

***Ship to Golden Shore :***  
***A Chronicle of the Schooner Damariscove,***  
***Her Men and Her "Afterlife" 1849-1854.***



**By**  
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**Denver, Colorado and Olympia, Washington**  
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Created by R. Scott Stilson

The Schooner Damariscove's voyage  
18 December 1849 - 12 July 1850

**Owners of the *Damariscove***  
in  
Chronological Order

Name	Relation to Vessel	Date
Abner Stetson	Builder	1849
Reuben Ball Lyman [Thos.] N. Chapman William B. Fullerton William M. Hatch Harvey Hiscock Richard Hiscock William Kenniston Samuel W. [N.] Look Daniel [Mellen] Mellus Abner Stetson Waterman Stetson Alex B. Weeks George B. Williams, and (And others listed in table 1 below)	Partners - <i>Damariscotta Mining and Trading Company</i> - Owners	July? 1849-Nov? 1850
Thomas Hall William M. Hatch William Kenniston Daniel C. Mellus Joseph Mellus Waterman Stetson, and Alexander B. Weeks George B. Williams	Owner and Master Owners	Registered November 3, 1850 Sold November 5, 1850
William W. Shelly William H. Mitchell	Owners	November 5, 1850 - April 19, 1851
Lafayette Balch Cyrus Palmer (possibly one other - Wehber)	Owner - Enrollment granted Register Granted E & L Granted Owners	April 19, 1851 - October 18, 1851 October 18, 1851 - April 20, 1852 April 20, 1852 - November 23, 1853
George S. Wright	Owner	November 23, 1853 - November 26, 1853*
E.R. Woods C. Macy George F. Bunker	Co-owners	November 26, 1853 - December 18 <sup>th</sup> , 1854
Vessel Lost		License Surrendered December 18, 1854

\*We question the short duration of George S. Wright's ownership of the Schooner. Further inquiries are being made to discern if our present knowledge as presented here is accurate. Anyone with information on this point is encouraged to contact one of the authors.

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Hatch family portraits - left to right: Top row - Miller Hatch, Nancy (Laughton) Hatch, John H. Hatch. Bottom row - Sarah Maria Hatch and Susan Jane Hatch. Courtesy of Roxann F. Rhea.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the Tacoma Public Library which Randolph Stilson does so well in his portion. For almost two years he and I have struggled to make this journey come to life again. It has truly been a labor of love. We have been somewhat like the crew of the *Damariscove*, in that we have not always perceived things in the same way, nor have we always agreed. If just two people have this problem, you can readily understand how it was for 22 men aboard a schooner! Without Randy's agreement to co-author this article, without his contribution, his help in finding more old newspaper accounts and books in Washington and Oregon and the invaluable "first hand account" of the gold mine segment, this article would merely be a personal reminiscence. He has worked full time, attended his family at home, and put up with my ineptness on the Word Processor! Kudos go to him for the formatting, layout and printing of the manuscript. He has dealt amazingly well with a retiree whose obsession is the main thing on her agenda.

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If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?  
—Albert Einstein—

## Preface

We are about to re-tell the story of the Schooner *Damariscove* (built by Abner Stetson), which sailed down the Damariscotta River on December 18, 1849 and arrived in San Francisco Bay on July 12, 1850. Ms. Judi Finn, Editor of the Lincoln County News of Damariscotta, ME, agreed to run this as a series beginning in June, 2005. The authors, Roxann F. Rhea of Denver, CO and W.Randolph Stilson of Olympia, WA both had great-great grandfathers aboard the *Damariscove*. Rheas' ancestor was William M. Hatch and Stilson's was Reuben F. Ball; both men kept journals during the voyage.

**Rhea writes:** William M. Hatch (1799-1850) was soon to be 51 years of age (2<sup>nd</sup> oldest) when he joined the 21 other men on the *Damariscove*. He was the only son of Phillips Hatch and his 3rd wife, Fanny McCaffrey. William left a wife, Nancy (Laughton/Lawton) Hatch and 11 children at home in Bristol. Phillips Hatch and Nancy's father, James Laughton, were long time neighbors; both were Revolutionary War veterans who lived long enough to receive pensions

William's eldest child, Emeline, was married to Charles Doolittle Sears and lived in Damariscotta. The youngest was Charles Sears Hatch, a mere 15 months of age. I am descended from Sarah Maria Hatch, who was not yet six when her father left. William wrote daily entries in his journal beginning on December 18, 1849 as they sailed down the Damariscotta River and ending July 12, 1850 when the *Damariscove* reached the Bay of San Francisco. The last journal entry was penned on July 28, 1850 in which he indicated that perhaps the sister of Captain Bearstow (Barstow) might soon return to Maine and bring his journal to his wife and the Sears family to read. To this day I do not know who brought it home, but it was cared for and handed down in another branch of the family.

Even though I have researched and documented my place in the Hatch family, I never knew until 2002 that William kept a journal of the voyage or that it was in existence. I had visited the Bristol area some years before, saw the graves of both William's and Nancy's parents, and read about the *Damariscove*'s voyage in Christine Dodge's books.

Much later, a chance search of the Internet revealed that the California Historical Society in San Francisco held a microfilmed copy of his 208 page hand-written journal! After connecting with the owner of the original, I was given permission to obtain a copy from the CHS Library. It can be read there (albeit not easily); however, it cannot be copied.

This journal has enabled me to know William, as if he were here, to learn from him, to appreciate his part in the period of history, and to experience a sea going vessel as if I were on it. This is his legacy, and my search for him will continue. Ultimately to know William and the others was to know and develop a closeness with this schooner beyond

anything I would have imagined. I feel compelled to say that, as a woman, I understand how devastated the wives and mothers of these men must have been to see them sail away for an undetermined period of time...to be left at home with children and endless responsibilities. Only William's expressions of loneliness and love are known. So, I particularly salute Nancy and her children, as well as the other women and children left behind.

