no more that year. I got a whale from time to time, and at the end of the season had another nine hundred barrels, making eighteen hundred since leaving home, which was considerable above the average catch of the fleet, although some ships got much more. I think it will interest you to hear about the taking of the last whale that season. It was the middle of September, and time to be getting out of the sea. I had been into a good harbor known as Horse Shoe Bay, filled water, and got a good stock of wood, bent good sails and had new braces for the long, rough passage across the north Pacific. On leaving the harbor, and just outside, but not clear of the height in which the harbor lay, I fell in with a small number of large whales. The wind was moderate, but an easterly blow was coming. I lowered two boats for them. One of the boats struck in a short time. The whale ran inshore which at that place was a sandy beach, backed by an abrupt cliff against which the

surf beat at high tide, or during a blow, with no possibility of a landing for some ten miles each way, and the wind was blowing on ashore and increasing all the time. There was nothing to do but to follow the boats, for I must pick them up or lose them altogether. They killed the whale when within a mile of the end. He sunk in twenty fathoms. I made signal to cut the whale and get aboard quick: but by that time it had become so rough that the boats could not pull to the ship, so I ran down to leeward of them, luffed to head of shore, dropped the topsails on the cap, and picked up the boats: then sent all hands aloft, double reefed the topsails, set the courses, and put the old ship to her mettle, getting an offing: and a hard time she had of it. We were heading about four points of the land, plunging to the knight head every sea, and probably making at least two points leeway and it dark as pitch and a blinding snow storm. Mr Folger had a streak of timidity in his composition, and was evidently frightened. He came to me and said "For God's sake, Captain, do shorten that sail, you'll tear the masts out." I asked him how far off shore we were, and if he thought we were gaining. He said perhaps eight miles, and probably we were holding our own. I asked him how deep the snow was, and how far it was to the nearest settlement, and he said perhaps two feet, and the settlement forty miles. Then I asked him if he thought any one of us would like to reach the settlement if the ship went ashore, and he admitted that he did not believe any one of us would. Then I told him that the sails must stand until the masts went, as we should be no worse off no matter which way we went ashore, but that I had no intention of letting the ship go ashore if I could help it. About one or two o'clock it suddenly dropped to a dead calm. Then I took in the courses, knowing that in a short time it would come out of the northwest like a cannon shot, which it did within half an hour: and it blew the snow out to sea in a very few minutes, and the short, sharp seas went down with it, leaving the remainder of the night beautifully clear, and the tremendously high mountains seemed to be ready to fall bodily upon the ship. Now, as the ship was safe, the next thing was to try and save the whale. So I put the ship on the back track, told the mate to keep her on her course, while I would lie down a couple of hours when he would call me. He didn't wait a couple hours. On the contrary, in less than a half hour he was at my cabin door, saying: "Captain, if you're going to keep the ship on this course I want you to come on deck, for it looks as if the ship would list the beach every minute." So I did go on deck, and I did keep on that until daylight, not much before eight o'clock. When we were within two miles of the place where the whale lay sunk on the bottom. Of course the ship was running nearly parallel with the land. The wind was off shore, moderating fast, and the sea had become perfectly smooth. The two boats which I sent soon found the buoy, and without much difficulty got the whale to the surface, and we got him alongside around noon. The wind had fallen to a light breeze. I squared the yards, set all sail, and got about three miles from land before it died out altogether. In the meantime we had commenced cutting, but the tackles were wet and stiff with the cold, so it was dark when we had got the head on deck, about half the job. The wind had blown on a fresh breeze from the northeasterly point, but so far to the north that we could head directly off shore, but with all sail on the mainmast furling necessary to enable us to work the tackles, the wind being on the port side, we made slow headway: and the snow was falling fast too, though it was not such a blinding storm as it was the night. Well, what with torches and guess work we got the blubber between the decks, and everything secure at twelve o'clock, had braced round the mainyard, set the topsail, and with double reefs all round were standing off shore, and I didn't care how hard it might blow, or how thick it snowed, for I had a good ship under my feet, a good well-trained crew to take care of her, and plenty of sea room. I had made a fair season catch, and all was well.

The next morning we started the tryworks, and in due time had the oil, something over one hundred barrels, safely stowed in the hold, the whole season's catch amounting to nine hundred barrels with from fifteen to sixteen thousand pounds of first class bone. We passed between the Kurile Islands enclosing the Ochotsk Sea, and then straight away four thousand miles for our port of San Francisco, where we arrived about the middle of November.

It did not take long for the larger part of my crew to scatter. The mate, second mate and the cooper left and came home to Nantucket. Some went to the mines. I paid off a few. Others got into the clutches of the sharks, got in debt, and were finally shanghaied aboard some of the many clipper ships lying there bound to China and the Chinha Islands, the last (Guano ships). About half a dozen of the steady ones stood by the ship and continued the voyage. I docked the ship, and slowly took out the oil, marketing most of it, the firm of Moore & Folger conducting the sales. The bone and the small quantity of oil not sold I shipped to New York by the big clipper Golden Fleece, loading wheat at the same dock: after doing which I refitted for another year's cruise. As the ship had only stores for two years when we left home, and something over eighteen hundred barrels of the casks had already been filled, we needed everything in that line, as well as clothing for a new crew. Most of the men would come aboard without sufficient clothes for the northern cruise, and many minor articles, all of which must be hunted up and got onboard. I needed, or thought I needed, a sufficient number of new heavy casks for ground tier, for it was not an unusual thing for a ground tier cask to be crushed by the weight of the two tiers above it. But I could not find any suitable: So as an alternative I put sixty tons of ballast in the bottom, leaving room for only two tiers: and an excellent plan it proved for a one year's cruise, although it would not have done for a long voyage. Then I hunted up sound casks enough for twelve hundred barrels, lots of them were partially wrecked: but we would have plenty of time to put them in order before going north the following March: but it proved quite a job for me: for the cooper I shipped in place of the one who left the ship when we arrived, although a good workman, had never worked on anything but new work, whiskey and beer barrels and such like, and so knew nothing about repairs or how to make casks ready to receive hot oil. They shrink much when filled with hot oil. In consequence I was obliged to don frock and overalls and take the lead: but he, the cooper, was a good workman, and intelligent, and soon caught the idea. Then I was able to leave that part to him: and after getting the first whale, which we soon did, and he saw how the hot oil shrunk the casks, he was as good a ship's cooper as I ever saw. I shipped as mate, in place of Mr Folger, Lorenzo B. Leeke, a resident of Narragansett, Long Island, whom I found stranded: and an excellent mate he proved to be. His being stranded came about in this way. He had left home as mate of the bark W.S. Perkins of Sag Harbor. They had made one unsuccessful season in the Artic. Then the captain made port at San Francisco, sold everything saleable, chartered the bark to a company engaged in the Oregon lumber trade, and came home, leaving the whole crew to shift for themselves. I rated Mr Wells second mate, and shipped a Mr Perry in his place, made my brother Norman a boat-steerer, easily obtained a crew – mostly men who had been whaling before – and sailed after being in port some six week: and I had this unique experience, of being the first whaling captain that ever made port in San Francisco since gold was first discovered without ruining the voyage in whole or in part by doing so. Several had tried it. Some had wound up the voyage the same as the N.S. Perkins did. Other had got away with only part of a crew, and were obliged to go elsewhere for men – a costly thing at best. All had met with disaster of some sort, and most of them had been hailed into court on charges of assault on the high seas, while I had got away without any trouble with my men, and well

pointed for another cruise. I cruised down the coast looking for sperm whales, but saw none, and finally went into Margarita Bay, a considerable body of water in Lower California, a breeding place for a small whale of the Wright whale species: that is they had no teeth. They would try out about forty barrels of oil somewhat inferior to the oil of the Arctic whale. They went under the name of mucle diggers – (an inappropriate name, for they certainly did not dig for mucle, and having no teeth were obliged to swallow their food whole). The bone had no value. It was short and of a dirty white color. I got three or four of the whales, and my mate got badly hurt by one of them: the only man I ever had badly hurt during the time I spent in the whale fishing. It happened this way: He struck the whale near the entrance of the bay, and he ran out to sea where the water was rough, somehow the whale in thrashing about brought his flukes down on one side of the boat's bow, cutting it clear off from stem to keel, and at the same time striking Mr. Leeke a glancing blow from shoulder to foot, knocking the elbow partly out of joint, the knee entirely out of joint, cutting the flesh from the side of his foot, leaving the bone exposed, and bruising the whole length of his body. I saw the accident from the ship anchored a half mile away, and went to him as quickly as possible. Of course they had cut the line and let the whale go. I found him sitting in the stern, the water nearly up to his arm pits. He was perfectly cool, and under his direction the men had used their oars, and so kept the boat from turning over. I saw that his left knee was out of joint: the lower half of the leg was at an angle of forty-five degrees from the thigh. I took him under the arms, and told his after oarsman to lift that leg and pass it to my man: but both boats were rolling in the sea, and somehow between them they let it fall across the gunwale of my boat: and it was a lucky fall too, for it put the knee joint in place as neatly as a surgeon could have done it: but it hurt him, for he groaned and fainted dead away. Being in the water so long the foot had become chilled and did not bleed at all. I got him onboard and into a hot bath as quickly as possible, and kept him there for, I should think, nearly an hour. Then with four men to help, and another with his elbow bare for a model, I got the elbow joint in place. It was immovable when I commenced, but a good joint when it got well. With much rubbing and keeping the bath as hot as he could bear it, I finally got the circulation up, and the wounded foot bleeding. Then after allowing time for the blood to get full possession of the hurt, I brought the flesh which was hanging by the skin of the sole, in place, and with sticking plaster and bandages held it in place. He was pretty badly used up, and did no duty for a couple of months, but came out all right in the end and did good service in the Ochotsk the following season. Knowing that a big joint when injured was worse to care for than a broken bone, I secured both knee and elbow with bandages, with a strip of stiff leather some eight inches long bound on the inside of each, and I kept them there for not less than six weeks, only readjusting them occasionally, with the result that neither gave any trouble afterwards so far as I heard. The shoulder was badly bruised, swollen and black, although the joint was not injured, but I reduced the swelling and scattered the crushed blood within a week with the help of poultices and cloths wrung out of hot water, and changed at short intervals. The hip had evidently got the hardest blow. The clothing was torn away, leaving it bare. Much of the scarf skin was gone, and in spots the hide was broken. Still it had swollen but little, and was scarcely discolored at all. Being immersed in cold water so long must have prevented the blood from settling at that point. I kept hot cloths on it two or three days, then dressed it with simple ointment, and it came out all right. So much for rough surgery.

It was time to make our spring port, preparatory to the season north; and I had had enough of the mucle diggers. So I left Margarita Bay, and started straight away for the Sandwich Islands, two thousand miles away, with another thirty-five hundred from there to the Ochotsk Sea. We reached Hilo in due time,

filled water, and gave the men liberty. It was here that I learned that the ship Phenix (your Uncle Bethuel) and the Wave had neither of them reached port the previous fall: but another ship (I forget her name) had brought the report that all three of them were in company, inside the Shantar Islands, late in September, and that during a southeast storm both the Phenix and the Wave had anchored under Elbow Island (a good harbor in a southeasters, but exposed to a forty-mile rake in a north west gale – a thing almost certain to follow a southeaster at that season of the year) and that he had considered it safer to remain under sail in the open bay than to anchor under Elbow Island, which he did.

He also reported that the wind did shift to the northwest at midnight, bringing a blinding snowstorm, which lasted some four hours. The wind reached the dimension of a howling gale before daylight, and that he was sure that neither of these ships were able to get away or able to hold on where they were, and must both have been wrecked at Elbow Island, which proved to be the case. And this is the story of the wreck, as told to me by your Uncle Bethuel the following year, which he spent with me aboard the ship Massachusetts. He had lost one of his anchors during the summer, and so had only one to depend on: and in consequence went well into the harbor where the water was smooth. The Wave anchored farther out a half mile distant. When the wind shifted – which it did suddenly – the Wave got underway – at least he saw the gleam of her lights through the snowstorm, and knew by that time that they were heaving up the anchors: and after a seasonable time the lights disappeared, when he knew she had filled away, and that was the last he knew of her. (She was wrecked and all hands gone in less than an hour afterwards.) In the meantime, the Phenix, now stern to the island, commenced dragging the anchor, bumped over a sunken reef, which making off from a rocky point formed a small cone: but in doing so broke the rudder, both fastenings, and stuck; and so they lost it altogether: and that meant the loss of the ship, and the wintering of the crew on an uninhabited island during an Artic winter. The anchor caught onto the reef, so the ship lay very comfortably in the cone with plenty of water to float her through the next day and night. The day following they slipped the chain, let the ship go on the beach, made fast to the trees, and went to work getting out everything that would help them through the winter. Provisions, clothing, bedding, tools, sails and rope, everything that would be of use in their then situation. And it was no child's play either. The beach was steep, the bluff from twelve to twenty feet high, the rise and fall of the tide twenty feet, and the snow not less than two feet deep: and there was no certainty of their being able to hold onto the ship for any length of time. (In fact she did get away from them the third night after they beached her.) The second night one of the trees to which the hawser was made fast tore out by the roots, the ship swing round, and as the tide fell, heeled off shore. That made it necessary to cut through the bilge, tumble out cargo, and so get at the stores: and they worked until they had got all that they could find, and about all there was in the ship. During that night it came on to blow, and before morning the ship was gone, and they never saw anything more of her. The next thing was to build their camp. By good fortune they were at a place where wood was plenty, fir trees ten meters in diameter and less, tall and straight and it burns freely when green. First they built a floor one foot high, sides six feet high, fourteen feet wide, twenty feet long. A rather high peaked roof, all of logs. Then they covered the whole roof and sides with the ships sails, double on the roof, with small logs on top to keep it from blowing away. In the center of the floor they build a crib two feet high which they filled with earth for a fire place. It was six by eight feet. The chimney was built of small trees going endways well up through the roof. The bottom of the chimney was shaped like a hopper, and was two feet above the fire, the whole resting on and supported by the corners of the fireplace. As the snow deepened, which it soon did, they banked it up to the eaves of the building, and so kept themselves as warm as we are able to do here at home. The also built a smaller building in which to store their

provisions, which your Uncle kept locked. For it would never do to allow the crew (thirty-two all told) to have free access to the food. And this was the situation: They were on an uninhabited island, separated from the mainland by a strait seven miles wide: the nearest settlement (a fishing village) forty miles distant, abandoned during the winter months. It was the first of October, and no help would reach them, or anyone know anything about them before the following May, with food enough, with close economy, to last from three to four months and scurvy (that scourge of the High latitudes) sure to make its appearance in a short time: and to counteract it they dug from underneath the snow a wintergreen vine (Reindeer moss, it must have been) which they ate both raw and cooked: and an excellent remedy it proved: for they got through the winter with little or no trouble from scurvy.

Being so short of food, it was evident from the first that a portion of them must start for the settlement as soon as possible: get there if they could, or perish by the way if they could not, or all starve together on the island, as an alternative. But they could not start until the strait was frozen over, and the rushing ice would keep the tides moving for some time yet. So they employed themselves making every preparation they could think of. Long canvas boats with wooden sides, with bear skin nailed on the bottom to grip the snow, and lined with several thicknesses of blanket, mittens of the same, hoods to their overcoats, and many other things, including two tents in the form of a spread umbrella that could be folded, and two moderately large sleds to pack their extras, shovels, axes, and spare clothing and food. All this kept them busy for three weeks, when the ice ceasing to run they made their start, Bethuel taking the third mate and half the crew with him. The days are short at that season of the year in high northern latitudes, but the moon gives good light, reflected as it is by the snow, which was then some seven feet deep: and they timed their start near the full. They got safely across the straits in one day, and were glad to camp as soon as they reached the main land, for the string tide had piled the ice up and the deep snow made hard traveling, for it was so mealy that they sank below the knee at every step. They made camp by digging two holes as deep as the mealy snow would let them, spreading a piece of canvas at the bottom: then getting into the hole, and spreading their umbrella-like tent, held up by a light center pole, and allowing the snow to sift in around them (top of the tent) which if there was any wind it quickly did. Fortunately they had no storm during the journey, and the fifth day, just as night was coming, they reached the fishing village at the head of south-west bay, forty miles from their starting point, having made an average of eight miles each twenty-four hours. Two or three of the men had to be helped along the last few miles. (They did not dare to haul them on the sleds. If they had gone to sleep it would have been the last sleep.) But they had made their forty miles through seven feet of snow, and in freezing weather without the loss of a man, or even a frost bite. So much for common sense, pluck and preparation. The only one they found at the fishing village was a native Tongase who had just loaded his dog team with cured fish, and was starting for the military station fifteen miles inland. He tried to escape, being frightened, but we all had a few native words, and Bethuel used his lungs for all they were worth, calling out, and repeating the one word "Dobra" (good) which halted the native, who soon caught on to what and who they were. Then he (the native) opened one of the buildings, built a roaring fire, gave them a lot of smoked salmon, and then started for the winter settlement. You may be sure they passed a good night, for they were all safe, their journey was practically at an end, and they would soon be able to send forth fresh food their mates on the island to protect them from scurvy.