All other considerations aside, the journals we have read call for a crash course in nautical, geographical, navigational, meteorological terminology, 19<sup>th</sup> century "medications" and illnesses. William was quite detailed in many of his entries. Among other things, he wrote about what they ate, how they entertained themselves, how crowded the conditions were, how many birds and animals they saw and hunted, how the ship was rigged, what their duties involved, what kind of discussions the men had, what their occupations were, how the natives of Brazil, Chile and Patagonia differed and how compatible the group was, at least in the beginning! There were light moments, moments of good camaraderie, moments of terrifying storms, boring moments and moments of longing to either be at home or to have this never ending voyage end! There were poignant night dreams of family and friends and daydreams of becoming rich in the California mines. The men took care of one another as best they could. With all of the negatives, the journals never failed to mention splendid sunrises and sunsets, beautiful night skies, spectacular mountains, the delight of calm seas and pleasant weather. Is it any wonder that we are mesmerized by it all?

Part of my research and Stilson's has delved into the "afterlife" of the *Damariscove* on the Pacific Coast; this will add another dimension for both the East and West coast descendants. It is hoped that descendants of the people involved with her coastal trading and her ensuing adventures will enjoy learning about her voyage to San Francisco.

**Stilson writes:** The year 1849 marks an extraordinary population movement that impacted hundreds of thousands' lives at the time and millions in subsequent generations. Today's school children care little for the impact that this great migration caused their ancestors, taking their studies of the time's momentous events as just more ho-hum facts in history's litany; and it was so even with me as I was growing up, until my mother and father took on the task of interpreting and compiling the diary and papers of my great-great grandfather, Reuben F. Ball (1822-1900). Arising from a Wilton, Maine childhood, the grandson of Israel Ball (Revolutionary War veteran) and Percis Stone of Spenser, Massachusetts, the son of Levi Ball and Mary Morse, Reuben spent his young adulthood as a farmer and lumberman in Wilton and a boot and shoemaker in South Weymouth from whence he left to join the *Damariscove's* crew at the suggestion of his brother-in-law, William B. Fullerton, another investor in the enterprise.



At the age of 27 in 1849, with wife and children at his home in South Weymouth, Mass, Reuben Ball became a statistic within the great westward movement caused by the discovery of gold in California. He became one of what history now calls a “Forty-Niner”. Thus was my interest kindled in the sailing of the schooner *Damariscove* (The ship’s name has been variously recorded in other works as the *Damarscove*, *Damaris Cove*, *Damariscover*, etc. I use the nomenclature ascribed by both the diarists and the U. S. Government in the official licensing documents).

Reuben Ball’s 69 page journal or diary is adventuresome reading. Not only are the daily events portrayed sometimes riveting, but trying to interpret handwriting and non-standardized spelling makes for an unusual experience akin to but more difficult than (I think) doing jigsaw or word puzzles. Three of his stories stand out for me: The first is not in his diary but is mentioned in his autobiographical materials and is the story of how the *Damariscove*’s crew “requisitioned” a cannon so that they would have protection from pirates and other dangers on their voyage. The second involves Reuben’s ability to keep his stomach during the worst of weather while most of the others are heartily seasick. The third consists of multiple entries in the journal normally penned on a Sunday when “all hands are civil”. Curiosity has led me to seek more information about the ship that took my great-great grandfather through the Strait of Magellan and thence to San Francisco.

When the voyagers arrived in San Francisco Bay they still had considerable organization and distance to overcome. They had to get to the gold fields. The remainder of our story will attempt to give the reader a hint of what life in the mining areas was like, how the miners created their own society and how some made it back to the loved ones they had left behind. Since only one of our intrepid adventurers (to our knowledge) left an account of this part of their experiences, we will depend on Reuben Ball’s diary entries mixed with some stories remembered by Arthur Chapman, (Lyman’s son). Following Reuben’s successful return to Maine, we will return to the West Coast to follow the *Damariscove* once again as she literally delivers the goods to San Francisco from the Pacific Northwest - Oregon Territory. Of special interest will be one of her owners, Lafayette Balch (also a native of Maine), founder of Steilacoom, Washington; the documentation of other owners; and her eventual wreck off the coast of Oregon at Winchester Bay—at the mouth of the Umpqua River.

The authors of this work hope that presenting this little bit of history of the schooner *Damariscove* and its crew will inspire others to look into their ancestors’ history. If others have an ancestral connection to the *Damariscove* we hope that you will contact us, so that the full story of this gallant little ship can be documented.



## **Part I: The Journals and Sailing South**

### **The Sources**

Before departing on our voyage with the *Damarisove* and her men, we will note the various accounts we know to have been written.

1) "Members Of The Damariscotta Mining and Trading Company Sailed in the Schr *Damariscope* from Damariscotta of the 18<sup>th</sup> of Dec. 1849: Bound to California In the Pursuit of Golde". Reuben Ball's original journal held by the Stilson family, who transcribed it. Mr. Stilson has kindly given me the transcribed journal as well as the transcription of Reuben's autobiography we both use in this article. It should be pointed out that Reuben's journal is the only one of four accounts which includes his time in the California mines and his trip back to Maine. He was also the only one of the four men who named a mining and trading company.

2)"Journal of a passage from Damariscotta to San Francisco in upper California in the Schoonor *Damariscope* From December 18<sup>th</sup> 1849 to July 12, 1850 Kept by William M. Hatch" A microfilmed copy of William M. Hatch's original journal is at the California Historical Society, North Baker Research Library, Director Mary Morganti (MS #958) which can be read on site. A typed transcript other handwritten copies are said to be under copyright. Unfortunately, copies could not be shared with Mr. Stilson for this reason.. We are still able to do a comparative study by checking dates and events of other journals with entries made by William M. Hatch

3)"A Journal of a voyage to California from Damariscotta in the schooner *Damariscope* around south america through the Straights of Majelon" The original journal by Lyman N. Chapman, which is, I believe, at the State University of Wisconsin. In addition there is a mimeographed transcript of the journal which was given to me by a relative. There also is a book by B.B. Chapman at the Skidompha Public Library in Damariscotta, ME. It contains the same information as the mimeographed copy, but is done in a clearly typed format. Both authors also have son, Arthur Chapman's , account of Lyman's time in the gold fields as recalled in 1933.