The next day the officers commanding the military post fifteen miles inland sent dog teams and took them all up to the settlement. It was a Cossack command, and the soldiers had their families, and lived in separate houses, instead of barracks. In a few days Bethuel arranged matters, and sent dog teams loaded with fresh meat to the island, and did the same twice more during the winter. So from that time they fared as well as the inhabitants, and all came through all right. Only one (the old black cook) who remained on the island had one foot frozen, and as they thawed it by the fire it was in pretty bad shape in the spring. I have written this story because I feel sure it will interest you, and I am sure it is the only record of that wreck in existence.

After finishing our business at Hilo I went to Taai for a stock of potatoes, arriving with two other ships just before sundown, went ashore and engaged them, intending to get them on board the next day: but before morning the wind shifted to the southwest, as it occasionally does during the winter season in that latitude, and when that takes place it always attains the dimensions of a moderate gale.

As Taai is no harbor, ships must get to sea when the wind is on shore. So at daylight we were all underway and standing out to sea. It blew a moderate gale, and it was twenty-four hours before we were able to return. Then we got our potatoes and left for Honolulu, lay off there one day, and then left, touching at no other place: but being rather early, going under easy sail, looking for sperm whales: passed the Ladrone Islands (Guam is one of them) sighted the Bonin Islands on our way north: but seeing no whales on the route, entered the Okhotsk at the usual time (April). We found that the ice was not nearly so heavy or the floes so extensive as the previous two seasons, consequently we were able to work around first north and then west much sooner than usual: and as Bethuel and his fate were constantly in my mind, I lost no time in getting to the Shantar Bays where he was last seen. I reached the port of Ayan (The Russian-American Fur Company's principal depot) and about one hundred miles from Elbow Island, and the same distance from the head of Southwest Bay, about the middle of May. There I interviewed the governor, only to learn that he had had no communication with the port where Bethuel left the Elbow Island (Obol Shantar).

We had reached the point at which the strong tides commenced, and the farther we went the stronger the tides would be, and the ice still extensive in the Shantar Bays, would be moving with the tide, rendering navigation difficult: and the ice being confined between the islands and the main lands there would be some danger of the ship being crowded ashore. Still, as we had seen no whales so far, and hoped to find them in the bays we (there being three or four other ships with me at the time, and more were arriving) all worked through the floes farther into Southwest Bay, and finally reached a small harbor, a rather deep gut in the main land, which whalers call Striped Bluff Harbor, and where the water being slack the ice did not accumulate: and which was about twenty-five miles below the head of the bay. Here we anchored, about six or seven ships, to lay until the ice should finally run out. Here I provisioned two boats, put them in charge of the second mate, and instructed him to creep along shore, haul the boats on the beach when threatened by the ice, but not to return to the ship until he had reached the settlement and found out what had become of Bethuel: for I was sure that if all had not perished that was the place to look for them. They found Bethuel and his men all right: but not at the

settlement. The ship Florida being unable to get to the little harbor where we were lying, drifted up the bay fast in the big floe, and then when the ebb made dropped his anchor and let the floe go out past him, in two tides, he was inside the ice altogether, with his copper and sheathing badly torn, and in sight of the settlement. It was a dangerous thing to do. For the floe in the bay was thin, not more than eight or ten feet thick, and if a northeast gale had arisen, the pressure of the big floe would have forced the ship aground, and then run all over her, wrecking all above the planksheer. Bethuel, glad to get on a ship's deck once more, went onboard the Florida: and it was there my boats found him two days after leaving the ship. It turned out that the ice had left the south shore of the bay sooner than we had been able to get to the Striped Bluff. Then Bethuel's mate had taken a shore boat in tow, and gone to the head of the bay. Consequently Bethuel and six of his men came on board in his own boat. They remained the rest of the season, and I brought them to San Francisco in the fall. Up to this time, not far from the first of June, we had seen no whales, or so few as to be called none, and it was about the middle of the month that I took the first one, some twenty miles south of Ayan. He was entirely alone, not another in sight, and he acted strangely. It was dead calm, the water as smooth as glass. Under these conditions I hadn't the least idea of getting him when I lowered two boats. In fact I had gone below, expecting to hear the boats come alongside in a short time. Instead, the boat went straight to the whale and struck him, and in half an hour he was alongside the ship dead. This was a short time before sundown. Then we noticed the water had suddenly become alive with a marine insect about the size of a small bumble bee, but looking more like a black short-legged spider. Evidently the whale had been so intent on gorging himself that he took not notice of the boat that struck him. Before morning the ship was surrounded by whales spouting in every direction. I cut the one I had alongside that evening. The next day I got two, one of which I cut. The other lay alongside. The following day I got one more, and at the end of the week I had taken what finally stowed down eight hundred barrels. Then the weather grew thick, stormy, and blew up a moderate northeast gale, and the sea got up s that we could not run the trywork. This made it necessary to seek a harbor, which I did by picking my way between the unnamed island and Felixtuf and anchoring under the lee at the place marked by an anchor. In the course of another week I had the oil safely in the ship's hold, eight hundred barrels of good oil, and some thirteen thousand pounds of first class bone. The best fortnight's work I ever did during my career as a whaler. By the time I had finished storing the oil both the marine insects and the whales had disappeared, and we saw no more during our month's stay in that vicinity. But these conditions were a wonder. No one, so far as I knew, ever saw anything like it. There must have been seventy-five, possibly a hundred ship in the Shanter Bays at that time, and all of them were capturing whales as fast as they could take care of them: and I should say that a fair estimate of the number taken would not be far from five hundred. And yet the whales would not leave as long as the food remained: and it was as plentiful at the last as when it first made its appearance. It simply disappeared as suddenly as it came.

Finding no more whales at the Shanter Bays we cruised in the open, and up the coast: took one more large whale, which made the season's catch nine hundred barrels, twenty-seven hundred barrels since leaving home. I had intended going into Horse Shoe Bay to obtain a stock of water, and make my final preparations for the long voyage across the Pacific, starting about the middle of September, the usual time: but not far from the first of September a very disagreeable incident occurred, and which might have been a very serious one, and also one that I have always felt shame that my thoughtlessness caused. Some fifty miles southwest of the Horse Shoe Bay, at the mouth of a fine salmon stream, is – or

was – a permanent Russian settlement. (Europeans, not native). Some, evidently, men of note, with a small church and a priest attached. He (the priest) spoke fairly good English. I had landed there several times, and having found that salt was a luxury with them had always saved it and given it to them whenever I conveniently could. We were off this settlement at noon, and Bethuel, myself and the second mate, went ashore simply to give them what salt I had, and to say goodbye. Inside the mouth of the river is a small bay with deep water, where we had always left the boats, walking the mile or so up to the village: and the second mate landed there this time, which Bethuel and I pulled a half mile up one of the two branches of the stream. After spending the afternoon with our Russian friends we came down to the boats intending to get onboard before night. Then we found that the tide had ebbed, that there was no water nearer than the small bay where the second mate's boat lay, and we must either carry the two boats a half mile – a thing we certainly could not do before dark – or wait for the flood tide to float them. I sent the second mate aboard with directions to Mr Leeke to lay off till morning when I would come aboard: but before morning it was blowing a stiff northeast gale and no ship in sight. I don't remember how long we were there – certainly a week – probably more than a week, anxiously watching for the ship, for the season was already late, winter would be on us soon: and although I knew Mr Leeke would not abandon us, still the possibility existed that she might have been crippled, and so he would not be able to get back: and all the while the wind was fresh from the northeast. Finally, in the early forenoon we sighted a ship coming down the coast before the wind, three miles off shore, and we sculled off to her. I forget the ship's name, but I knew the captain (Stranborough) very well, and he hoisted our boats up under his own, and some twenty miles farther to leeward we met the Massachusetts beating up, and carrying all the sail she could trying o get back. Didn't she look good! And weren't we glad to get onboard her once more! And weren't our shipmates glad to see us onboard, especially old Leeke, good old fellow that he was.

It was now well on towards the middle of September, and the wind ahead. I gave up the idea of going to Horse Shoe Bay, and squared away for Ayan, where I procured a stock of wood and water, and from there started on the four thousand mile passage to San Francisco: made the passage with no more than the usual amount of storms and gales and arrived the latter part of November, 1859. Here I docked the ship, made preparations for taking out the cargo, turned over both ship and cargo to the firm of Moore & Folger, placed Bethuel in charge with the understanding that she should be fitted out for another Year's cruise with him in command, paid off my crew, and then took passage home by the way of the Panama route, bringing my brother Norman home with me, and that ended my service in the whale fishing. I left Norman at Cornwall, and your Aunt Mary and Cousin Annie came to Cotuit with me. When I left home, and the last time I heard from home, the family lived at Little River, and when we reached the road leading to that part of the village William Jones drove past. It was the first time I ever saw him. I called his attention to that fact, but he only laughed and said he knew what he was about, that my family did not live at Little River. When he stopped at the gate (right here) it was the first time I knew that we had abandoned the old home for all time. I was not any too well pleased with the change. I liked Little River, and I felt strange up here. I had made up mind that after twelve years steadily in the same ship I would spend one year at home before I sought employment again: but everything had changed before the year was out. The election in the fall of 1860 resulted in the choice of Mr Lincoln as President, and brought the Republican party pledged to oppose the extension of slavery, into power. The secession movement had started: and the following spring (1851) the boom of the first hostile gun, in Charleston Harbor, proclaimed to the world that the war of the great rebellion was upon us. The war stopped the fitting out of whaling ships. Nearly all that were lying at home ports were bought by the

government, loaded with stone, and sunk in the channel leading into Charleston Harbor, in a vain attempt to close the port. Poor hydrographic engineering. A little common sense should have taught those responsible that the current would create a new channel, which it soon did. It being perfectly clear that there was no more employment for me as a whaling man for some years at least, I went part of that year with (mate) your Uncle Roland in the coasting schooner James Barrett. Then in August I shipped mate of the ship Mongolian (grain loaded) on a voyage to Le Havre, France, returning to New York the last of January. Soon after I applied for an appointment as acting master in the Navy, furnishing testimonials as to my fitness for the position. In due time I received a communication from the Navy Department informing me that my application had been favorably considered, and directing me to report to the commander of the Brooklyn Navy Yard for examination. The examination being satisfactory, my appointment as acting master, U.S.N. dated March 3, 1862 reached me a day or two later: where, on taking the oath of allegiance to the United States, and placing my letter of acceptance in Commandant Paulding's hands, I was attached to the receiving ship North Carolina, and directed to attend a school of gunnery, established at the yard for the benefit of volunteer officers. A fortnight later I was detached from the North Carolina, and ordered to report to Lieutenant Earle English, commanding the United States steamer Somerset, then fitting out at the yard, and ordered to join the East Gulf Squadron at Key West, Florida, for service onboard the vessel.

The Somerset was simply a Ferry boat of the size of those plying in Boston Harbor. She had been bought by the government while on the stocks, had been strengthened to enable her to support a battery, and was designed for service on the blockade, and for river work. Her battery consisted of two nine-inch smooth bore Dahlgren guns placed on pivot carriages, one on each end, and four long thirty-two pounders in broadside: a very effective fighting craft in smooth water, but next to worthless in a sea. Her crew consisted of one naval lieutenant, commanding, four acting masters, and four acting master's mates – these of the line. Her staff officers were one acting first assistant (chief), and three second assistant engineers, paymaster and surgeon, with enlisted men sufficient to number one hundred and thirty, of all ranks: and she had no spars, simply two flag-staffs.

We left the New York Navy Yard the last of March in company with the U.S.S. Fort Henry, sister to the Somerset, both bound to Key West, and kept company as far as Cape Henry, mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. There the Fort Henry's machinery went wrong. She could steam ahead, but could not reverse. So we accompanied her into Hampton Roads, where we left her, and made the remainder of the passage alone. While at Hampton Roads I visited the Little Monitor, who had just before defeated the big Merrimac. It was a wonderful performance. She (the Monitor) was armed with two eleven-inch smooth bore, Dahlgren guns, in a movable turret, while the Merrimac carried twelve hundred pound rifled guns: but the little Monitor was such a small mark that during the five hours' fight she was only hit four times, and not injured at all, while she hung to the Merrimac, pounding her railroad iron protected sides with 140 pound solid shot until a large number of her crew were disabled by mere concussion (I understood that a few shots entered the ports). The only man injured on the Merrimac was her commander, Lieutenant Worden. His station was in the pilot house with the wheelman (Acting Master Howard, though not belonging to the Monitor, had volunteered to act as pilot and wheelman during the battle), which was constructed after the manner of a four-sided roof: but there is always a weak point in

structures. In this case it was a bar of iron ten meters thick, set perpendicular above the slit, one inch-wide, through which the pilot and his commanding officer watched and maneuvered the vessel. A shot from the Merrimac struck that bar right over the spot where Worden was looking: and the bar being set perpendicular instead of at an angle, it was a square blow, and the concussion injured Worden's eyes so badly that he was never fit for service afterwards. The Merrimac retreated to Norfolk evidently crippled. During that fight she was commanded by Lieut. Catsby, Ap. Jones formerly of the U.S.N. (her captain Buchanan had been wounded by a musket ball the day before, when the Merrimac had sunk both the Congress and the Cumberland, sailing sloops of war.) It was a fortunate circumstance that the Monitor arrived in Hampton Roads the night before the battle. The Merrimac had already destroyed the Congress and the Cumberland. The Minnesota frigate was aground on the Rip Raps, and the Merrimac was coming that morning to finish her, when she was met by that "little chess box on a raft," as they called her: and that little chess box was what prevented the Merrimac from steaming up the Potomac, and having the city of Washington at her mercy, with heavens knows what results.

We left Hampton Roads after replenishing our stock of coal, and fortunately had a smooth passage, arriving at Key West in due time and without accident, and were immediately ordered to cruise off the north coast of Cuba, and to keep a sharp lookout for certain vessels that were suspected of an intention to run the blockage at New Orleans, and of which we were furnished a list. I think it was the fourth day out: the weather was a beautiful morning, wind light, sea smooth: and being Sunday the crew were dressed in white. I had charge of the deck from eight to twelve. At nine o'clock we sighted a large, square rigged steamer coming from the eastward. We were then some half way between Havana and Matanzas, and some six miles off shore. I headed the Somerset for the steamer, shaping her course so as to intercept her, and notified Capt. English: and very soon everyone was one deck, all agog for what might turn up. We passed within easy hail. We were turning the helm astarboard to fall quickly in her wake. Capt. English hailed "What ship is that?" The answer came: "The British ship Circassian." Then from our Captain: "This is the U.S. Str. Somerset. Hove too, I'll send a boat aboard of you." The answer came quick "Havn't got time." This conversation lasted say thirty seconds. Immediately the order "Beat to Quarters" was given, and the drummer was ready with his drum, and within not more than two minutes a blank cartridge (a peremptory order to hove too) loomed from gun No. 1. No notice was taken of that. Next came the order "Solid shot across her quarter point blank. Don't hit her," and a minute after the shot plunged up the water a short distance of her starboard quarter. No notice was taken of that either. Next the order came "Load pivot with five second shell: elevate seventeen hundred yards. Fire to hit." Now that order might seem inconsistent. The five second shell would explode at thirteen hundred yards: four hundred yards short, had the ship been distant seventeen hundred yards. But Captain English did not wish to injure the ships hull, but to explode the shell over her. The aim was true, and the distance well estimated: the shell cut one gang of her forerigging off just under the top, and exploded over her forecandle, scattering the pieces about her deck. Fortunately no one was hurt. Her engines stopped immediately, and she came too with helm apart, and lay until we came up to her. A boarding party consisting of Acting Master William Dennison (Executive office) and Arthur, with the Paymaster – to assist in examining her papers – and ten armed men, were sent aboard. The examination showed she had cleared from Bordeaux, France. No destination mentioned. This was sufficient to warrant her detention, and a prize cruise was detailed with Dennison as Master, Arthur as assistant, and Peterson Chief Engineer, with one assistant and fifteen armed men, with orders to keep close company

with the Somerset to Key West. But neither Peterson or his assistant had ever seen an engine of that pattern, and neither of them could start it, and the Circassian's engineering refused to do so. But Capt. English was fully equal to the situation. We took the big brute in tow, first transferring her crew, with the exception of her officers, steward and two of her engineers, to the Somerset, placing them under guard: and in that shape started for Key West: and with the help of the Gulf Stream were off Sand Key (entrance of Key West Harbor) early the next forenoon: and a novel sight it must have been to onlookers. That ferry boat, looking more like a big sea turtle than a war ship, creeping into the harbor with that big square rigged ocean steamer in tow.