4) A printed transcript of most of the letter written by William Kenniston to his wife, Mary not long before the *Damariscope* reached the Bay of San Francisco appears in the book, *The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay* by George Wharton Rice...pp. 84 - 95. In addition there was another transcript of the letter which included some information that was not in the book. Copies were obtained courtesy of the Boothbay Historical Society, Barbara Rumsey. We do not know if the original letter exists. Mr. Stilson now has copies of Lyman's journal and the Kenniston letter.

## The Voyage Begins

We are so very fortunate to have these accounts to enlarge and enhance our knowledge of this voyage, these men and their wonderful schooner. There were other journals mentioned in William M. Hatch's writings, i.e., Alexander B. Weeks who intended to send his home with William's when Capt. Barstow's sister returned to Maine (we simply do not know whether that happened), Harvey Hitchcock and George B. Williams. Hatch also makes mention in his January 2<sup>nd</sup> entry that the "ship's day run" was being "worked up by Capt. Talbot or Capt. Choate in presumedly the ship's log. These are the only others we know of, but there certainly could have been more.

We will refer to the keepers of journals and the letter as follows: Ball, Hatch, Chapman and Kenniston. Unless otherwise specified we are referring to William Hatch not Ephraim Hatch. There is an excellent series of articles about this voyage and the gold mines written by Mr. George F. Dow of Nobleboro (Nobleboro Historical Society) which appeared in the Lincoln County News (Damariscotta, ME) as early as 1977 and another in 1983. These were based on Chapman's journal . Our articles will try not to be too repetitious. We hope to include some items not previously covered, to compare some of the writings in the other journals, and to add some facts heretofore unknown. In addition we will try to clear up some inaccuracies which have persisted for years. It is not our intention to present a frivolous account; however the journals do reveal that despite the dangers, the boredom, the occasional bickering...the heights and depths of human emotions....suffice it to say, the men, at times, had fun and entertainment along with all the rest. How else could they have survived? This article, covers not only much in the way of documentation, but some in the way of light hearted comment. We are proud of our ancestors and their comrades. It is important to keep their story alive...for us, our children and all the descendants to come.

It should be helpful to read the list of men aboard the *Damariscove*, accompanied by their ages and occupations as given by the sources noted. Three accounts exist. **Table 1** combines two of these: Ball's list, since it included occupations and Wm Hatch's which included ages. The list in the Christine Dodge book Vol. I, p.335,(author unknown) will not be used. Variations, corrections and additional information appear in parenthesis, and names are alphabetized for easier reference:

When Kenniston left home his letter said he expected to go as a passenger but discovered that the company had to work the vessel.[ A short digression here, might help explain the term "passenger" in regard to this voyage. Daniel Roberson, above, is listed as a passenger, Hatch's journal stated that they stopped at Dyer's Point and picked up some passengers. This writer was told that Dyer's Point was probably Cape Elizabeth; Talbot is listed above as being from Cape Elizabeth, but other references list him from Portland. Ball's Journal title named the Damariscotta Mining & Trading Company. He was correct that the men formed a company. Hatch also referred to the

**Table 1**

Name	Age	Station	Occupation	Residence
Ball, Reuben	28	seaman	farmer	So. Weymouth, Mass
Berry, Charles	30	2 mate	Chordwainner/seaman	Cape Elizabeth
Chapman, Lyman N.	24(22)	seaman	carriage maker	Damariscotta
Chout, Francis H. [Choate]	43	pilot	seaman	Beverly, Mass
Curtis, William (Col.)	43	seaman	ship carpenter	Damariscotta
Fullerton, William B.	39	seaman	blacksmith	Wiscasset
Hall, Thomas	52	1 mate	boatbuilder	Damariscotta
*Hatch, Ephraim [Hutch],[Ephraim]	38	passenger	house carpenter	Damariscotta
Hatch, William M.	50	seaman	farmer/*mason	Bristol
Hescock, Harvy H. [Henry] [Hitchcock or Hiscock]	23	seaman	brickmaker/ farmer	Newcastle
Hescock, Joseph H. (same as above)	21	seaman	ship carpenter	Damariscotta
Hescock, Richard (same as above)	36	2 steward	corker - farmer	Newcastle
Kenneston, William [Kenniston or Keniston]	43	seaman	butcher - farmer	Boothbay
Little, John	34	seaman	farmer	Damariscotta
Look, Samuel W. (Lock, [S or L]. W.)	40	cook	fisherman	Georgetown
Mellus, Daniel C. [Mellies/Malice/ Mallus]	37	seaman/rigger	ship carpenter	Damariscotta
Mellus, Joseph (same as above)	43	seaman/rigger	ship carpenter	Searsport
Roberson, Daniel H. [Robinson]	22	passenger	house carpenter	Damariscotta
Talbot, George W. [Falberte **]	38	Capt	farmer/ seaman & *mason	Cape Elizabeth
Tuck, Mathew	29	seaman	farmer	Farmington
Weeks, Alexander B. (Weeks, Alex)	23	3 mate	sadler/ seaman	Damariscotta
Williams, George B.	40	3 steward	farmer	Woolwich
*Ephraim Hatch - evidently no relation to William M. Hatch. It should be noted that Hatch's journal disclosed that both he and Capt. Talbot had certificates of Masonry. There was nothing to indicate that Hatch was a carpenter, as Ball originally listed: Chapman's age was given differently by just about everybody! **The misspelling of George Talbot's name was apparently due to a problem transcribing Ball's handwriting].				

company. Kenniston was exactly right...they all did have to work the vessel. None were passengers. It is also clear that the men bought shares in the vessel and cargo. Did they all have a share? We do not think the officers, Capt. Talbot and Capt. Choate had a share; however, Capt. Hall did. [This assessment is probably as clear as it is going to get]. When we refer to crew, company, partner, our men, our fellows or group we mean the 22 men aboard the schooner. Returning to Kenniston's account, the explanation of how the watches were divided up is somewhat confusing. It does give some insight into the four watches: The Captain's watch: (Capt. Talbot), J. Mellus, John Little and Harvy Hiscock; The mate's watch: comprised of Thomas Hall, Daniel Mellus, Lyman Chapman and himself (Kenniston); 2<sup>nd</sup> mate's watch: Charles Berry, William Hatch, William Fullerton, Joseph Hiscock; the last watch included Alexander Weeks, 3<sup>rd</sup> mate: William Curtis, Mathew Tuck and Reuben Ball. (Note: One of the four watches must have relieved a watch in some way, not explained). Liberty has been taken with Kenniston's spellings.

Apparently some who later wrote about the voyage thought that Hatch was the captain of the *Damariscove*. This may have come from some misinformation or misinterpretation by a descendant of his. At any rate, he definitely was not the Captain, nor did he himself claim to be. As for Ball's complete listing of occupations, Hatch seemed to address this in his own way as he wrote on February 1, 1850: "I can find in this motley crew of 22 men 6 ship masters 9 seamen 4 ship carpenters 4 riggers 2 boat builders 3 house joiners 3 merchants 7 farmers a justice of the peace 1 shoe maker 1 brick maker 1 butcher 1 sadler 1 wheel wright 2 block & pump makers 1 spar maker 2 Black smiths 1 surveyor of lumber 1 mason [he did not know yet that Capt. Talbot also was a mason] 2 caulkers & 2 sail makers besides one School master & one teacher of music" He has left us to guess which folks did what. Interestingly enough Ball does not list himself as a music teacher. He definitely was. Many people feel that where there is music, there is soul..Ball's talent in music was probably the "glue" that held things together. So, really, Hatch was indicating all the multiple trades that the men had. Again on May 23 he wrote in a humorous vein: "There is a grate many trades going on here barbers shop Tailors shop Carpentering joinering washing ironing tinkering besides the navigation singing and literature of several distinguished individuals". As in everything he wrote, he seldom punctuated and usually did not capitalize. The challenge in reading his writings is great. He did not always spell very well either, and as always the handwriting of the time was difficult to decipher. The transcript of Ball's journal appears to have been just as written....the same is true of Chapman's journal [there were problems with spelling and punctuation in all of these journals]. It seems rather obvious that Kenniston's letter did not follow the original that closely, regarding spelling, grammar and punctuation. Transcriptions of this sort definitely make for easier reading.

## The Schooner

Next it is helpful to briefly comment on our knowledge of the Schooner *Damariscove*. She was built in New Castle, Maine in 1849 by Abner Stetson, a well known shipbuilder of his time. There are some descriptions of her relating to tonnage and dimensions which appear in early listings in Maine. Several new items of information were found in the records of the National Archives (NARA) when copies of Certificates of Registry and Certificates of Enrollment issued in San Francisco were obtained. Any particular ship that was registered and licensed was named and described in exactly the same way each time new documents were issued. Certificate of Registry #334.(at San Francisco). in this instance the ship or vessel called the *Damariscove*...."having said or certified that the ship or vessel has one deck and two masts and that her length is seventy nine feet nine inches her breadth nineteen feet and eight inches her depth eight feet that she measures one hundred two and 51/95 tons that she is a schooner has a square stern (a flat stern as opposed to a round or elliptical form of stern, usually having a more or less flat surface sloping upward; confined to wooden sailing vessels) and a billet head (at the bow - a carved ornamental scroll at the upper end of the stem in place of a figurehead).

We would be remiss if it were not pointed out that the relationship between the Schooner *Damariscove* and these 22 men involved a certain type of bonding...perhaps akin to a racehorse and its jockey. All four men commented on the good qualities of the vessel...a few examples follow: On page 91 of George Wharton Rice's book , "*The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay*, Kenniston wrote, "But we had one of the very best vessels that ever floated in salt water, so we were able to hold on lying to much of the time with three reefed sails and trying to make the weather when it was possible."At the end of December, 1849, Ball wrote..."so I stood and watched the foursail till all at once she gave way and went with a terrible thrash against the lea rigging, and the little vesssle like a hero, shuck herself and came up." On December 27, Wm Hatch wrote, "this is one of the best little vessels i ever went to sea in." Very early in the voyage Chapman wrote that a heavy gale arose lasting 48 hours ... "our bark was thrown on her beams ends but she rited again like a bird she rode out the gale like a nighthack". March 5, 1850 Chapman wrote...."the wind blew a gale.....and our little schooner rides the sea lik a bird she is the best seaboat that ever crossed the Main". May 3, Hatch wrote, "the little craft cutting dirt towards Robinson Crusoes Island as fast as her legs will carry her".[Apropos of a racehorse, maybe a large stretch of the imagination might conjure up a vision of a horse, at the very least!!]. Throughout the voyage it seemed to be the consensus that the *Damariscove* was keeping up or surpassing the performance of other ships. Now, if only we had some kind of image, sketch, painting, or tintype of Hatch as well as the *Damariscove* our mission would feel more complete. One suspects the schooner's feelings for the men were mutual, since she never lost one soul as a result of rough seas, illness nor injury. This is quite amazing considering the fact that several of the men had no prior experience aboard a seagoing vessel, and the seas were often unbelievably rough. We might point out here that the above quotes include only a few

of the numerous references to the vessel's size as little or small. She, indeed, was small as the previous description taken from Registry papers clearly indicates. A few months after her arrival in San Francisco someone must have told this brave little vessel to "get a life", and she most certainly did! After all, the men had the mines and business to attend to. The *Damariscove* was not inclined to rest on her laurels. Her time ("afterlife") in the Pacific Coastal trade will be discussed in a Part VI.