With Dennison and Arthur onboard the prize I was second in command on the Somerset, and as such the active duties devolved on me and you may well believe that I kept the deck from the time we took the prize in tow until we reached Key West: and with thirty odd prisoners to guard, and a big ship to tow, there was plenty to watch out for, Commander English being fully occupied in making out his report of the capture.

During the night the guard sent me word that one of the prisoners wished to speak with me. He, the prisoner, told me that he was a boatswain of the steamer: that he thought he was entitled to quarter separate from the common sailors, and that he had some information that would be of service to us, which he would give to no one but the commanding officer. This I reported to Captain English, who after a few minutes talk with him directed me to give him the freedom of the quarter deck, but to keep him under surveillance. I afterwards learned that the information was the effect that the English captain – after he hove to – gave him a bundle of papers with instructions to secret them in some place until after the boarding party had visited the ship. Then if they decided to detain her he – the boatswain – was to destroy the papers. If she was returned he was to return to them to his captain. As everyone was under surveillance from the time the boarding party arrived he had no opportunity to destroy them, and had so concluded to reveal the place where they were hidden. The papers proved to consist of several letters of advice to the consignee, invoices, and a copy of contract between the owners and captain of the ship and the shippers, whereby the former agreed to load [unload? Ed.] the cargo at New Orleans, if possible, and failing that to land it at Mobile, Alabama. With this evidence there was no question of the steamer being lawful prize. The District court at Key West so held, and she was sent to New York and sold by the prize commission at that port. The English owners appealed, and the case finally went to the Supreme Court. The grounds of their appeal were that New Orleans – the port for which the ship was bound – was at the date of the capture in possession of the United States: and, as under international law a nation cannot blockade its own ports, the ship was not lawfully a prize: but the final decision was that New Orleans was at the time under military instead of civil law, consequently not a port of entry: and as under the circumstances the ship's destination was Mobile, that made her a bona fine blockade runner, and as such a lawful prize. This decision was reached about the time the war was ended. I asked the English captain how he came to bring his fast steamer within hail of a war ship, and such a slow-poking thing as the Somerset, and he said: Her decks were full of people dressed in white, which I took for some excursion party out from Havana: and she's the d—est looking war ship I ever saw."

Two days after we arrived at Key West, with our prize, the news came that Farragut had run past the Mississippi forts and had taken possession of New Orleans, and each of the war ships – some six, possibly eight, were ordered to fire a salute of thirty-four guns in honor of the victory. The Somerset happened to be the third to receive the order, which came from the fleet captain as he pulled past us in his gig, and was in these words: “You will fire a salute of thirty-four guns in honor of the capture of New Orleans by the West Gulf Squadron under command of Flag Officer Farragut, and you will follow the Meredeta.” We were taking in stores preparatory to another cruise. All the officers, except Dennison and myself, were away in the boats receiving them, and Captain English was also ashore: and at least half the men were with the boats. Just as the order reached us the flagship Niagara finished her salute, and the first gun boomed from the Meredeta, each firing at fifteen seconds intervals. So we had just eight and a half minutes for preparation — ample time and to spare had the men all been aboard, but short time in our then demoralized condition. Dennison gave this simple order: “Hustle Chatfield,” and hustle I did. I told off a captain and two loaders for each of the four broadside guns, directing them not to run the guns out after firing, filled the powder division with spare men, kept the remaining half dozen for emergencies, and reported all ready just as the Meredeta fired that last gun. Fifteen seconds later our first gun boomed, and we finished our salute of thirty-four guns in good shape so far as time was concerned. But the results! After the first round the guns stood at taut breeching, muzzles inside the ports. Then the saluting charge for that class of guns is four pounds but the old gunner got confused and sent up service charges of eight pounds. Consequently the concussion was very great: and with the first gun of the second round the light housework above the deck began to give way, and when the salute was finished every door was off its hinges, and scattered about the deck. Much of the partition work was also down. Every piece of crockery was smashed. The forward pilot house was swaying like a drunken man, and only kept from falling in a heap by the men holding it up until we got guy ropes and secured it: and the paymaster’s office! Everything it contained, books, stationary, broken ink bottle and spilled ink in a mingled heap on the floor. Poor Day. He was a timid little fellow just out of the Harvard Law School, and this was his first experience of life. His name was Adams, and he was a nephew of Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy. He complained bitterly that we would not stop firing when he told of the wrecking of his office, and declared he could never get his accounts straight again: but he did in time, and could laugh at the incident with the rest of us.

Soon after we had finished our salute Captain English came onboard. At first he seemed surprised at the condition of things. Then commenced to laugh, and continued to do so during his tour of inspection. The carpenter and his assistants replaced things in the course of the next twenty-four hours.

After a week’s, perhaps ten days, stay at Key West we were ordered to cruise between Tortugas and Bahia Honda, north side of Cuba, and proceeded to that station. But the sun was on its way north, and with it the trade wind belt. So instead of the smooth water we had on our former cruise we found a short choppy sea, created by the fresh northeast trades now blowing directly down the channel: and it soon became evident that a ferry boat with a heavy battery could not stay there without risk of foundering. She rolled deep, creaked and groaned badly, and flooded her decks constantly. The Meredeta spoke us, and her captain came aboard: and he agreed with Captain English that the Somerset must return to Key West, and made a joint statement to that effect. So we returned and were ordered

to Cedar Key to relieve the gun boat Tahama, which we did: and then commenced the humdrum life of a blockade – not blockading a fortified port, but lying at anchor watching for blockade runners, which never came, but would have come quickly had the ports been left unguarded for forty-eight hours. Cedar Key consists of Sea Horse Key, on which the lighthouse stood, and is about a half mile from Depot Key, head of navigation. It has a good harbor on its east side for vessels with fourteen feet draught, with a channel of ten feet to Depot Key, on which was the principal settlement. The bay is small, fifty or seventy-five acres. Opposite, a short half mile is Way Key, terminus of a branch of the Fernandina and St. Marks Railroad. Back of that Key No. 4, separated from Way Key by a wide shoal water lagoon, and reached by the railroad over trestles, and a number of small lumps of land, one of which was called Live Oak Key. The Tahama had somehow got possession of a small schooner yacht on which we put a small Howitzer, and used as a tender, occasionally sending her on a cruise up and down the coast. On one of her cruises (Healy in command) she captured the small steamer Acorn at place called Dead Man's Key, half way between Cedar Key and St. Marks. The crew set her on fire, and escaped to the shore, half a mile distant. Healy said he could have easily put the fire out but the steamer was hard aground, so he let her burn. Peters (our chief, who was with Healy) knew the steamer well: and said she was formerly owned by the Sandwich Glass Company, and used to transport glass ware from Sandwich to Boston: but that was before the Cape Cod Railroad was built. Twice or three times I was left to maintain the blockade while Capt. English went off on a cruise with the Somerset. I always had orders to take the schooner outside the harbor at nightfall, and to remain in the open until daylight. (This to avoid a possible night attack by boats). This we kept up for some weeks: and at the same time, with the boats, were reconnoitering among the keys, and while doing so discovered that there were salt works on boat Live Oak and Key No. 4. As soon as the schooner returned Capt. English took the Somerset up to Depot Key (head of navigation), and from there sent three boats in charge of Dennison, with Arthur and Peters, to destroy the salt works, while Healy landed with an armed party on Way Key, intending to cross on the trestles, and support the boat crews in case they were attacked. When they reached Key No. 4, Healy found the trestles had been burned just far enough to keep him out of rifle range of the landing at Key No. 4. So Dennison had the job all to himself, and a very poor job it turned out.

Dennison's party, consisting of twenty-three all told, destroyed the works at Live Oak Key without opposition: then started for Key No. 4, his course taking him not nearer than a half mile from where Healy was standing on the trestle, near the burned portion. In the mean time Healy saw a body of armed men, evidently a coast guard company on the brow of the slight eminence just back of the salt works, and within easy rifle range of the beach. The beach at this place is semicircular sloping up to the brow of the hill some twenty feet high, and two hundred back from the beach, back from that thick Palmetto scrub, a nice place for twenty-three men to land, with some forty or fifty concealed behind that barracks building waiting for them. Dennison pulled straight for the landing, no seeing, or misunderstanding, Healy's signals. I presume he thought Healy was just waiting to join forces with him. He landed, left three of his men to care for the boats, employed half his party half way up the hill, the rest stacked their arms preparatory to breaking up the salt works. Then the rebels rushed from behind the building and opened fire. Dennison seeing immediately that he was outnumbered, called in his skirmishers, and relined the whole party behind the salt works, a good protection: and probably he would have been able to stand off while he sent the boats (two men in each) for Healy's party. But before he had fairly got in his work another party of rebels opened fire from the dwelling house on his right, taking his men in the

flank. That was good strategy on the part of the rebels, and settled the fight. Dennison ordered a retreat en masse, and they got off bringing every man and every musket with them.

But nine of the party were hurt, two of whom had to be carried to the boats. One died of his wounds a few days afterwards. The other had to be invalided, and discharged as unfit for service some weeks after. Dennison was only a volunteer officer, just from civil life, and it was the first time he had been under fire. We thought he had done well. He himself was struck by a spent ball on the hip, which made a particularly bad bruise, and forced him to hobble around with a cane for several days.

Two days afterwards the gun boat Tahama called at the Keys. There we organized another expedition of eight boats, two of which were launches with a twelve pound howitzer in each, and about one hundred men in all, and destroyed the salt works on Key No. 4 without opposition. The rebels firing at long range as we were leaving, perhaps thirty or forty shots reaching my boat, which was the rear boat of the line, but doing no damage. This affair came off, as I remember, the last part of June, 1864.

It was during the month of July that the yellow fever made its appearance in the squadron at Key West. The news reached us by one of the smaller gunboats, which came up the coast with a staff lieutenant onboard, who signaled the fact to each of the blockading ships, and also that the local transport's trips would be discontinued for the present. We depended upon the local transport for provisions, as well as other stores. Ours were running short. Our request for a new supply had already been sent in, and we were looking for the stores on the transports next trip. We had food sufficient to last a week, in addition to several barrels of break (condemned as unfit for use). We also had a good fish net, and there was abundance of mullet in the harbor, so we would not starve for a month. But that did not suit Captain English. So he sent Dennison and another officer to Key West (Isild his name was) in the schooner for the stores that should have reached us by the local transport, and the paymaster furnished him with a copy of the requisition. Flag Officer Lardner (commodore by courtesy) was a tough old fellow, and at his wits' end with the yellow fever in the squadron: and so when Dennison appeared before him with his orders, he let himself out, swore at both Captain English for an old fool for sending, and at Dennison for a young fool for coming, to Key West while the yellow fever was raging, and ordered him (Dennison) to get onboard his schooner, and out of the harbor of Key West as soon as possible. But Dennison was no chicken: and being a volunteer instead of a regular officer did not have that intense fear of the court martial. So he told the flag officer that he had his commanding officer's written order to proceed to Key West and get the provisions, and that he certainly should not leave without them unless he had the flag officer's written order peremptorily directing him to do so. Dennison said the old fellow looked him straight in the eyes for at least a minute, then reached for the requisition, ordered it handed back, saying: "If you can find that storekeeper and get him into that warehouse to deliver those stores you will be lucky." Dennison said he told him that he'd have those stores if he had to take the storekeeper into the warehouse by the neck to deliver them. He got the stores, turning them out of the warehouse with his own men, while a clerk checked them off: and was back to Cedar Keys in a little over a week from the time he started. We now had rations for three months. How Captain English did laugh when Dennison told him of his interview with the Flag Officer, and he said: "If you had been a regular instead of a

volunteer you'd have got out of that office and out of that harbor as quick as possible without waiting for the stores or a written order either," and he added (musingly) our men would have been here on short commons.

The yellow fever was bad enough in Key West, but none of the blockading ships had it that season. The flag ship Sabine (old time sailing frigate) lost a large number of her men: as I remember somewhere in the neighborhood of a hundred.

We were relieved in Cedar Keys sometime in July, and sent to West Pass, St. George's Sound, the harbor of Appalachicola, a much more important station, to relieve the U.S.S. Fort Henry, one of the vessels maintained at that place. The reasons for keeping a strong force at West Pass were because the Appalachicola River is navigable up as far as Atlanta, Georgia: and several river steamers were known to be inservicable, and a night attack by them with infantry was feared: and it was also known that a gunboat (Chatahoocha by name) had been building, and might be finished for all we knew: and we also knew that she was commanded by that fighting fellow Catesby A. Jones, the same that commanded the Merrimac in the fight with the Monitor in Hampton Roads: and the rumor reached us that he had sworn to clear out the blockade at West Pass, and open that port to commerce: and that with his gun boat and three river steamers, protected with cotton bales and hundred riflemen on each, he could easily do it: and I am sure he would have stood a good chance to succeed.

Soon after reaching our new station Captain English was detached from the Somerset, and placed in command of the gunboat Sagamore, and Lieutenant Alexander Crossman succeeded him in command of the Somerset: and within a short time a general change had taken place. Something went wrong with Dennison, and he was invalided and discharged from the service (he recovered and rejoined the navy before the war ended). Arthur was detached, and sent I don't remember where, and Healy was put in command of the steamer Beauregard (a useless tub) with orders to take her north and put her out of commission, which he did. So of the five highest officers (good comrades everyone) who left New York in March, I – in August – was the only one left; and I was ordered to assume the duties of executive officer. I was lonesome. In their places we had Lieutenant Crossman commanding, a good officer and a gentleman: Acting Master Waugh, a surly Scotchman, jealous of everything and of everybody, and hard to manage: James Higly, good natured, but inefficient: and Acting Ensign Achley, a German, restless, and who could not keep his tongue still for the space of one minute. Surgeon Draper had also gone, and we had a right good fellow, Surgeon Cook, in his place: The one really good comrade now in the wardroom mess.

The gunboat Port Royal (George M. Morris commanding) a much more powerful fighting craft than the Somerset, had also been sent to West Pass. She was a double ender too as well as the Somerset. So we had fourteen heavy guns with which to meet Catesby A. Jones should he come down to clean out the blockade at that place: but all the guns were on uncovered decks, and the men exposed to rifle fire: and

should the river steamers with their three hundred soldiers one get within easy range – well, it wasn't a nice thing to contemplate.

It was a somewhat curious coincidence that both Lieutenant George M. Morris, Crossman and Catesby A. Jones had all been at the U.S. Naval Academy at the same time, and were well acquainted with each other. Morris and Jones were classmates, Crossman younger: and Morris was second in command of the Cumberland, and in actual command the day she was sunk by the Merrimac: while Catesby A. Jones was second in command of the Merrimac the day she sank the Cumberland, and in actual command the next day when she fought the Monitor: and here they were pitted against each other again, with the prospect of another fight before the year was ended. Captain Morris was a very restless sort of fellow, and after a time declared that he would not wait for Catesby Jones to come down the river to fight him: but, on the contrary, he would go up the river and fight Jones. What he did was to get the Port Royal hard and fast on the bar at the river's mouth: and we had a week's job lightening and heaving her off into deep water again. Then he (Morris) gave up the idea of going up, and we both lay quietly just below the mouth for a time, and finally went down the bay, and resumed our usual place at the Pass. Not long after a hurricane passed over that part of the coast lying between St. Mark's and St. Josephs: the full strength passing over both the east and west passes of St. George's Sound. Everything at West Pass was driven ashore and wrecked except the two war steamers: and we were hardly able to hold on each with three anchors out, and a full head of steam: while the sailing bark blockading East Pass was driven ashore, first on the island, forming the harbor, and after the wind shifted, blown from the island clear across the bay and grounded within a short distance of the main land. As soon as the blow was over we (Somerset) went to East Pass to see how affairs were at that place. We found that the captain of the bark finding his vessel (drawing fourteen feet) in only four feet of water, near the main land, and heeled over on her side, so that he could not use his guns, had blown her up, crossed to the island with his crew and small arms, and was waiting, knowing the we would surely come to his relief, if we were in condition to do so. We remained at East Pass some weeks, until we were relieved: and it was my job to recover the guns, and most of the shot and shell. The anchors and chains were not to be found, though I hunted the track that the bark was supposed to have taken in crossing the bay.

When our relief came we returned to West Pass, and the Port Royal was ordered to some other station. It was the last we ever saw of her. That left the Somerset alone at what was the most important station east of Pensacola – important because it was a port of entry, with fourteen feet of water to the mouth of the river – the the Chattahoochee River navigable to Atlanta, Georgia. I am sure the next three months were the most disagreeably anxious months I ever spend during my service. You will remember that we had expected the rebel gunboat Chattahoochee, aided by river steamer, with riflemen on board, would attempt to break the blockade at West Pass: and we had no reason to suppose that Catsby Ap. Jones had abandoned the project, and while we would have liked nothing better than a fight with the gunboat, single handed, we knew perfectly well that if those river steamers could get within rifle range they would force us to abandon the guns: for our whole battery was on uncovered deck. First we debated the question, wouldn't it be best to lie at the mouth of the bay: and then if the expedition hove in sight steam out into the gulf in hopes the gunboat would follow, and then fight her in the open: but that meant the abandonment of a small inlet, six miles east of West Pass, and good for vessels of eight feet draught. We decided that we musn't do that: so we finally decided on this plan. I with an armed party went up to the city and got a lot of boards and scantling, and with it built a double fence around

our hurricane (upper) deck, packing it between the boards with four inches of sand, making a breastwork, breast height – this in case the river steamers should get within rifle range (we would sink them first if we could) we would abandon the guns, take to our improvised fort, and fight it out with our small arms. Still there was the Chattahoochee. If we had not been able to dispose of her we should still be at the mercy of her heavy guns. The other part of our plan was never to lay all night in the same part of the bay, and to show no lights. Soon after dark we would move to a different part of the bay, then with steam at low pressure, but ready to be increased, also prepared to get up anchor quick, or slip if necessary, and a ten o'clock inspection, drummer in his place, and orders to the officer of the deck to beat to quarters at the first sign of anything unusual. I would, instead of removing part of my clothes, buckle on my side arms, and lie down for such sleep as I could get: and I won't even guess the number of times the roll of that drum called us to quarters during the three months we were watching for that expedition to come out of the river.

It turned out in the end that all our trouble and anxiety went for nothing: and it came about in this way: When Captain Harris attempted to go up the river with the Port Royal, and while he was aground on the bar, the Confederates drove a double row of piles from each side in a narrow part some fifteen miles above Appalachicola, filled the spaced between with logs, leaving the open wide enough for the steamers and also the gunboat Chattahoochee to squeeze through: but not wide enough for the Port Royal. Then the hurricane came, especially strong in the river, the water rising several feet above normal, that brought down a mass of trees and other debris, which not only filled the gap they had left, but created a shoal a good distance above the piling, turned the water out upon the marshes, creating a broad shoal lake, and so rendering the river unnavigable at that point. The Chattahoochee broke from her moorings, and when the hurricane had passed and the water had subsided, she was out of the river altogether, deeply embedded in mud, and buried in a mass of debris. But we knew nothing of that for over three months. You may be sure we were well pleased when we learned that the combined expedition could not get out of the river.

We remained at West Pass until the spring of 1863: then were sent to St. Marks to relieve the steamer Stars & Stripes: but we had made a number of boat expeditions to isolated parts of the bay, destroyed several sets of salt works. These salt works were composed of sugar kettles set in mud furnaces and were always located at shoal water points, out of reach of the heavy guns, and so only to be reached by boats. We captured a small schooner that attempted to enter the small pass that divided St. George's Island into two parts.

The town of St. Marks is some eight miles up the river of the same name, which has a channel good for small vessels of from eleven to twelve feet draught. Large vessels, and vessels of deeper draught, must stop at Spanish Hole near the lighthouse. The channel is narrow, with short, sharp turns, caused by numerous oyster reefs which lap each other, so that large vessels even of light draught cannot make the turns. This river is formed by the union of two smaller ones, the St. Marks and the Walla Walla, the town lying between the two: and it is, or was, of some importance, it being the port of Tallahassee. We knew there was a three-gun battery of the point in front of the town, which commanded the river as far as the

guns would carry, and that there was a river steamer with a scow lashed alongside, with two guns of some caliber on board. But none of our war vessels could get within reach on account of the crooked channel. In fact an effort was made towards the end of the war by a small fleet. No success attended it.

Captain Crossman was young, ambitious to distinguish himself, and blockading (anchored) is very tedious for the commanding officer, who is never expected to leave his ship to take command of boat expeditions, unless there are two ships at the same place, when the junior commander may go. I commanded every expedition where two or more boats were engaged after Dennison left.

So Captain Crossman planned a night expedition with the view of surprising the battery, intending if successful to spike the guns, and then attack and capture the steamer, and took command of the expedition himself. It was a risky thing to do. For if we had met with disaster he would surely be censured, probably court-martialed, for leaving his ship without a line officer above the grade of Acting Master's mate, (which was just no grade at all) on board. We could muster about eighty men, including marines, and we had six boats, besides the captain's gig, which would carry only himself and four men. So by close packing we could crowd the eighty men, including officers, in. We muffled oars, covered the metal seaboard with thick cloth, and made every preparation against noise: and with a quantity of spare ammunition left the steamer soon after sunset on a very dark night, crept up through marshes and lowlands bordering the lower part of the river, seeing nothing until we reached Port Leon, the first firm ground, and about one and a half miles below the town. Here we came in touch with a rebel force, and got into a small fight. Just how many rebels there were we never knew; but judging by the amount of ammunition they expended in the five minute fight, there must have been in the neighborhood of a full company. The river at Port Leon is about 100 hundred yards wide, the opposite shore is marshy and was covered with tall swale grass. As we drew near we saw four small fires, the extremes some six or eight hundred feet apart, and knew from these that a line of sentries were posted along the river shore. Then Crossman dropped back alongside my boat: and we held a consultation. The conclusion we reached was that the grass on the opposite shore was sufficiently tall to overshadow us: and that by keeping close under it we could creep past the sentries without being seen. Then we started on again, the orders being that if we were hailed we were to keep moving and not to answer the hail. It turned out differently. The grass instead of overshadowing us was barely up to our shoulders, and there were also occasional breaks of a few feet. We had reached midway of their line when the hail came "Boat ahoy". No answer. Then again: "boat ahoy." Still no answer. Then sharp and peremptory, accompanied by the sound of the creaking of a musket "Boat ahoy, I say." Then Crossman answered " We are fishermen going up to the town." "Come ashore fishermen and give the countersign." Just then another voice called out "Sentry No. 2 I see four boats," and immediately they both fired. The gig was up. You must remember that we had planned a surprise party for that battery guard, and the surprise party came to grief when those sentries (only a mile and a half below) woke up the night with their shots. We heard the order to fall in, and knew by the sound that there was considerable body getting under arms: and we had been moving up river to the time the sentries fired, consequently were somewhat above the rebels, and to retreat as quickly as possible we must cross their lines of fire at point blank range. Probably several would be hurt in doing so, for the men could not row and use their rifles at the same time. Then Crossman called to me personally, " Land your men, Mr. Chatfield, and clean those fellows

out,” and then he pulled up the river as fast as possible to get out of the fight. Now, Crossman was no coward. Nothing would have suited him better than to have led the men into the scrimmage, but as he told me afterwards he suddenly realized the situation he had placed himself in. He had taken every fighting man, including every line officer, out of his ship, and gone with them himself on a very uncertain expedition, when the only duty he was required to perform was to maintain an effective blockade of that port, at the same time keeping his ship in the best condition to resist any attempt the enemy might make to raise the blockade, and so to open the port to foreign commerce.

As he told me afterwards, he felt that he must get back to that ship with his men if possible, but without them in so it was to be: and in that case get the ship out of the harbor and maintain the blockade from outside until some arrangements were made, for his comrade of the same class (Naval Academy class) who had spent some years as an active lieutenant on board ship, commanded at St. Marks, and being a sailor would understand the conditions, and would be after his ship before another sunset. And after telling it he looked at me and said “And Tom I knew you would do the job if anyone could.”

When I got that order I passed it down the line, and rushed the boats to the beach. We grounded some twenty before reaching it. My first impulse then was to order the men to disembark, but before doing so I took an oar to test the bottom. The oar went down at least three feet in soft mud. As it would never do to get stalled in that mud, I gave the order “Trail oars and commence firing.” Both sides fired at practically the same time, and we kept up a lively fusillade for some five minutes. Then the fire from the shore ceased: and after another round I ordered the men to cease too. We plainly heard the jingle of the enemy’s equipment as they made off at double quick. Captain Crossman returned in a short time, and while we were consulting as to the propriety of continuing the expedition, the boom of a heavy gun reached us, and a shot ploughed the water a few feet outside the line of boats, and was quickly followed by another directly over our heads. The night was awakened, and the chance of surprising the battery lost. She fired some ten shots. Some went over our heads, others a few feet outside of us, skimming the surface as they passed. They had the range and the line of the river perfect, for every shot passed between the banks, and we were puzzled to understand why those that were in line with the boat went overhead, until we discovered that we were sheltered under a small bluff, a mere lump some twenty feet high projected into the river a few feet under which we were lying. We could hear the shots strike the bluff, and then ricochet over our heads.

It has always been a surprise to me whenever I thought of the very small number of men hit in proportion to the amount of ammunition expended in battle. For although most of the rebel bullets passed high, still the water was hissing all round the boats. There were five shot holes through the launch (my boat) and she contained twenty-seven men. Some of the oars were splintered, one rifle stock was ruined, and one marine musket had its sight knocked off and its muzzle bent so as to render it useless, and only one man was hit – a slight wound above the elbow – the bullet having passed between the arm and the body.

We got back to the steamer at midnight, having met with no loss, and done no damage. I am sure no report of this affair ever reached the Navy Department, at least none was published in the Blue Book. And right here let me say that too much credence must never be given to official reports. They are all covered to suit the occasion, and to please the powers that be. Subordinates avoid reporting unpleasant things when it is possible.

A day or two after I conducted an expedition to Oclacking Island, some six or eight miles distant, for the purpose of destroying some salt works, which we had located at that place. I destroyed the works (some fifty kettles) and captured three men. Two were civilians from Georgia who owned the works, and whom we released a day or two afterwards. The other wore a Confederate uniform, and claimed to belong to a South Carolina regiment, and on leave. We detained him a prisoner of war. I was amused at his answers to my questions as to who and what he was, and why he was in the Rebel army. He said: "I believe in Southern rights." I told him I believed in Southern rights too: but that as we were fighting on opposite sides it would seem that we did not understand them in the same way. He thought a few minutes, then gave it up with a remark "Judge McGrath said it was all right, and he knows more than I do: so I went in." Which goes to show that all big mischief in this world comes from the top. It was a common thing for the Confederate rank and file to ask, and in all innocence too: "What did you alls come here to fight we alls for?" which also shows how little the common people of the South knew concerning the cause which brought about the war.

We were soon ordered back to West Pass to resume the blockade of that place, and in a short time Captain Crossman was ordered North, Acting Volunteer Lieutenant William Budd relieving him in command of the Somerset. I was sorry to part with Crossman, for he was a gentleman and a good fellow: and he came as near admitting me to the status of good comradeship as it was possible for a regular to do. For in common with them all he bitterly resented the necessity the government was under of admitting civilians to the service, and placing them on a par as to regarded rank and privilege as themselves. His remark: "Tom, I knew you would do the job if anyone could", although the only time he ever addressed me by my Christian name, showed that he would have liked to have admitted me to full comradeship.

From that time my position was one of perpetual torment as long as I served on board the Somerset. Budd was a roué, foul of speech and foul in deportment: a big, strong fellow, full of a restless energy, good to look at until one reached his face. That showed sensuality in every line and feature. I am sure he drank too much liquor. He upset the whole routine and discipline of the ship: not in a quiet way, with a method: but would break in and change drill, or anything else, at any and all times, until officers or crew knew not what to expect next. It was now the fall of 1863, and after the Proclamation of Emancipation: and we had ordered to extend protection to all blacks claiming it: and it was surprising how soon the blacks caught on to it: and also the number that were coming to us, men, women and some children, though not many of the latter. The men were sent forward under the Master of Arms, who compelled them to strip and thoroughly scrub each other, throw their old clothes overboard, and when clean furnished them with a sailor's suit then I camped them on the island with instructions to keep away

from the women, else I would send them back to the main land (a thing I would not dared to have done, but the threat answered the purpose). For the women I set up a tent, rigged a sugar kettle in a mud furnace, and instructed them to clean themselves and children, and to immerse every article of clothing not less than one hour in boiling water. Some had evidently been house servants and were inclined to resent the cleaning process as an indignity: but I would make no distinctions. On the whole they were tractable and easily managed. As the transports arrived we sent them to Key West for the admiral to dispose of.

The Confederate conscription was in full blast, and in that section was being executed ruthlessly. This caused a stampede among the white inhabitants, and the cracker families were coming claiming aid and protection (mostly women with their children), and one and all claiming that their husbands and sons were Union men who had been forced into the Rebel army. Poor, half-starved things. If they hid they were surely excusable. A few men also came claiming to be Unionists who had escaped the Conscription. Some of them brought their families with them: others joined their families who had already reached us while they were in hiding. Most of them elected to remain on St. George's. They could erect palmetto houses: and as there were deer and some cattle on the island they could, by hunting and fishing, easily take care of themselves. For everyone had his rifle, and the palmetto scrub was a good hiding place, and they were under the protection of the war ship's guns. As most of them were enlisted in a refugee regiment, which a Major Weeks, who held a commission issued by General Newton commanding the Department, commanded, they had probably told the truth as to their being Unionists. The remainder of these refugees we turned over to the army at Cedar Keys as soon as possible after they came to us. But how the poor things did die off! Half starved, as they were, the heavy army rations threw them into fever, which carried off large numbers in a short time. As an illustration: during the following winter, and after I had left the Somerset, I carried a family of twelve, (Father, Mother, and ten girls) named Johnson, to Cedar Keys. Some time after I visited the Keys, and saw Mary, the oldest girl, and she told me that everyone of the family was dead of the fever but herself and her father, and he had enlisted in the refugee regiment, so she was alone. "The hell of war, and its consequences."

But there was another element that was claiming assistance. Northern families who had been caught when the war broke out, and well bred people. They had lived quietly enough until the conscription was ordered. Then no exception was made in their favor. A Mr Dodge, his wife, a son and his wife: a younger son had been caught and sent to the army. They belonged to Brooklyn, N.Y. He owned one of the three cotton presses at Appalachicola, and received and forwarded cotton. A Mr Cleaveland, wife and daughter of Rhode Island. He was a cotton sampler. His two sons had been caught and sent to the army. They were sent north in the transport Union, I think, and were gone before Captain Crossman was detached. After he had gone a Mrs Pullman and a little girl about five. Her husband was a furniture dealer at Appalachicola: had gone into hiding, and had succeeded in reaching one of the war vessels (at East Pass, I think) of which she knew. Then she came to us. At the same time a Mrs Bond and her little boy, not far from five years old, came to us. Her husband was a civil engineer, and they were located in Georgia somewhere. He too had taken to the woods to avoid being sent to the army: and had got on board the blockading vessel at St. Andrews, of which she knew. Then the Confederate colonel had given

her a pass, authorizing her to proceed to Appalachicola, and I went up to the city with an armed party and brought her down, and incidentally about thirteen blacks. To do this I had to seize every boat on the water front, order its owner to accompany one of my blue jackets whom I put in charge, load her (the boat) with blacks, and send them down to the steamer. Even then I was forced to leave a number behind for want of transportation. These women, each about thirty years old, were well bred, and ladies in every sense: knew their husbands were safely out of the Confederacy, and they were in safety and on their way to their former home in the North, the land of promise to them at that time. But both instinctively avoided Captain Budd, and all other women who came on board did the same. I had given them use of my room, which opened directly on the quarter deck: and they used it as a sitting room during the day time, I, of course, having access to my desk during the day: and I noticed they always kept the door partly shut when he was around.