## **Maiden Voyage**

The *Damariscove's* first Registry in San Francisco in November of 1850 gives her previous registry as December 15, 1849 (#7) in Nobleboro, Maine. Unfortunately the National Archives states that they have no existing records prior to 1850 from Nobleboro (kept at Waldoboro). It is a known fact that the *Damariscove* was used from July to December 5, 1849 in Maine as a fishing vessel. A reference on page 378 of George Rice's book cites Page 84, line 9, "Captain Talbot (from notes and references). The new *Damariscove* was commanded on a fishing trip in July to Dec. 5, 1849 by Daniel Mellus (Mallus), of Damariscotta. Ten days later George W. Talbot, of Portland, took charge of the schooner at Noblesboro." [no source for this is given]. What a surprise when a more careful reading of Hatch's journal reveals on May 17, 1850 ..."one would think to look at this journal, that our rief [?] Sailes and all must be pretty well wore out as in reality they are for the Main Sail that is but 10 months old looks as if it was three Years..." If the sail were 10 months old, we would arrive at the date of July, 1849. In addition a reprint of Robert B. Applebee's *List of Vessels built in Nobleboro, Newcastle, Damariscotta and Bristol Maine, 1944...*p. 32, courtesy of Penobscot Marine Museum, Searsport, Maine [copied as it appears]: "*Damariscove* Geo. A. Talbot mast "49 Danl.Mellen mast"50 [dates were mistakenly reversed here] Owners Daniel Mellen, Waterman Stetson, Richard Hiscock, Abner Stetson [the builder], Alex B. Weeks, Thos. N. Chapman, Harvey Hiscock, Saml. N. Look, George B. Williams, Reuben Ball, Wm. B. Fullerton, and William B. Hatch." We are not sure if all of the owners listed were on the ship during this fishing trip nor are we sure there was a Registry issued for those five months. There are no existing customs records to document this. We do not know what owners' names were on the December 15, 1849 (#7) Registry. It would seem that most of us who have read about this voyage felt that the December 18, 1849 date indicated the *Damariscove's* first voyage. Obviously some have read the two references cited, but the journal comment on May 17 leaves no doubt. The fishing trip did take place.

Are there inaccuracies in these journals? Yes, absolutely. In the perception or knowledge of 22 individuals, one would find varying information re-spelling of names, ages, and occupations. These variations also would extend to their recording of events. They saw and heard many things differently. On the other hand, some things were amazingly similar. Taking into consideration their age range from 21 to 52, their marital status, their life experiences, their interests and their occupations, their mind sets were often quite dissimilar. As a small example, Ball mentions that in April they

managed to get newspapers from January telling of the President's message and some information from Congress. Neither, Kenniston, Chapman nor Hatch mention it. At the other extreme on January 28, 1850 three of the men wrote of the first time the *Damariscove* was in full sail. Hatch made the fewest and most incomplete remarks about the sails, so it is wonderful to have the other two descriptions. Chapman wrote: "we hoisted our topsail for the first time we have now a foresail mainsail two jibs staysail gaftopsail squarsail and topsail on our little schooner". Ball: "The wind is lite but faire and all the canvas that can be spread is on her. We have hoisted our top sail for the first time today. We have on today two jibs, topsail, swire [square] sail, and four [fore] and main sail and altho the breees is lite she is going at the rate of five knots". Hatch : "this forenoon rigged the topsail yard & sent up the flying fore topsail all sail is now sot on the *Damariscove* for the first time since we hove to sea she looks rather majestic with all her lite sails rolled down" On that note, we believe it is past time to set sail!

## **California Bound**

After sailing down the Damariscotta River on December 18, 1849 the *Damariscove* headed out to sea past Monhegan Island and towards Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa. The intent was to catch the trades and to check the chronometer. [Only Hatch's and Ball's journals usually noted daily latitudes, longitudes and/or observations. Weather conditions did not always allow for the former. None were cited in the Strait of Magellan.] This portion of the passage took 36 days. All except Kenniston noted the exact date of leaving Damariscotta. He wrote that they left Nobleboro rather than Damariscotta. Chapman started his journal on January 1, and Ball did not start daily entries until January 3. On January 9 Ball spoke of Richard Hescoek becoming 2<sup>nd</sup> steward with him instead of Chapman. Hatch never passed up the opportunity to write something; he kept daily entries from the beginning.

We know from all three men that in those first 10 days the seas were extremely rough. They feared for the vessel, and almost all of them were deathly sick. About the only highlight one would normally expect would have been Christmas Day. To our amazement it was neither celebrated nor mentioned...it just was not a widely observed celebration in 1850...at least in New England. New Year's Eve and New Year's Day were. They had turkey "pye" or sea pye which Chapman thought was especially good—Ball remarked that it was a gift to the company from Mr. Kenniston. Hatch is the only one who alludes to the noisy night on December 31 saying some called it an "Irish wake and some a Methodist powwow or watch meeting." He thinks there must have been some of the "good creature"[alcohol] around. After their dinner on New Year's Day they gathered on the decks and in the cabin and sang until they were tired; he had never heard better music. "Reuben Ball is our leader and a professed music teacher". Prior to this time Ball had been far too busy trying to help the sick and feed the crew, since he was one of the few well enough to do it!

The most momentous thing to happen among the crew occurred on January 20 when they were all summoned to a meeting to vote on whether or not they should be allowed to continue smoking on board!! This was serious, timely and in some ways humorous. Timely in that in today's world this has been happening frequently in the workplace, eating establishments, etc. Serious and humorous in that the vote was called for (according to Hatch) because twice someone had set fire to one of the sails, and some were seen going into the hold where 8 casks of gun powder were stored...with lighted pipe!! One would have thought they might have realized the hazards. Ultimately they voted to be allowed to continue to smoke as long as they stayed on the lee side of the quarterdeck. Not all were smokers, so it was not of much interest to Chapman, who did not mention the meeting at all nor to Ball who had little to say about it. Now Hatch was a different story. He would have had no liking for being punished for another's wrong doing. However, he opined that he would not be smoking as much as he had in the past, for the sake of his health! This was the beginning of an ongoing "dissertation" concerning the bad effects of smoking and the lack of exercise. Hatch had a terrible cough and cold for much of the passage. Early on Capt. Choate had suggested he cut back on smoking to help the cough. He made several attempts to stop smoking and each time noticed that he felt better.. "for i do think that using tobacco freely is injurious to any ones health benumbing (sic) to the head besides that a dirty troublesome habit i have been long adicted to it is hard to brake off". He even wrote of imploring his wife to stop smoking her pipe by saying it would make her face appear younger, improve her health, and keep her from being hooked forever to a nasty pipe. Of course, few women are smoking pipes these days! Nevertheless the message was the same.