I think they were with us about ten days before the transport came along. One morning Captain Budd sent his steward to my door to invite Mrs Bond to take breakfast with him. She did not want to go, and appealed to me. But I told her she had better accept: that he could do her no real harm, and he could, if he chose, make her very uncomfortable (even send her ashore to live with the blacks), and I had reached the conclusion that he was vindictive enough to do so if she had slighted his invitation. (But perhaps not). So I accompanied her to the door of his room, and then went to the ward room for my own breakfast. Before we had finished she came in amongst us like a tornado, eyes blazing, and burst out: "Now, I want to take my breakfast with gentlemen." When I had finished breakfast and went out, I found Budd walking the deck, looking like a baffled hound: and I guess that was what he really was. When the transport came Budd went on board of her, leaving me as usual to dispose of the passengers and contraband (negroes). I sent Mrs Pullman and Mrs Bond in one of the cutters, and watched them as they boarded the ship. As Mrs Bond reached the top of the gangway stairs a big, broad-shouldered fellow caught her, and lifted her from the deck, carried her aft out of my sight, she clinging to him with both arms round his neck, and the little boy holding to her skirts toddling behind, safe under the stars and stripes once more, bound North to their former home, ruined financially, but happy in their reunion. Mrs Pullman must wait until the transport arrived at East Pass – her next stopping place – when a similar scene would be enacted.

My situation had become so intolerable that I had, some days before, applied to the admiral for transfer to some other vessel, and a day or two after the transport had passed, Acting Ensign James P. Montague (a Sandwich man) came to West Pass in the U.S. Schooner Two Sisters, bringing orders detaching me from the Somerset, ordering me to assume command of the Two Sisters, and to cruise between Cedar Key and Tampa Bay. When my provisions ran short I was to report to the Flag Ship at Key West for more. Captain Budd handed me my orders, and directed me to turn over the muster rolls and Executive Officer's accounts to Mr (Acting Master) Waugh, and to report to him when I was ready to leave the ship. I finished that piece of business, and was about to report myself ready when a messenger boy called my attention to the men, who were crowded in the waist – a hundred or more – waiting to bid me good-bye. And how the loyal fellows did grip and shake my hand: and old Gambell (Chief Boatswain's Mate) old sea dog, but a man to tie to, blurted out "We're d—d sorry to lose you Mr Chatfield, but we wish you good luck." I reported to Captain Budd that I had carried out his orders, and asked permission

to the leave the ship, which he gave. Then I lifted my cap to him for the last time, passed over the side into my boat, and a half hour later was standing out under full sail. I had a command of my own now, was no longer Captain Budd's subordinate, was glad I had seen the last of him, and so was a happy man.

In speaking of Captain Budd in connection with his inviting Mrs Bond to breakfast, I said that I had come to believe that he was vindictive enough to treat her shabbily had she refused his invitation: and a short time after we parted he committed an act which I think proved that I had sized him up correctly. There was a family at Appalachicola consisting of a young middle-aged couple, with no children (Monks by name). He was a member of a company of irregulars, coast guards, or coast patrol: and, I suspect, a good deal of a devil. She lived quietly in a neat, moderately sized, well furnished home, which I was told was their own. I had occasion to know of this, for I had called once and questioned her, and she appeared to be a decent woman. Budd went there with an armed party, who, under his personal supervision, turned her out, and then burned the house with all its contents. This seemed to me a pure act of vandalism. It could forward the Union cause in now way. I am glad I was not compelled to have any part in it, which I probably should had I then been serving on board the Somerset. I suppose Budd had a good side, but I never got in touch with it. I never came across a man that didn't have some good in him.

Perhaps my use of the title of Captain may be confusing, and so I had better explain. When I entered the Navy there were but three grades of commissioned officers, Lieutenant, Commander and Captain, and Passed Midshipman, one who was waiting for his commission. A captain when commanding a squadron was officially termed Flag Officer. By courtesy he was called Commodore: but the title of Commodore was not recognized at the Department. During the year 1862, the latter part, Congress rearranged the grades. Midshipman was dropped, the Academy boys being designated Naval Cadets: from that they passed to Ensign, the lowest commission: then Lieutenant, Lieutenant Commander, Commander, Captain, Commodore, and then Rear Admiral, the highest grade. Admiral is a special creation. There have only been three: Farragut, Porter, and now Dewey. Any one of these officers (grades) may be placed in command of a war vessel, and then be by courtesy called captain, but only while in actual command: hence Captain Crossman, Captain Budd, Lieutenant Commander and Acting Volunteer Lieutenant respectively.

The Two Sisters was a small schooner of about fifty tons measurement, of the kind used by Delaware Bay and the Chesapeake oystermen: a fast sailor, capable of keeping the sea in all weathers. Her complement was one Acting Master commanding, and one Acting Ensign, and fifteen enlisted men: and being a tender to the Flag Ship her crew and officers were bourne of the Flag Ship's book. She was one of five fitted out by the Admiral to cruise between the blockaded ports with a view to capturing the many small vessels seeking an entrance in the numerous inlets on the Gulf Coast of Florida: and a free and independent service it was, with no log book, and no accounts of any kind, provisioned for thirty days, then return to Key West for more, make a written report of our doings addressed to the commander of the flag ship, but rarely to the Admiral, have a chat with the old fellow, then away on another cruise. Of the many incidents occurring between November 1863 and May 1865 while I

commanded my little craft, I shall only mention a few of the most important, else my story would have no end.

After leaving West Pass, and while on my way to my cruising ground between Cedar Keys and Tampa Bay, I captured a schooner out from Nassau, which was trying to get into the inlet of Deadman's Bay. She was not much of a prize, being bound in with no cargo. I sent her to Key West, giving Montague four men, taking all the schooner's crew, captain accepted, on board the Two Sisters. You must know that a neutral vessel is never a prize until condemned as such by a prize court. Consequently the captain must never be taken out of his vessel. The captors simply take her to port, and deliver her to the Prize Commissioner, when their duties are ended. I saw the captain at Key West a few days afterwards, and he hailed me with: "You were d—d smart to take every man on board your craft. If you'd left me with just one I would have retaken my vessel or died trying." And he looked fully capable of it. He had all the marks of a genuine descendant of the old freebooters.

We cruised during the winter all the way between St Marks and Punta Rossa, as we received ordered: overhauled many vessels, but made no captures. It was only the following summer that General Seymour left Jacksonville in his attempt to cross Florida. Gainesville was understood to be his objective point. I had verbal orders to cruise off, or in the vicinity of the Homosassa River, keep things as hot as possible with a view to keeping the Rebel coast guards on the lookout, and so prevent as many as we could from joining General Finegan: but he, the Admiral, cautioned me to be very careful and not lose any of my men. We were never able to keep the ships fully manned. Seamen were too scarce for that and they must not be risked doing soldiers work. It was easy to keep things pretty hot. We carried a twelve-pound rifled Howitzer, good to throw a shell two and half miles: and we could make demonstrations with the boat. But Montague was not a safe man to send away in the boat. He was such a fearless fellow, that once out of reach of orders there was no telling where he would go, or when he would return. I spent many anxious hours wondering what had become of him.

As is well known, Seymour was badly beaten by Finegan at Clustee and retreated to Jacksonville with the remnant of his army, and that ended that phase of my service.

It was in June 1864 that I received orders to relieve the steamer Hendrick Hudson in charge of the station at Tampa, and with the orders a letter from the Admiral's secretary (private of course) but evidently inspired, saying that yellow fever was raging in Havana, and would surely reach Key West and get among the squadron: that the Admiral had decided to send all ships infected to Tampa Bay for isolation, and that the reason for putting me in charge was on account of my small crew: and further that a gang of carpenters had already gone to build a hospital on Egmont Key: and a surgeon (Parker) with a dozen negro nurses and some laborers had been detailed to care for the sick and bury the dead: that the surgeon and his gang would be independent of me, but that I must see to the discipline of the negroes: and in a foot note the Admiral hopes that you will not let the fever get among your men.

I relieved the Hendrick Hudson at Tampa, and she left immediately. The hospital was finished in a day or two afterwards, and within a week the steamer Moluska – a first class gunboat – with a complement of one hundred and eighty men came with the yellow fever. Commander Gifford, her commander, transferred his sick to the hospital. I went on board to take his orders as in duty bound, he being my senior. He told me that his orders were to leave me in charge of the station, as he, the admiral, had confidence in my discretion. I told him that being the case I should claim the privilege of moving my vessel at any time without referring the question to him, which he assented to. In less than a fortnight there were four ships in Tampa Bay, and later the Hendrick Hudson returned, all aggregating from eight to nine hundred men, and infected with yellow fever. They soon filled the hospital, and the rest of the sick had to be cared for on board their respective ships. It was a pretty anxious time for me. The negroes got unruly: and Parker (the hospital surgeon) sent for me, and I went with my blue jackets to straighten them out. It isn't worth while to mention the means I resorted to. It is sufficient to say that they were very tractable thereafter, and that Parker had no further trouble with them.

The captains of those ships had enough to do with their sick for it was not easy to isolate the sick in a crowded vessel, and so it became necessary to hoist signal "Bury the dead" with my distinguishing pennant over it. That meant that I must take the corpse from the ship, place it in the trench, see that it was properly numbered (the name and number being recorded in the ship's log book) and leave it for the negroes to cover: and as near as I can remember I buried about sixty in that way. Perhaps the fever was of a mild type: or it may be that the constant fumigation to which the ships were subjected had its influence. As that may be, by the end of August we were free of the disease, and not one of my crew had been infected with it. Having no surgeon to interfere I had taken my own precautions. First, and before a ship arrived, I went a short distance inland where I knew some negroes had a lime kiln and got a quantity of quicklime. With a portion I limed my little vessel throughout. The remainder I placed on Egmont Key in a convenient place near the shore, and covered it to prevent its becoming slaked, slaking a small portion which I put into a tierce and covered. Then when signal "Bury the Dead" was set, I picked a boat's crew, all of whom used tobacco, went myself every time, and we all chewed and smoked industriously while we were in contact with the body. Then stripped, washed each other with lime water, immersed the clothes we had on in lime water, leaving them there some hours, rinsed ourselves in sea water, and then put on a clean shirt, which another boat had left at a convenient place a short distance away. The infected ships having freed themselves of the disease dispersed about the first of September, leaving about one hundred of their men buried in Egmont Key, the Hendrick Hudson resuming charge of the station, and I had ordered to proceed to Key West. But when Commander Gifford handed me my orders, he (our surgeon was present) asked me what precautions I had taken to avoid the fever. I explained. Then the surgeon asked why, and what my theory was. I told him that I had come to the conclusion that yellow fever germs were living organisms, in the nature of a fly, floating in the atmosphere, and in common with all animated nature were endowed with the instinct of self-preservation: that I felt sure that the instinct would induce them to avoid passing through a man's mouth when he was both chewing and smoking tobacco: and that I knew quicklime would meconate a yellow germ. The surgeon said that as a precaution he didn't think my method could be improved upon. At any rate none of us contracted the disease.

I had now served twenty-eight months continuously, and I applied for three months leave of absence, stating the fact of continuous service. The Admiral granted me six weeks' leave, but did not permit me to go North in the transport Union. The blockade running steamer Matagorda, captured by the Magnolia, had just been condemned as a lawful prize by the local court. The squadron was short of men, and the admiral would not permit a prize crew to be detailed to take the prize North, simply a prize master from the Magnolia. Then placed her in charge of officers who either had leave of absence or were ordered North (I was one), with a crew of enlisted men whose terms had expired. We reached Boston, safely anchoring at quarantine at dark. The next morning the health officer boarded us and made his inspection, such as it was, for we were a jolly lot, and had no intention of being quarantined if we could help it. So we entertained him generously from the contents of a brandy punch bowl, the water (heated) which went into its consumption being obtained from a cask of commissary whiskey. Charley Blackwell had somehow got possession of a blank permit which he had already pulled out, and when inspection was over the fellow signed it, Blackwell guiding his hand. Then we was quickly aided to his boat, and left the ship, sitting in the stern with his head resting on the seat, and his two oarsmen grinning. I happened to have charge of the deck at the time, had instructed the boatswain's mate to heave the anchor at short peak, and when the bunt was just clear of the paddle wheel struck the bell for full speed, which the engineers, who had caught onto the trick quickly applied. In half an hour we were at anchor off of the Navy Yard, the ship turned over to prize master Porter (of the Magnolia) when the rest of us scattered. I reached home that same evening, taking your mother by surprise.

It was now the latter part of September, 1864. Ten days of my leave had already expired, allowing me not more than three weeks at home, for I must report at Key West within six weeks, or give reasonable excuse for not doing so, else there would be Hail Columbia as a consequence. I returned to Key West in the transport Union, getting there on time, and resumed command of my little vessel. During the winter I cruised at different times all the way from Punta Rossa to St. Marks, but most of the time between St. Marks and Cedar Keys. The Rebel conscription was being enforced, and throughout Taylor County the smoke from burning homesteads was going up in all directions. The plan of the conscript officer was to visit every home which contained a man, either father or son, fit for service. If the man was there they took him without ceremony and forced him into the ranks. If he was not at home they assumed that he had gone into hiding, simply burned the premises and left the family to shift for themselves. Then many of the poor, harmless things would seek the water front, get on the outlying keys, subsist as best they could, trusting to luck to get picked up by the cruising vessels, and conveyed to the army camps where there was good. We had orders to grant protection to all blacks claiming it, and to such of the whites as were willing to take the oath of allegiance to the United States. So we aided many white families in the course of the last year of the war. One day, off the Ocala River, I discovered a white flag on an outlying key, and sent Montague to ascertain what it meant. He found one middle-aged man with his wife and family of twelve girls, and other women and children to the number of forty-two, all half-starved, and begging to be taken to the nearest place where good could be had. While Montague was arranging to get them off to the vessel he heard shots on the mainland, and made out three men swimming towards the key with a pursuing party firing at them. Montague went to their assistance, driving off the pursuers with his longer range rifles. He got two. The other was hit and sank before he reached him. The two rescued men elected to stay on the key with a view to aiding their families as soon as the troops engaged in conscription had passed on. The party I took to Cedar Keys, and turned over to the army

stationed at that place. It was the Johnson family of fourteen, whom I have already mentioned as all being dead with fever except the father and one daughter when I again visited Cedar Keys some time later. This was the largest party I ever aided at any one time, although I assisted several others. Commander Fleming of the Sagamore, stationed at Cedar Keys, scolded a good deal about my prowling up and down the coast relieving Rebels, said he didn't believe our orders required me to do so, and that they ought to be left to their fate: but I knew that orders permitted me to do so, and I also knew that they were in trouble because they resisted being forced to fight against us: and, anyway, I couldn't see the poor creatures starve when I could help them: and, besides, every man whose home was in the South, and who took no active part in the rebellion, was entitled to sympathy and protection of the United States, and not to be banned as a Rebel. Their position was hard enough without that sort of treatment.

During the month of March (the latter part, I think it was) I had occasion to go to Punta Rossa: and when at the mouth of the bay, three miles below that point, which is at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, I met the steamer Honduras (our local transport) with the stars and stripes at the fore (signal that the General – Newton – was on board). Captain Harris had never been up the bay, and had no one on board who could pilot him. I had been to Punta Rossa, and also to Fort Myers – eight miles up the Caloosahatchee – several times: so told Captain Harris to follow me up to within a half miles of the point, and to drop his anchor when I hove too, which he did. Then I went alongside, and General Newton showed me an open letter from the Admiral, addressed to the several commanding officers of the fleet, stating that General Newton had planned an expedition having in view the capture of St Marks, and also for the relief of the Union prisoners camped at Thomasville, a few miles distant from St Marks: and directing such as could be spared from the several blockaded ports to render him all the aid in their power: and he (the Admiral) had detailed Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Charles H. Blackwell to accompany the expedition, consult with the commanding officers, and to issue orders in his name. As I was a cruiser no consultation was necessary in my case, and Blackwell immediately handed me an order making me – with my little command – a part of the expedition.