In a two week period in January, Hatch mentions the need of or the lack of exercise at least six times! He was constantly concerned about the dirty conditions of the cabin and was fearful that many would become ill as a result. Keep in mind he was the second oldest in the group. This was a man who read his Bible regularly and stressed the importance of keeping the Sabbath appropriately. It appears that he was fighting some of his own demons as well and perhaps fearing for his own mortality. On March 19, 1850 he wrote, "i think we have got along pretty well & now by way of explanation i would say that some people i suppose would think this a strange mess of stuff for a man to enter into a sea journal so many thousand miles from home but it is just as i feel & i may as well set down & give it vent at the pint of this steel pen as to be for ever thinking it over speaking may relieve you so may writing". What immediately comes to mind is a modern day session with a mental health therapist, who suggests that a patient keep a journal as a way to relieve angst/and or stress...venting, if you will! This day's entry was probably the longest in his entire journal..three pages...and included many expressions of longing for home, family and neighbors. Undoubtedly his sense of humor, his religious faith, his attention to detail and his "venting" sustained him. It certainly can be said of the other three chroniclers that their faith was foremost in their hearts and minds...a necessity for surviving this grueling passage of six months and 24 days. There are several references by the men concerning getting fat, which should not come

as a surprise. We are struck by the thought that the more things change, the more they remain the same. It is, at times, almost impossible to imagine these ideas being put forth 155 years ago. Had some of these folks been writing best sellers on the latest "diet plan" or ways to keep mentally and physically healthy, they could have amassed a fortune without risking life and limb to mine gold in California!

## **Cape Verdes**

The vessel came within about 20 miles of the Cape Verde Islands on January 23. The men longed to be able to set foot on land, but this was not the plan. Since the chronometer was correct, the captain tacked the ship to the south for their run to St. Catherine (which they reached in 24 days). On January 24, Ball noted that it was his birthday. He probably kept that information to himself! While the vessel was sailing to St. Catherine, we will include some trivia which might prove to be useful.

## **Going to Sea in Ships**

There are just too many nautical terms to be included here [The author apologizes to the many east and west coast readers who are very well informed in nautical terminology]. Two of the most common phrases were reefing the sails and tacking the vessel. A reef is part of a sail that can be folded or rolled down and tied down to reduce the area exposed to the wind...thus reefing the sails was almost a constant job. Tack...to change the course of a ship by turning its head to the wind or sail against the wind by a series of tacks...another frequent task. Another helpful explanation touches on nautical or sea time. Hatch specifically referred to keeping a sea journal (which was from noon to noon) until the *Damariscove* arrived at St. Catherine. He then started a harbor journal which was from midnight to midnight. As soon as they left St. Catherine on Feb. 28, he noted switching to sea time again. So this must be taken into consideration when reading some of the journal entries. There were some differences between the journals based on time, but they were probably more often due to recollections of occurrences. This writer only mentions the fact that nautical terminology would eliminate this schooner as a ship. Ships had three or more masts, all of which were square rigged. Nevertheless, ship was a pretty generic term and was widely used to describe most sailing vessels. Throughout the journals, the men often referred to the *Damariscove* one time as "our ship", and at others as "our schooner".

Lastly we would like to explain and mention "ships spoken to". A protocol was followed when ships were seen fairly close to one another. They spoke either by showing their colors, firing a gun across the bow...or both. There were various courtesies extended such as hanging a light on the stern for another ship to run by. The captains might visit one another's ships at times. The San Francisco *Daily Alta* newspaper carried an item regularly entitled "Spoken" which was included under the heading of "Shipping-- Intelligence". More will be said about this later. One comes away with the

feeling that these contacts with other ships were the highlights of the passage...they satisfied the need for a connection, no matter how brief. There were at least 12 or 14 ships identified by name in the journals. Occasionally the name and port of origin were incorrectly given by Hatch and possibly by others. Those noted in journals were as follows: Ship *Osceola*, Capt. B.P. Barstow; Brig *Kendall* of Boothbay...Capt. Chase; Schooner *Percival* (Capt., Mate & 1 passenger visited on board *Damariscove*); Schooner *Rochester* of N.Y. (here is an interesting story to tell shortly); Sloop *Barr* of Mystic, Ct. Capt. Holmes; Ship *Dalmatia* of Boston; *Caldonia* of Boston; Schooner *Golden Rule*, Capt Vanaman (also boarded *Damariscove*); Schooner *Crescent City*; Bark *Winthrop Hallowell* (in S. F. Bay the same time as the *Damariscove*); Brig *Eclipse*, Halifax Nova Scotia; Schooner *Northern Lite* (Light) of Boston (all four men saw and identified the wreckage of this vessel near Cape Possession, Strait of Magellan - much more on this later!); Kenniston identified a schooner at St. Catherine's named *Mary Reed*, Belfast, Maine... Capt Kedar. Both Chapman and Hatch note a French brig who showed her colors when she was close enough, as did the *Damariscove*; Ball noted a schooner from New Orleans lying along side. The mate was Winter from Bath. Ball loaned the crew "a lot of papers", but he did not know the captain's name.(Feb. 18). Twice there were references to ships who seemed to pull away after approaching...perhaps, as Hatch said on one occasion..."they didn't like the look of us." Of course, the spy glass was used often! We have heard of the use of a speaking trumpet, but none appeared to have been used on the *Damariscove*. John Bartlett Goodman III's *Encyclopedia of Gold Rush Ships* has a list of over 600 ships, the *Damariscove* among them. It is an invaluable tool. Every single item is not completely accurate, but the portions this writer has seen are extremely useful.

What cargo did the *Damariscove* carry? Some of the items they brought with them are mentioned in the three journals at times, but we do not have a complete list. We know they had the following : water (stored in hogsheads...strange name for barrels!), coffee, wine, coal, wood, flour, sugar, chocolate, molasses, beef, pork, ham, sausage, tongues, fish (cod), pollack, cattle's feet, beans, rice, potatoes, peas, turnips, dried apples and dried plums, at least two live turkeys, gun powder, tent cloth, cloth for clothes, lumber to build a house. The only reason the writer had to include dried plums is because several times they had plum duff to eat. The definition of duff is a stiff flour pudding, boiled or steamed, often with currants or raisins and spices...ergo, they must have had dried plums. There were no doubt other dried fruits that were just not mentioned. The men found gooseberries and cranberries in one location which would have been a treat. Ball made some mince pies out of salt beef, which the crew thought were first rate. Speaking of food, the fare was usually none too exciting. Some of the cooks later had many complaints, so this job changed hands from time to time to prevent too much grumbling. Probably the best fare was the meat they obtained when they were able to hunt on shore and flying fish which ended up on the decks at times and were cooked; ducks, various other birds, and guanacos, a type of llama, which they found to be very tasty.

Unrelenting seasickness made several men ill for days at a time, during almost the entire passage. Apparently most of the illness on board had little to do with food or its preparation...at least that they were aware of. The main exception would be scurvy, which most had at one time or another. Some of Hatch's descriptions do not fit with the definitions...such as ague. He often spoke of someone "having a humor" on some part of their body. It almost sounds like a large blood blister or a hematoma. The "ship's fever" earlier referred to would be typhus caused by a body louse which lives in clothing and multiplies quickly in poor hygienic conditions. No wonder he and others became concerned about keeping the cabin cleaner. They did wash their clothes whenever possible. There were the usual coughs, colds, stomachaches, toothaches, bad blisters, sore hands from working on the rigging, and other minor complaints. As concerns the medications that were used, there is very little to be learned. Hatch spoke of using Friar's Balsam for his cough. Surprisingly, this is still used in herbal and homeopathic medicine, as a mild expectorant, hot drops (a cough expectorant containing capsicum [paprika] and alcohol). Apparently this was later often used during the Civil War, since there was no liquor to be had. The last attempt to locate a definition for a medication mentioned by him i.e., syrup of Motherwort (Motherwort) brought the writer to a sudden halt. The definition here is a tall weedy plant from the mint family...so named from the notion that it was useful in curing diseases of the womb. There is absolutely no way to apply this to anyone on this vessel! It can only be assumed that for these folks it had an entirely different meaning, with which we are not acquainted.

In a less serious vein, we will go back to the subject of entertainment on the voyage. Hatch told about several silly ways of "making sport" and seemed amused by them. Chapman, Kenniston, and Ball had no comments. Kenniston took part in one episode, but does not mention any of them. Ball and Chapman may not have been involved in that type of frivolity...or if they were, it did not seem important enough to write about. On February 2, Kenniston portrayed Johnny Booker, J. Mellus a drunkard and Daniel Mellus a countryman named Silas. While this was going on others were having serious discussions. Charles Berry, Mr. Williams, Alex Weeks were discussing American Slavery and numerous other subjects. However, on May 31<sup>st</sup> Hatch wrote that all hands took part in merriment and sport involving all kinds of music and dancing. He was thoroughly entertained by this... "take them together they are the cleverest and best humored set of fellows that ever i met with" It is best described as comic relief for these men.

## **Old Neptune**

Time has flown by since leaving Cape Verde Islands...and the *Damariscove* was approaching St. Catherine. Only a few things of note occurred during these 24 days. One would be crossing the Equator which evoked comments from Chapman, Ball and Hatch. Sailors' lore had much to say about "Old Neptune" who supposedly would appear on a ship when it crossed the Equator. The subject was talked to death for at

least two days. The event took place on January 31. The previous day Ball heard all the talk about Old Neptune but thought he wouldn't dare come on board....there were too many greenhorns there! On January 31, he heard Old Neptune had just come aboard, but he had not seen him yet. Chapman commented on January 31 that much has been talked about Old Neptune coming on board, but he had not seen him yet. Hatch said on February 1, "did not see Old Neptune don't know whether the old Gentleman is dead or alive i think he must be dead". When they recrossed the Equator on the Pacific side not one word was written about Old Neptune.

Throughout the passage it becomes clear that these men were basically in charge of mending themselves, their ship and their clothes...quite a formidable task. They were also quite adept at making their own clothes..notably trousers (including putting in pockets!) and caps, many of which had ["gone with the wind"]. At times they even contributed to needs of other ships, i.e., Ball's brother-in-law, William Fullerton, set up shop to offer his services as a blacksmith. Ball also told of working with Fullerton when he set up a temporary forge ...they fixed all the hooks and shackles that needed repair. Truly an amazing group of men. During this long period of time, the other happening, although, not really significant, was the previously mentioned sighting of the French ship...Chapman, Hatch and Ball all may have commented because they had not seen another sail in 15 days. It is sometimes difficult to keep everything in the proper sequence of time.

Perhaps this is the place to speak of the constant and ever changing sea life the men saw during the voyage. Ball spoke of seeing a small whale. "a handsome site in the water". Chapman spoke of the first fish caught at the end of January....a porpoise that the captain harpooned. In the early part of March they saw sperm whales on more than one occasion. At that time they also saw large turtles. While in the Pacific Ocean in June, Hatch commented that many porpoises were around the ship, but none were caught. It seemed that fish were not fond of copper bottoms. There were almost as many different kinds of birds....albatross, geese, ducks of all sizes, penguins and the lowly pigeons.

Some of our readers may be thinking that we have neglected Kenniston. Not so..he really began his commentary at St. Catherine. Considering that his letter to wife, Mary, was written just as they were approaching San Francisco, we find his recall, although very brief, to be quite good. There were inaccuracies, as there were in all the journals.

Land was sighted on February 15 and it was determined to be the port of St. Catherine. As soon as they dropped anchor, they were boarded by a customs officer from the fort and quarantined for six days. Ball said it was because they did not have a "Bill of health aboard". Our next episode will start with the time spent at St. Catherine, and then reveal an extraordinary "nugget"(not a gold one!), but rather a "happening" in the Strait of Magellan.

## Part II: St. Catherine - Strait of Magellan



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A bit of general background on St. Catherine: Ila (Island) de Santa Catarina, Brazil...St. Catherine as it was called - the capital of the state of Santa Catarina. A constant stream of vessels headed for California stopped here for wood and water and repairs. Rio de Janeiro and Valparaiso were two other ports of call used frequently. Since about 1894, this city has been called Florianopolis. Current reference to Santa Catarina would mean the state and the island, not the city. The island was originally settled by the Spanish in 1542. Between that time and 1894 possession of the island changed back and forth between Spain and Portugal. In 1894 revolutionists tried to overthrow the Portugese government of President Florian Peixoto but were defeated. The name of the city was changed to Florianopolis in honor of the President. The island is mountainous and wooded. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1956).