For the carrying out of his plan General Newton had the 9th U.S. Infantry (black troops) Lieutenant Col. Purcell commanding, camped at Punta Rossa, one company camping at Fort Myers: and at Fort Myers there were also a lot of refugees (crackers) enlisted under a Colonel Crane, who commanded by virtue of a commission issued by General Newton. These refugees would be left in the garrison at Fort Myers, and a platoon of the 9th at Punta Rossa: the remainder – about four hundred rifles and one field piece – would go with the general. In camp at Cedar Keys was the 3rd Regiment U.S. black infantry, with one field gun, about four hundred enlisted men, commanded by Colonel Tanshend, and also Major Weeks' refugee regiment, not exceeding two hundred, the whole (excluding such gunboats as would join) of one thousand enlisted men.

We got the troops with their equipments on board the Honduras and the army transport Hussar, which had arrived later during the day. Then I was ordered to proceed with all possible speed to Cedar Keys to notify Colonel Tanshend to prepare his troops, the general waiting for the company at Fort Myers to

reach him. I left Punta Rossa shortly before dark, and with a fresh fair wind reached Cedar Keys the following noon. There I found the Magnolia whose admiral had sent me to join the expedition. She could accommodate five hundred troops easily, and was of light draught, but long to get up the narrow channel to Depot Key, where the troops were camped. The next morning both the Honduras and the Hussar came, and the general ordered both to go up to Depot Key to give the men a chance to stretch their legs: and also the Magnolia to go up to take on board the 3rd Regiment. None of them had a pilot, and no officer would undertake the job, so it fell on me to do it. First I took the Honduras up, touched bottom once, but got to the wharf with little trouble: then the Magnolia, putting her to the wharf, or rather alongside the Honduras, safely: but I certainly did not have twenty feet to spare, swinging her round Grassy Key. Then the army pilot (a common sailor unused to command) had got the Hussar aground half way up: and it fell to me to get her afloat, and bring her up, which I did. Quite late in the evening the general sent his orderly to say he wished to see me: and when I called on him, he told me he had given orders for the troops to embark at daylight, and he wanted me to be on board to start the steamers as soon as they were on board. I called his attention to the fact that it would be half ebb at daylight, and that the steamers would be barely afloat, and that while the Hussar could go down at low water, both the others must wait until half flood. He said that would disarrange his plans, but if it was unavoidable of course he would have to wait for the tide, and so he countermanded his orders, and the troops did not embark until the middle of the next forenoon. Shortly before noon I started with the Magnolia, and by good fortune swung her round Grassy Key without touching bottom, crept down the channel with barely water enough to float her, and anchored her in the harbor at Sea Horse Key.

I had depended on the Honeysuckle (blockader) to furnish a boat to take me back for the Honduras: but the boat was a long time coming, and when it came it was a dingy thing with but two men in it. Consequently I did not get back until three o'clock: and it was then high tide. Then the general, who was on board the Hussar, and would not trust the army pilot, told me to take the Hussar down next, and then come for the Honduras. But Captain Harris got restless, and wouldn't wait with a falling tide, and so started with the army pilot and got aground in the bend at Grassy Key, and when I boarded him he was swearing at the pilot for an incapable, and at himself for trusting him. Captain Ransom of the third regiment had already sent the pilot ashore, under arrest, and was made as Harris was at being left behind: for the General had already started for St Marks, taking the Magnolia with him, while Ransom was on board the Honduras with his quota of troops with no chance of getting away before the next afternoon. I got the Honduras afloat during the night, and got down to Sea Horse soon after twelve the next day. The Hussar took the Two Sisters in tow, and we started for St Marks, twenty hours after the General had gone.

We reached our destination at noon the next day in a fog, found the Magnolia, and three war ships, Moluska (Commander Gifford), Brittainia and Spiren, and soon after the Hendrick Hudson arrived, anchored some four miles outside the bar: and also an armed schooner (I forget her name), Acting Master Hill commanding, on blockade nearer in, she being a sailing vessel Captain Hill did not care to risk an attack by boats in the narrow waters of Spanish Hole.

I reported to Captain Gifford, accounted for my absence from my cruising ground, found the General in consultation with him, and that they had arranged their plan of attack, which they gave to me in detail, and as a part of which directed me to take Major Weeks with his two hundred refugees on board, hunt up the blockaders (she was not in sight) select an officer and boat's crew, and as soon as it was dark enough to send them round Light House Point, Major Weeks having orders to proceed up the trail to the relief of the blue jackets as soon as possible. And all this was done under cover of darkness. And then the General shook hands with me, and said "Captain, we have selected you as the man we believe most capable to carry out these instructions. Do it if possible, else our whole plan will be disarranged." And I did it.

I found the blockader lying within a half mile of the bar: selected Acting Ensign Whitney (I knew him, and that he was to be depended upon) directed him to pick his ten men, all the largest of the schooner's two boats could carry, and started him an hour before dark, cautioning him not to go beyond the bar until it was dark, then to creep round Light House Point, and up East River as quietly as possible, ambush his boat at some convenient place, march his men up, and then ambush them in such a situation as to command the bridge with his rifles, but not to show himself, or make the least noise unless it became necessary to open fire, and not to open fire because he saw men, but only in case an attempt was made to destroy the bridge. The bridge might not be guarded, but it was possible it might be, for Charley — that alert naval officer — was still in command at St Marks, and I had had a taste of his metal at Port Leon the previous summer: and I promised Whitney that with decent luck I would have the refugees up to the bridge by daylight, or very soon after to relieve him.

Then after it was fairly dark, I having the correct bearings of the bar, started to get the refugees ashore: got over the bar without accident, and going very slowly felt my way up the channel, hoping to reach the dilapidated wharf at the Light House. It was all feel: for between darkness and fog it was impossible to see. Finally I ran hard aground, fortunately on the shore side of the channel, pretty sure I was somewhere near the light house, but not knowing just where: and not knowing the condition of the shore, whether a swamp of firm ground. Then I sent my subordinate, Mr Buck (Montague had been promoted to Acting Master, and ordered elsewhere) with orders to land two men who would walk to test the condition of the ground, while he with the boat traced the shore, keeping in touch with them, and so find the light house: and also if the troops could reach it from that point. He returned in about an hour, and reported that we were a quarter of a mile below the light house, and that the ground was fit to march upon. I solved the problem of getting two hundred men ashore with one small boat, by running a line ashore, put one seaman in her, and hauling her to and fro by the line. But it took some time to do it, and it was four o'clock when it was accomplished. Then Major Weeks demurred at starting. He was afraid of getting his men stalled in the swamps. But I told him that he must go to the relief of Whitney: that I had been entrusted by General Newton with the carrying out of this part of his plan, considering myself in command: and that I would not take the risk of Whitney's being overpowered, perhaps captured, and the bridge destroyed by waiting here until daylight: that I would go with him (I was not sure Whitney would take orders or even advice from an army officer, especially from a major commanding a lot of refugees, by virtue of a commission issued by a brigadier general, and not by the War Department) and that my boat would trace the shore, and so guide us over the ground my

men had already walked over, and reported as safe. The Major demurred at the idea of my having authority over him after he was landed. However, he was a good fellow, not one to split hairs, so we started, reached the light house all right: and from there we had the old trail, much overgrown by long swale grass across the low ground between the light house and the woods: but still firm ground, with no danger of getting stalled. It was getting to be daylight before we reached the bridge: and when we were within about a thousand yards Whitney woke things up with his rifles. First a full volley, then dropping shots, that sent us to a double quick, the Major deploying his men as we advanced. I fired three shots from my revolver as a signal to Whitney to fall back, which he did. He explained that as soon as it was light four armed men had started to walk across the bridge in his direction. Evidently they knew nothing of his being there to receive them. Then he had opened fire, and drove them back: but that a number of shots had come from that side, at least thirty or forty in all. There must have been more than the four he had seen concealed in the scrub on that side. None of his men were hurt: and I directed him to fall back out of sight of the bridge, then circle round, recover his boat, and return to his ship. He had done his part of the work, and did it well, good fellow that he was. He begged to be allowed to remain and join in the fight, but I told him that the squadron was so short of men that one seaman was worth a dozen soldiers, and so he must keep his men out of it. So he went. I should have gone with him, but curiosity, I suppose it was, induced me to stay with the Major. I told him I had finished my part of the job, and did not claim any further authority over him. He laughed and said he supposed not. It was while talking to him that I came nearer to getting hit than at any other time during the war. We were in the road (the men were in the scrub on each side of it) he kept moving, when he said: "Chatfield, you keep moving or you'll get shot, there are sharp-shooters among these fellows watching for officers, and if you stand still long enough one of them will get a bead on you, and your uniform makes a conspicuous mark," and just then a bullet took the shoulder strap off one of my shoulders. It didn't touch the skin, or even tear the coat, but it was quite near enough.

I really had no business there, but I did not think it prudent to attempt to walk two miles to the point alone. There might be some stray crackers along route, and I might be taken prisoner, or even killed by them, and that would have counted against me in the service. For having fulfilled my instructions, and having had an opportunity to return with Whitney, I was absent from my command without authority: and I had stretched my orders by going to the front to look after Whitney. So I stayed where I was, and in something over an hour Major _____ of the 3rd came with a body of his black followers, and after a few words with Major Weeks saying that he was not going to stay there and give the Rebs time to accumulate a force to oppose the crossing, rushed his black fellows across the bridge. The enemy concentrated their fire upon the column, disabled a few, then scattered through the scrub in retreat. I concluded it was safe for me to retreat to, so toddled back to the point alone. Then I learned that the fog having lifted soon after midnight (it didn't lift in the harbor until daylight) the fleet had got underway, stood in, and at peep-o-day the Moluska, the only one that had a pilot, followed by the Magnolia and Hussar, had crossed the bar, reached and were anchored in Spanish Hole. The Honduras, Brittainia and Spiren were all three aground some distance below: and that the General hearing the firing had hurried the Major, with as many as the boats could land in one trip, off to the assistance of Weeks.

I had been on my feet twenty hours: had eaten a few mouthfuls, as I could catch them: was wet, tired, and sleepy: but I reported to the General the conditions of the front, and received his thanks. Then he looked at me and said: "I guess you're tired enough Captain, but I wish you'd take your vessel, go down to the Honduras, and get those horses and mules (some twenty odd) bring them up, and land them on the point so they can be fed, and be in condition to start in the morning." I was tired: but I guess that was what I was there for: so I went, got the animals ashore before dark, and then too tired and sleepy to bother about supper (I had eaten dinner while they were taking in the horses) went to my berth and slept until morning.

In the morning the General started, getting away about eight o'clock. I shall not attempt to give a detailed account of the march, battle and retreat after being badly beaten. The General had intended to cross the St Marks River at Newport. Two miles above the town of St Marks there was a bridge, and also a deep water ford at that place. But Major Weeks' refugees, who were scouting between the East River and the St Marks, reported the bridge burned: and as the ford was too deep for artillery, he was obliged to take a route four miles further up, where a narrow corduroy road, a quarter of a mile long, cross a big swamp, the source of the river. In front of the road, some thirty feet back, was a ridge of sandy hills, then or fifteen feet high, and covered with a thick growth of palmetto scrub. The road turned the ridge, passed between it and the swamp, entering the corduroy directly in front of it. Major Weeks with most of his men was left to guard the ford at Newport. Captain Strickland, with a smaller party of observation was sent to the head of the swamp four miles above. These precautions were taken to prevent a possible Rebel force getting in the rear without the general's knowledge. There the troops camped for the night. Next morning they crossed the swamp by the corduroy eight hundred, all blacks, intending to turn by left flank, march the six miles to St Marks, take the four guns battery in the rear, and then make a dash for Thomasville, relieve the Union prisoners, and return by the way they came, or reembark at St Marks, if the war vessels succeeded in getting far enough up the river to protect them with their heavy guns. Instead of carrying out the plan they were attacked as soon as they were clear of the swamp by a Rebel force under General Samuel Miller, hidden in the woods between the swamp and the Fernandina and St Marks Railroad, which ran a short distance back, and parallel with the swamp. Evidently the Rebel force was nearly or quite equal with our own, for at the end of two hours' fighting, while our fellows had captured one field piece, they had failed to clear the woods of the enemy, and they had been losing men fast. It was then that they heard car whistles in the rear of the enemy, and in a short time the Rebel fire increased to such an extent that General Newton knew they had received reinforcements, and that he must retreat at once, or lose the whole of his little army. He must have had his plan all arranged, for he immediately sent Colonel Tanshend with two companies, and the three field guns, with orders to mark both men and guns in the palmetto scrub on that sand ridge, shoot and kill if necessary: but at any cost prevent a stampede. Tanshend was quick. He certainly could not have got in position when his orderly reported him so ready, then the signal, and the rush en masse. The officers did not have to shoot. The negroes were by no means panic stricken. On the contrary they were halted and gotten into line without difficulty. The Confederate followed quickly, simply packed the corduroy and pressed forward like a flock of sheep. Then Tanshend when they were within fifty feet of the edge of the swamp, and one hundred from the muzzles of his guns, opened fire, grape shot, point blank, straight down the corduroy, while his two companies of infantry on his flanks, close to the guns, four deep, sent their rifle balls in the same direction. Tanshend fired three rounds, then ceased: and when the smoke lifted, not a single man

was on his feet the full length of the corduroy. Probably a goodly number were not hit at all, but simply dropped with their stricken comrades unable to understand such a hailstorm of death-dealing lead. Then the word came to retreat, and the march back to the transports. Major Weeks joined the column, keeping the river, watching for a possible pursuit, but was not molested: only half a dozen horsemen showing themselves in the distance. Strickland never returned. He, with his small party, was captured by some irregulars at the head of the big swamp, and he was shot as a deserter as day or two after, the alternative to the execution being that he should join the Confederate Army, which he refused to do. He had never been with the Rebel colors, had escaped conscription, that was all: but they called it desertion and shot him. He was just a common cracker of the better sort, and refused to fight against the United States. A brave fellow. I knew him very well. Another phase of the "Hell of War."

The troops camped that night above the East River, and the following day reached Lighthouse Point, the last getting in about noon. Then came the muster, and the ascertaining the losses with this result: two hundred and fifty blacks left on the battlefield: all either dead or mortally wounded: about fifty more or less badly wounded, not counting slight wounds which did not require surgical treatment: three hundred of the rank and file (nearly forty per cent of the number engaged). Stratton, Chief Aide, killed, shot through the spine. The Major of the 3rd regiment abdomen torn open by a piece of shell: Ransom, Captain, thigh shattered. Both died. Carpenter, Lieutenant of the 9th, leg disabled (knee, I think). One of his men helped him mount a mule, and he reached the Point. Another lieutenant of the 9th shot in the eye and a cheek bone shattered. Tanshend hit in the forearm, a slight wound: three other officers slightly hurt, but remained with their men: nine in all. The reembarkment was finished the next day. The wounded with their attendants, and the horses and mules, were put on board the Hussar, and she went direct to Key West: the 9th and the refugee regiment on board the Magnolia: the 3rd with the General, and what was left of his staff, on board the Honduras, who took my little craft in town, and with the Hendrick Hudson in company, went to Cedar Keys. There the Magnolia landed the refugee regiment, took on board a mass of flotsam in the shape of a lot of contrabands of all ages and sex, and went to Punta Rossa to land the 9th regiment (what was left of it). The Honduras landed the 3rd, then went to Key West. Rockwell resumed command of the Hendrick Hudson. The General and his one staff officer, Thompson, and the body of Stratton, went to Key West with Rockwell. The Magnolia had not sufficient coal to enable her to reach Key West. So I went to Tampa, took on ten tons, which I delivered to her at Punta Rossa. Then she went to Key West, and so ended what I believe was the last battle of the Civil War. Small, it is true, but a little distinct, complete in itself, and not auxiliary to some larger movement. For, as we soon found out, Lee had already surrendered to Grant, and Johnson surrendered either that day or a day or two after the fight.

As soon as General Newton had started, the three war vessels, Moluska, Brittania, and Spiren made their attempt to get up to the town of St Marks, with a view to render any assistance they could. They all go aground within a short quarter of a mile below the light house, and they never got any further. On the contrary, with considerable hard work (warping) they got back into Spanish Hole about the time the troops returned.

I think I will mention one man who was lost in that battle. He was a sergeant of the 9th regiment, of the color of an ordinary negro, with kinky hair, but with a Caucasian face, something over six feet in height, spare of flesh, rather inclined to slenderness. I think he must have had a slight strain of white blood in his veins. In language and deportment a gentleman, evidently well educated, with nothing servile about him, fit to command regiment. I had had him with his squad on board my little vessel for forty-eight hours, while getting troops up the Caloosahatchee to Fort Myers, some months before: and when we had reached the front, instead of hustling ashore as enlisted men invariably do, he stopped aft, lifted his cap, and thanked me for the courteous treatment he had received while on board. I noticed that when the white officers spoke of his loss it was not only with regret, but also in a tone in which men speak of equals. I have often wondered what his antecedents were.

Whenever I think of this utterly useless loss of life it is a source of satisfaction to me to remember that no helpless person suffered on account of the raid. The march and the battle were both on unoccupied ground. No homestead was burned, and no non-combatant injured in any way.

After delivering the coal to the Magnolia I went direct to Tampa to report to Commander De Haven (I forget what war vessel he commanded: but it was the same one that was sunk off Vineyard Haven some years ago in a collision with the schooner George Lowell) my reasons for being off my cruising ground without orders from him (the squadron had just been divided into two divisions, each being placed under the orders of a division commander De Haven commanded the division I was in). After receiving my report De Haven directed me to take two refugee women, with their children, and a dozen or more blacks of both sexes to Punta Rossa, and turn them over to the army for care and subsistence, which I did. On the way back I stopped at Charlotte Harbor. I don't remember why, and while there the Admiral, with first captain Read Warden, who were on an inspection tour of the fleet, came into the harbor, and much to my surprise came on board the Two Sisters. Captain Warden told me the Admiral wished particularly to inspect my vessel: and inspect her he did, very thoroughly: and he pronounced her clean and in excellent condition. Well he might. The whole crew had worked steadily recently to get rid of the effects of that ten tons of coal. Then he wished to see the men put through their drill, both gun and small arms: then he complimented me on the excellent condition my command was in after the irregular work on which we had been recently employed, handed me an envelope which he directed me to take to Key West immediately, and deliver to Commander Robert Handy of the flag ship Dale, who was in charge of Headquarters during his (the admiral's absence): and then he shook hands with me, and said: "I have named a board of officers who will examine you for promotion, and it comes in this way: General Newton mentioned you so favorably in his dispatches to the War Department that the Secretary of War sent an extract of the report to Secretary Welles of the Navy, and he has sent me orders to have you examined immediately." It goes without saying that I was pleased, and equally so that I was surprised. I had not asked for promotion. Many did: and coming to me in that way I think fully justified my being so: and I had taken a general liking to General Jack, as we had come to call him, and was pleased to know that my service was appreciated by him.

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It may seem to you, my children, that I am giving undue prominence to my own part in this affair: but you must remember that I am writing my own personal history, and that my position was unique. I was in the prime of young manhood, recognized as a man experienced in seamanship, held a rank in the Navy which entitled me to be consulted as to the details of such measures as I was expected to execute, that I was still in active command of my own vessel, and at the same time a volunteer on the staff of General Newton. So the general never gave me positive orders, but simply indicated what he wished me to do: and then left me to work out the details according to my own judgment. In this I differed from Rockwell. He was regularly detailed by the Admiral, and was relieved of his command (the Hendrick Hudson) while serving on Newton's staff.

I went immediately to Key West, delivered my dispatch to Commander Handy, and was directed by him to be on board the Honduras at two o'clock the same afternoon, where a board of officers would

convene to examine me for promotion. I found Commander Cooper alone. I had a club room acquaintance with him, and he said: "The other members have not arrived, let's light our pipes and have a smoke while we are waiting." Then we chatted about how long I had been in the service, what ships I had served in: said he knew Crossman very well, and wished to know how long I had served him as Executive Officer: whether I had commanded a division, the number and caliber of the guns, and the number of men necessary to man them. All this is a conversational way. Then Commander Handy and Harris came, and Cooper said: "I have been talking with Captain Chatfield (Captain by courtesy) and find him well up in gunnery." Then Handy asked where I had been employed before entering the Navy: and when he found that I had commanded a ship in the Pacific Whale Fishery, and was a world cruiser, he said that I must be a better practical seaman than he was: for his seamanship was most theoretical: but he wished to know if I could find a ship's position by lunar observation: and when I repeated the rules for taking the observations, and the working out of the result, he said he was satisfied as to my qualifications as a navigator, and turned me over to Harris. He said that we had served in the same squadron for the past three years, had known each other, and of each other's doings during that time: and he was as sure I was as well qualified to examine him as he was to examine me. Then Handy (temporary chief of squadron) shook hands with me, congratulated me on passing such a successful examination, and directed me to take on such stores as I needed and return to my cruising ground. Successful examination! Dear Me! It was no more than a smoke talk.

Afterwards Commander Cooper asked me a few questions concerning international law and courtesy, among them this: "In case you were in a foreign port in company with a more powerful ship of some nation other than the one in whose harbor you were lying, and the commander of the that ship should ill treat you in any way, or show disrespect to the flag under which you sailed, who would you appear to for protection and redress?" I blundered, for I told him I should appeal to my own government: but he said, ultimately, of course: but you would be the guests of the nation having jurisdiction over the harbor in which you were lying." Of course a port must see to it that its guests treat each other properly, and the appeal should first be to the port.: but I called his attention to the fact that the Frigate Essex was destroyed by the British Captain Hilyard while within the jurisdiction of Chile: and that the American privateer General Armstrong was also destroyed by a British war captain while lying under the guns of a battery at Fayal, within the jurisdiction of Portugal, and I never heard that England was called to account in either case. Cooper simply remarked that "both nations were weaklings compared to England." He also asked what I knew concerning the treatment neutrals were entitled to receive on the high seas. I told him I knew better than to take two passengers out of a ship flying the British flag, as Captain Wilkes did in the Trent affair. He said Wilkes committed a grave error, and one which might have brought his country into serious difficulty. Then he laughed and said he didn't care to ask any more questions.

I went back to my cruising ground, and in due time (early in May) an appointment as Acting Volunteer Lieutenant reached me, and with it order from the Admiral directing me to proceed immediately to Tampa, and relieve Acting Master James Russell in the command of the Steamer Honeysuckle, and to turn over the command of the Two Sisters to him, and to send him to blockade Sarasota Pass, and small inlet halfway between Tampa and Charlotte Harbor: and with the Admiral's order another note from his Secretary saying that the Admiral, while on his tour of inspection, had found the Honeysuckle in a very filthy and disorganized condition, with no log, no accounts of equipment, and that he commanding officer had then been absent for two days: and that no one on board knew where he had gone, or when

he would return: and that as the war was over the Honeysuckle would probably go North, and out of commission in the near future. He (the Admiral) had placed me in command hoping that I would put the ship in a clean and healthy condition and reestablish naval rule and order as soon as possible. A nice task. The year before Admiral Bailey had placed me in charge of the station of Tampa when it was to be used to quarantine yellow fever ships, giving as a reason that my crew was small, consequently fewer men would be exposed, and hoping I would be able to keep my own healthy: and now Admiral Stringham (his successor) had sent me to take charge of the same station, clean up and purify the worst fever stricken ship of the fleet (the Honeysuckle had lain at an isolated wharf at Key West, the previous summer, some of her crew had died, some went to the hospital those not affected were scattered among the fleet: a Master's Mate was in charge of her but never went on Board, simply went to the wharf each day to see that she was lying safely, and to bring a disorganized mob (fifty-four in number) under naval rule and discipline.

I did not like the task, but I thought if the old Greek could "make the filthy city of Athens so clean and sweet, that the office of city scavenger would ever after be held in high honor" I could, at least, clean one small ship and discipline one small crew: but whether I could destroy possible yellow fever germs was another question. As it turned out that phase of the question gave me no trouble: for the Honeysuckle was at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and out of commission, before the fever germs, if any were left, could have developed.

I proceeded to Tampa, read myself commander of the Honeysuckle, and also my orders detaching me from the Two Sisters, and my loyal fellows fairly mobbed me before I could get away from them. Most of them had been with me for eighteen months, and not more than two, or perhaps three, had ever been disciplined, and not one for at least a year. I turned the command of my little craft over to Russell, and got rid of him by sending him to Sarasota Pass as quickly as possible. He grumbled at being sent to guard an insignificant inlet twenty miles from Nowhere: and I imagine that was just the reason the Admiral directed me to send him there, for the further one could get him from the loot the better for the looted.

The Honeysuckle was a large ocean tug, one hundred and fifteen long, drew eleven feet aft, some three feet less forward, with powerful engines, and when in good condition a speed of from eleven to twelve knots. Good speed for those days. She was armed with two thirty pound rifles, parrot guns, small arms in proportion: line officers (subordinates), three Acting ensigns, Hobb (Executive), Perkins and Estabrook, and one Acting Master's Mate, one Acting 1st Assistant Engineer, Reuben Riley (chief) and three second assistants, Taber, Mattuck, and Peavy: no surgeon, and no paymaster resident on board. Both their departments were in charge of stewards (Deputies, not enlisted men, but subject to naval discipline), and a crew of fifty-four all told. Her boilers were in bad condition, and her bottom was as foul, with barnacles etc., as she with filth inside: and I had never seen one single man of the whole ship's company when I went on board. It was late in the afternoon when I took command. So after introducing myself to the officers, and getting their names, and positions, I went to my room, simply directing Mr. Hall to care for the ship, in the usual manner, until morning. I slept but little during the night. Instead I lay awake planning my campaign against dirt, disease and disorganization: and somewhere between

two and three in the morning dressed and went on deck, and found it deserted. Not a single soul in sight anywhere. So I concluded to keep watch myself, and await developments. At four o'clock the Quartermaster, who was asleep in the pilot house, roused up, struck eight bells, and then hustled aft to the ward room, called the officer of the deck, and then, seeing me on deck, hustled himself out of sight as quickly as possible (good discipline). Mr. Estabrook, officer of the deck saluted, saw his relief on deck, then went below, and I went to my room again. Two of the officers and quartermaster now knew that I had found the deck deserted in the night watch. After breakfast I ordered general muster, and then stated that I was fully aware of the filthy condition of the ship, and also of the lax discipline of the past several months: that I was in no way responsible for either, but that I was responsible for the future, and that from this time strict naval rule and discipline must be observed, and that the whole ship's company would be constantly employed in getting rid of the filth until the ship was as clean as it was possible to make her. As the men went to their quarters I heard the Boatswain's Mate say: "My God! What a job!" Then I made my inspection. The men's berth and mess deck were in the bows. Comfortable so far as room was concerned: the sleepers on which the floor rested being some two feet above the keel: the floor itself being on one and one-half inch unmatched board, not caulked, had shrunk to such a degree that the spaces between were from one-eighth to one-quarter of an inch wide, and through these spaces the filth of a berth and mess room had been washed for – no saying how long – and then it lay in a fermenting mass, nearly up to the bottom of the floor. The deck of the coal bunkers – furnaces – and engine was lower, the timbers resting on the keel, and the space beneath was choked with the same sort of filth. Aft was the ward room, and beneath it the shaft alley. As the steamer hung something over two feet by the stern all the water below the level of the engine pumps accumulated there, and the after end of the shaft was entirely submerged in a mass of porridge which smelt to the full as foul as a city sewer, and the wardroom itself was coated with the effects of it. So much for inspection.

I had no trouble bringing the crew into shape, a few sharp lessons, with no fuss, settled their case, and they really were not a bad lot. On the contrary they soon seemed glad of the change.

First of all, I sent an officer with a squad of men to collect a quantity of light wood, pile it on the beach and burn it to ashes. With this I made a quantity of strong lye. Another lot took up the berth deck, shoveled the filth into tubs, and so overboard, and with hoes, formed of a long strip of board, with a cross piece on end, got as much as they could from under the bunkers and furnace decks: and still another party with a draw pump cleared the shaft alley of that mass of filthy porridge. No one slept below that night. The atmosphere was decidedly disagreeable, probably dangerous. Even my own quarters, which were above deck, were unfit to occupy. Then with the engine hose and pump, the one forcing water through forward, the other pumping the filthy water overboard, and a draw pipe near the stern, we finally got the whole dirty mass out of the ship. Then with mops, small ones, with long wooden handles to protect the men's hands from the burning lye, we washed the inside thoroughly, forcing the hot lye into every crack and cranny within reach, followed that with a rinsing with lime water, and last of all gave her a coat of whitewash throughout, and the bedding and the whole went through a lime bath, the same as I had done the year before at the same place. All this occupied us a full week. After the first day or two the men caught on to the thing, worked with a will, and at the end were as pleased with a clean, sweet-smelling ship as I was myself.

About this time a boat came down from the town containing three of the inhabitants. One was a Colonel Hart, known to us as a staunch Unionist from the beginning. He had received protection soon after the war began in this way: Commodore Semms (Cousin of the Alabama Semms) hearing that Colonel Hart was in danger of ill treatment on account of his sentiments, forced his gunboat (the Tahama) as near the town as shoal water permitted. Then with his big rifled parrot he threw two, or three, shells clear over the town into the woods beyond. Having demonstrated that he could easily destroy the place he sent an officer with his ultimatum "If Colonel Hart is injured or disturbed in any way by anyone, I will not leave a building standing in the town of Tampa, or in its vicinity." The Colonel told me that for months not a soul except his black boy who lived with him – he had no family. Another of the three was a Mr. Mably – a representative citizen – known as a rabid secessionist – and he was believed to have been one of a party – who had earlier in the war ambushed themselves in tall grass on Gidson's Point, dressed two of their number to represent negro women – who exhibited a white flag: and when Randall of the sailing bark Rachael sent a boat with two officers to communicate, rose up out of the tall grass and fired at it at short range, killing one of the officers outright, and wounding the other, and two or three of the men. Randall had sprung his broadside on the point, and he opened fire with his heavy guns: but it was not long range, and he never knew as to whether he did the retreating scamps any damage. Whether Mr. Mably was one of that party or not, he was tame enough when he came onboard the Honeysuckle.

The third was a young fellow of the genus Carpetbagger, who had got to Tampa somehow, and was prepared to assist the citizens of Florida in the task of reorganizing the state government. These gentlemen were bearers of a petition from the inhabitants of the town of Tampa and vicinity, setting forth that disbanded Confederate soldiers, mostly armed, and utterly destitute, were drifting into the town, and that the people were afraid that in desperation they would resort to lawlessness to satisfy their needs, and begging me to assign an officer with a body of men sufficient to support him in his authority to control affairs under military rule until their safety was assured.

I was forced to tell them that I had a very limited acquaintance with my officers, and under the circumstances would not consider myself justified in entrusting anyone of them with the arbitrary powers of a military governor. Then Mr (the Carpetbagger) spoke up. He said that he was a graduate of some law school at the North (I forget what law school): that he knew all about law, both civil and military, and proposed that I appoint him my representative, and furnish him with a body of enlisted men to back his authority. He wasn't a bit afraid but what he could handle the affair successfully. I told him that he had not profited by his studies at the law school, else he would be aware that no person unconnected with the military – and consequently not subject to court martial for alleged misconduct – could exercise the functions of a military governor. But he thought he could convince me that I was mistaken. Then I told him that he must take his seat: that I could not listen to him. Still he persisted. Then I sent for Mr. Hall and directed him to remove the troublesome gentleman from my presence, and not let him come near me again while he was onboard. A more astonished graduate of a law school was never seen. It put me in mind of a graduate from the University of Pennsylvania that was with me on one of my whaling voyages. He told me that his old preceptor used to advise the students that the average college graduate needed seven years knocking about in the world to get the conceit cut of him,

and Scot (that was his name) said I've been seven months on board this ship, and all the conceit is out of me." I finally told them that the best I could do was to send a boat to Cedar Keys with a letter to the Colonel commanding advising him of the conditions at Tampa, and requesting him to send a company of troops to that place as soon as he could. Then Mr. Mably spoke up: "But they are black troops, and that will never do." I told him they were United States soldiers, and it would be well for the people of Tampa to remember that. Then Colonel Hart begged me to give him a letter addressed to the citizens of Tampa telling them what I had promised him, and advising them as to their conduct during the interval. A nice job for poor, half-illiterate me! But the old fellow was very anxious, and I could not refuse him. So I sat down and addressed my letter to the citizens of Tampa, Florida. (I wish I had a copy of that letter) advising them that I had received their delegation, read their instructions, and would see that they had sufficient protection as soon as possible. That it would be well for them to organize a committee of safety, poll the citizens of the town, elect a sheriff and a magistrate with powers to summon a jury of four or six, promptly, to take testimony and to pass upon all cases of lawlessness. But I cautioned them to keep a perfect record of all cases, and not to inflict penalties: but to use one of the old block houses to confine such persons as they deemed necessary until a military officer arrived, when the cases would be looked into by him. And I told them that, in my opinion, the fact that they were organized for self-protection would be sufficient to hold in check all lawless persons. My observations in the mining camps guided me in this). I had already started a boat for Cedar Keys, and I sent another to convey the delegation as far as Godson's Point. The poor little bateau in which they had drifted down was an unsafe craft to navigate the lower portions of Tampa Bay. It all amounted to nothing. My boat met the transport (a schooner) with Captain Jarrett and his company of the 3rd Regiment on board bound for Tampa: and by sundown she was anchored near us. The next morning she went up the bay, and a few hours after the delegation had returned, and my letter of advise had been read, the troops were landed, and the citizens of Tampa had all the protection they needed. But I suspect the fact that the troops were black was as gall and wormwood to some of them.

Two or three days later having got the steamer clean, and everything running smoothly, I went up to the town myself to look up Jarrett and see how he was getting on. I found him on a camp bed in one of the old block houses suffering with a pretty bad case of intermittent fever. Very glad he was to see me, and very much worried over the situation, for he had no commissioned officer with him. His one lieutenant (Thomson) lost an eye and had his cheek bone crushed in the fight at St. Mark's: and it was well understood that the plantation blacks would not take orders from their black non-commissioned officers. I asked him to report the situation to Colonel Tanshend, and I would see that the report reached Cedar Keys as soon as possible: but he said he was too sick to write, and asked me to relieve him of his duties while he was sick. Then I sent for the first sergeant, and found that he had been third mate of a New Bedford whaler, cruising in the Ochotsk Sea, and knew me very well. He said he could easily handle the company as long as Captain Jarrett was alive and he could give orders in his name: that the larger number of the privates were Northern men, and quite a number of them had followed the sea. There would be no trouble with them. But in case Jarrett died he was not sure of the plantation fellows: and so he begged me to keep in close touch, and to show myself as often as I could. He said the boys looked upon me as a member of General Newton's staff, and there would be no trouble when I was around. The upshot was that when the transport Union passed up the next day I sent a letter to

Colonel Tanshend, and two days later Major Weeks of the Refugees, came down and took charge of affairs at Tampa.

Calling on Colonel Hart while in town I found, as his guest General Samuel Miller (our opponent at St. Marks). Johnson's surrender to General Sherman had had the effect to disband the Confederate forces (or perhaps they had simply dispersed themselves) and Gen. Sam, as came to call him, his occupation gone, old, war-worn, and penniless, without kith or kin, a white-haired, gentle-mannered, sweet-faced old man, had wandered down to Tampa to become the guest and accept the bounty of his old friend Hart, but little better off in this world's goods than himself. And there the two sat when I called, smoking their pipes, and saying little: and a pathetic sight it was. Hart, staunch Unionist from start to finish, had suffered isolation among his own people for months, and but for the interference of Commander Semms early in the war, worse would probably have come to him: and Gen. Sam active, on the opposite side, and had just fought what I think was the last battle in the service, sitting there alone smoking their vile tobacco – the only kind they could get – and having little to say to each other. Hart received me quietly and introduced me to Gen. Sam, who offered me a pipe, grumbling at the vile weed he was obliged to smoke because he could get no other. He was averse to talking about the war, and particularly so about the St. Marks affair: and it was very little I could get out of him at that sitting. Afterwards I learned more. I found out that he was fond of his whiskey, for he apologized for not offering me such miserable stuff as they had: said it was not fit for gentlemen to use, "but beggars musn't be choosers."

The next day the transport Union from New York landed on her way up with supplies for the fleet, and I got a quantity of the best tobacco and I coaxed Captain Conroy to let me have a half dozen bottles of good whiskey, which he did, and when Major Weeks (I took him up to the town in my boat, the steamer he came in drew too much to go up the bay) I was glad it came about so, for I wanted to see that the first sergeant stood right with Weeks, he was in a sense under my orders. I took the tobacco and two bottles of whiskey with me, which I gave to Gen. Sam. Weeks had asked me to bring Colonel Hart to him, which I did, and then went back to the General. He had two brimming glasses of cocktail mixed, and two pipes filled with the new tobacco, and was standing in the doorway waiting for me. Then he invited me to sit down, and we puffed our pipes, and sipped our cocktails, and proceeded to get acquainted. There was no mistaking his fondness for good whiskey. He easily disposed of two glasses while I disposed of one. I asked him if he liked that brand. He said he did, and wished he had some more. I told him I had four more bottles which I would bring up on condition that he would answer such questions as I chose to ask concerning the St Marks fight. He said he wouldn't do it: and I told him he'd get no more whiskey. He scolded some at that: said it was too bad to tease an old man that way. I laughed at him. Told him the whiskey would be cheap at that rate, and I would not betray his confidence.

The two cocktails had put the old fellow in good humor. So after a little time he said: the story of that fight will be told by someone and it may as well be told by me.

I asked him when he first heard of our expedition, and he said: "When I got the report of the skirmish at East River bridge at nine the same forenoon. And soon after that a large number of vessels (steamers) were in Spanish Hole landing troops." And that he immediately began collecting the small bodies of soldiers scattered both up and down the coast, and also telegraphed for reinforcements, and he burned the bridge at Newport, which left the only possible route by way of the Corduroy Road across the swamp. I asked him how many men he had collected when the fight commenced, and he would not tell me, only that he had enough to hold Newton in check until his reinforcements arrived, which he was looking for at any time. When I asked him why he let Newton cross the swamp when he could easily have stopped him at that point, and if he chose to let him cross why he did not wait until he (Newton) had turned to the left on his route to St Marks? When he could have taken him in the rear, and so cut off retreat. He said he had forty-eight hours between the skirmish at East River Bridge and the crossing of the swamp to make his plans: that he had an accurate knowledge as to the number of troops Newton had with him, and that he intended to capture the entire force. What he didn't know was that the object was to reach Thomasville, but on the contrary he thought that the object was to get possession of the railroad, and that the expedition was in the nature of a flank movement and auxiliary to some larger operations of which he knew nothing. So he placed his men with a view to protect the railroad until his reinforcements (consisting of twenty-four hundred regulars) arrived. When they did arrive one-half went into action on the front, while the other half divided into parties, started to march around each flank, and so envelop his force, cut off his retreat and capture the whole body: and then he said: "Now Captain, I want you to tell me how Newton got his men off the field, and retreated in such good order. He actually carried off my field piece. How did he manage it? It has puzzled me ever since. The fight was still hot, it ceased suddenly, and the men were gone. I thought it was a stampede, and rushed my men after them, expecting to pick them all up before they reached the East River. Then Newton covered that Corduroy with the bodies of my poor fellows, and not another man would enter it. And when I explained how it came about he said: "Well, I was out-generaled, and I'm ashamed of the whole affair. I wish it had never happened."

I asked him if the rumor that all our poor, wounded fellows that were left on the battlefield were bayoneted where they lay was true, and what possible good could come from shooting Strickland as a deserter. He merely remarked that the Confederate soldiers could not be restrained when opposed by black troops, and he ignored the second question altogether.

A short time after, perhaps a week, the steamer Moluska, Commander Stanton commanding, relieved me, and brought orders for me to proceed to Key West, first emptying my coal bunkers into the Moluska's retaining only enough to make the passage. I easily obtained permission to visit the town once more while the coal was being transferred. I found all quiet. Jarrett had been moved from the old block house to one of the principal residences, and under the care of Mr Mably – who was an apothecary, and something of a physician, — was somewhat improved. I gave the four bottles of whiskey to General Sam. We had a cocktail and a pipe together. (Colonel Hart was absent from home). Then I bid the old fellow's eyes as we shook hands: "This miserable war is ended, and you will be going home to your family son: and you have a number of years of active life before you. Be a good boy, and do what you can to keep the country from war in the future." Then he thanked me for my kindness to a

defeated old enemy, and so we parted. Gentle, sweet-faced old general. To look at him one would think he could not destroy a mosquito without hurting himself. And yet the old lion could fight, as we had good reason to know. I called at Weeks' quarters to say Goodbye, and he walked down to the boat with me. On the way he told me that word had gone out that I was going to leave the station, and that the sergeant had been to him asking that the soldiers have leave to give me a sendoff, and that he had given them permission, provided I was willing. Of course I was willing. We had had some pretty rough experiences together, and I had always found loyalty. Then Major Weeks nodded to the sergeant, and he stepped forward, saluted, and said that several of the boys had served in the whaling fleet, and knew of me as Master of the Massachusetts, and wanted to bid me goodbye, and wish me good luck. I told him I could not very well stop to shake hands with the whole squad (some thirty-five or forty, all that was left after the St Marks fight) but I shook hands with the sergeant, and lifted my cap in acknowledgement of their good wishes: and then how these black fellows did cheer. I suspect it was a new sensation to them to see a naval officer with the rank of their captain shaking hands with their black naval company. I then stepped into my boat and returned to the steamer, found that the coal had been transferred to the Moluska, and that steam was up ready to leave. So I bid Commander Stanton (he was the same who, as Rear Admiral, lost the Kearsage on the Rancaden Reef in the Caribbean sea, a few years ago) Good-bye, and left immediately for Key West.

There was one thing happened soon after I took command of the Honeysuckle that may have some little interest for you. A cracker brought a small bag onboard containing some two dozen letters, with a request that they be sent to their destination. (If one could tell by the addresses what their destination was) Now an occasional letter came to the blockade, all through the war, with the same request: and, of course, each one was examined by the commanding officer to see that nothing improper passed through the lines. As the war ended it would seem as though I might have sent these poor little letters on their journey without examination. As I remember everyone was from some woman, child, or young person, begging husband, father, brother or lover to come home now the war was ended. Two especially impressed themselves on my mind, and in substance were about as follows:

"Dear Jim,

You know I can't write, but Sally is writing this letter for me, and you can get someone to read it for you. I haven't heard from you for more than a year: but now the war is over they tell us our men may come home. Do come quick so we can make a crop of next winter. It has been pretty hard getting enough to eat sometimes, but Sam has caught some gophers, which you know are good meat, and I have raised some corn and some potatoes, so we've only been hungry part of the time. We should have got along better but the soldiers took our hogs so we could not make any bacon, but we haven't got hardly any clothes. I am wearing the best dress now, and it needs mending often now. Emma hasn't got any dress. She wears my old petticoat. She ties it round her neck, and ties a string round the waist, and sticks her arms through slits. I made some trousers out of some bagging I found at the cotton press, but he hasn't any shirt. He just wears anything he can get over his shoulders. Sometimes nothing. So come home quick as you can, Jim, dear, we need you so bad."

And another:

“Dear Dick: It is such a long time since I heard from you, but they tell us now the war is ended and you can come home, so come quick as you can, and we will be married right away. I’m a woman now Dick. Pop says we may have the ten-acre lot at the bottom of the hill where the pines grow. We’ll plant a crop just as soon as you get here: and there is lots of trees just the right size to build our house. I’ll help you take them. I’m big and strong and can work lots: and, Dick, dear, I never had a ring, and I’ve always wanted one. Please bring me one, size smaller than this: (and then an ink mark, evidently made by covering one edge of a finger ring with ink and stamping on paper).

Oh, war – the glory of it – of the Hell of it!

I reached Key West the following day, and immediately received orders to take on coal and supplies sufficient for the passage to New York, and as soon as I had done so to proceed to that port, and report to the Commandant of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. I got away the next day just at dusk. The steamer’s bottom was as foul as it is possible for a bottom to be, and the boilers were in bad condition, so we could not carry enough coal to reach New York, so I put into Port Royal for a supply. I really put into Charleston, lower harbor, first: but Admiral Dahlgren was so afraid of yellow fever that he ordered me back to Port Royal. He did it by signal too. He would not allow me to board the quarantine vessel, or anyone to come within hail of me. At Port Royal it was different. There was a large fleet at that place, but I was allowed free intercourse with all.

Only one other incident worth mentioning happened. When off Hatteras, and about three miles from the shoal, with quite a heavy swell heaving directly towards it, Riley (the chief) reported that one of the water legs was leaking so badly that it was necessary to draw fires and let the boiler cool in order to repair it. I told him that was impossible. The machinery must run until I had got an offing of at least twenty miles unless the fires went out in spite of them. Then I asked him if he could not reach the leak, and stop it with pine plugs, without going into the furnace. He said they could reach it: but as they must work with the furnace door open the heat would drive them away. I told them they must make a trial. I would furnish them a dozen blankets, plenty of water, and men to screen them as much as possible, to cut his strips long, so they could work without getting any nearer the fire than necessary. At the end of the hour (the engine was barely turning then) Riley came aft – his face and hand pretty badly blistered, but smiling. “All right, Captain, the leak is stopped, and the fires are running up again.”

We arrived at New York about the first of July, and on reporting the Commander’s clerk handed me an order from the Navy Department, directing me to pay off all enlisted men whose term expired within six

months, to transfer the remainder to the receiving ship North Carolina, and to put the steamer Honeysuckle out of commission.

I completed this at noon of the third, just too late to get the report into the Commandant's office, which closed at noon that day, but not too late to catch the Cornwall boat, and go up and spend the Fourth with my parents.

I made my report before noon of the fifth, and was handed an order from the Department dated July 3rd, granting me four months' leave of absence from that date. That night I took the Fall River boat, and arrived the next day, July 8th, 1865. I found your mother in bed with a wee thing four days old lying on her arm. That wee thing will be forty years old next Sunday. We call her Daisy, and she has presented me with two grandchildren – a girl and a boy – of whom any grandparent might well be proud.

At the end of four months I received my last order from the U.S. Navy Department, dated November 3rd, 1865. It hangs on the wall of the sitting room, you have often seen it. It is an Honorable Discharge from the Naval Service of the United States.

My story is finished, children. It covers, in a general way, the first thirty-four years of my life, when most of you were still unborn. Of course it is faulty in construction – that you were prepared to expect. Such as it is I dedicate it to you one and all.

You may wonder if I am satisfied with the life I led during those thirty-four years. Perhaps the best answer I can give is both Yes and No. Many things I would have done differently, could I have foreseen results: but, on the whole, I may say that I am very well satisfied, especially with the years spent in the whaling fishing. As to my service in the Navy I have more reason to say No. I think that as a boy and young man I was something of a hero worshipper, and that the military element (i.e. the officers) were of the elite of the people: but long before my three years' close contact with them in the club-room and at the mess table, I had become disillusioned, and I had come to look upon them, as a class, as men with a very limited range of ideas, morals below the average of men, conceited fellows, and thoroughly impressed with the spirit of "I am holier than thou": and the belief grew on me, and still remains with me, that our military training schools are among our most dangerous institutions.

If you ask what single act gave me the most satisfaction, I can say truly that the throwing over of the black list as my first act after being appointed to the position of Executive of the Somerset, and by that act indicating to the enlisted men that as man to man, between me and them, there were to be no superiors or inferiors: that aside from the respect and obedience due to the authority vested in me, we were comrades engaged in a common cause.

It is needless to say that I was gratified at the way my promotion reached me: unsolicited as it was. Nature had equipped me with steady nerves, and also with intellect sufficient to enable me to perform all service required of me by those placed in authority over me, and I could not be other than gratified at receiving promotion as a reward for good service rendered, and coming as it did by way of the War Department, and in consequence of the commendation of General Jack.

You are all familiar with the life I have led during the last forty years, so I will not allude to it. The writing of the story has been a labor of love, and I have had much pleasure in doing it. Old memories have crowded upon me, and I have found it difficult to avoid making tedious by recording minor incidents common to all seafaring men.

With all my love, I am your father

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