A concise accurate history is quite difficult to find. The more one reads, the more confusing it gets! Today Florianopolis is a very desirable beach resort. Since winds were one of the factors delaying the *Damariscove's* departure from the island, it was interesting to read that on March 29, 2004 the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil made the news. On the 27th a severe storm occurred which caused a great deal of damage, two

deaths and 30 injuries. The U.S. meteorologists called it a hurricane and their Brazilian counterparts disagreed. "There has never been a hurricane on record in the South Atlantic" (CNN.com)

### **Sojourn at St. Cates**

There were no fewer than five American vessels in port (St. Catherine) on February 15, 1850 when the *Damariscove* dropped anchor. The American Consul boarded and offered any services he could. Although the six day quarantine was supposed to be very strict, they did get special permission from the Governor to go ashore for water and other provisions. Several natives in their canoes came along side with oranges, pineapples, watermelons, bananas other fruits, eggs and milk.

For those who might have seen the movie, *Master and Commander* whose seafaring action took place 45 years earlier ...there was a scene that perfectly fit the above description given by our chroniclers. The weather was often hot and the scenery beautiful. While on shore on the 19<sup>th</sup>, Ball spoke with a Mr. Uprand and his wife, who were bound for California on the ship *Leopard*. [ a newspaper item under Shipping Intelligence...*Daily Alta California*..dated June 14, 1850 shows the ship *Leopard* from Boston arrived at San Francisco via Juan Fernandez...this writer feels that the vessel Leverett mentioned in the "Spoken" portion of the *Damariscove's* arrival on July 12, 1850 [cited later] was actually the ship *Leopard*. None of the *Damariscove* journals ever mentioned a vessel named *Leverett*. Many of the newspaper accounts incorrectly stated the type of vessel as well as the name.]

On Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> Capt. Talbot brought an American pilot named Johnston on board. He was either a native of Harpswell, Maine...as Hatch thought, or Portland, Maine as Ball said. Ball was probably correct, since he said Johnston was well acquainted with Capt. Talbot (who was from Portland). Johnston stayed on board the *Damariscove* while they were anchored at various locations in the harbor (this harbor area was at least 10 miles long according to Chapman).

A fort guarded the harbor; the Brazilians were quite particular about the vessels entering and clearing after their quarantine. The pilot Johnston had been there for 19 years, married a Brazilian woman and had a family. Hatch remarked that a Mr. Perkins from New Castle had been on board all day (Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>), but he did not know where he was from until he had already left. On Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, Capt. Talbot went ashore with 22 letters for the American Consul to mail. (Hatch). This certainly tells us that families of all on board the *Damariscove* would have received a letter. We wonder if any of these are still in existence? The crew washed clothes, rearranged cargo (some was spoiled and had to be thrown out), and repaired the bowsprit which had a leak under it. Other days they went ashore to see the city of St. Catherine, while waiting out their six day quarantine, as well as waiting six additional days for good weather.

What follows reveals a very diverse social commentary in the journals: Ball mentioned going into town to the public squares, where there were soldiers, bands playing and natives riding their horses and mules. On Sundays the soldiers were on parade, the stores were open, and it was almost like a holiday. He found the people to be kind and friendly; It was his opinion that the Portugese people, if needed, would take better care of a stranger than in most places in the states. He told of speaking with a man from Rhode Island who had to be left on the island due to illness and was receiving the best of care. Although Ball was the only one who mentioned it, apparently some of the crew raised a little money for this man and also gave him some extra provisions. Chapman simply wrote that when they visited the city, he found it extremely undesirable. He noted that a ship from New Orleans was in quarantine for 40 days. Hatch wrote that several of the men visited the stores and shops in the city. It was hard to converse because of the language barrier, but the people made an agreeable impression on him, as did the city.

There were obviously many Americans ashore from other ships. He really did not observe any bad conduct on the part of the native population, but was adamant about the rudeness of Yankees in general. His assessment of the numerous soldiers there was that they were protecting the populace and guarding them against people from other countries who abused them...especially Yankees! Kenniston felt that the Brazilians took advantage of the American vessels that needed supplies when they were in port. He did say that the cost of entering and clearing the ship was \$50.00 and indicated that was not too bad. Kenniston said that few people could be understood "more than wild geese". He wrote that there were 12,000 inhabitants and remarked that they pay no attention to the Sabbath. Stores were all open on Sunday...every day 500 soldiers marched through the city "to keep the slaves from rising against the whites". It would seem after reading these accounts, that it was not just beauty that was in the eye of the beholder!

One occurrence during their time in St. Catherine centers around what Chapman spoke of on February 25...an incident involving Charles Berry. This must be what prompted the comment in the article ( Vol. I p.335) of the Dodge book about the voyage, where it was stated that "Berry left the ship". On this particular day when several of the men went ashore, Berry was apparently upset with some of the company and wanted to go to California on another ship. He went off into the woods, and several of the men went after him to bring him back. No one else spoke of this except Hatch who wrote of an incident on board the day before that seemed to upset everyone...he never revealed what it was nor who was involved. (Charles Berry, who was mentioned as late as June 6, would have had no other opportunity to leave the ship, since they were at sea until their arrival in San Francisco.)

After six more days it was calm enough (February 27) to resume the passage...26 days from St. Catherine to the Strait of Magellan. On March 7 Hatch wrote that "Mr. Williams & Fullerton have been tinkering up the cooking utensils which have got badly

out of order. Joseph Mellus & Mr. Berry are making a gun carriage [for the infamous cannon]? Mr. Weeks is mending up a pair of old pumps, Joseph Hitchcock is making a last, Daniel Mellus and some others are working Chronometer time." They saw sperm whales as well as several large turtles.

Kenniston's letter spoke of encountering heavy gales three days out of St. Catherine which lasted for five days. "This was not a common gale; it was more like a hurricane; it blew so we could not carry sail, as it would blow them away." The other writers did not describe winds that strong in a like period of time. However on March 11, Chapman gave a wonderfully descriptive account of the roughest weather they had experienced so far. To paraphrase this commentary: There was lightening and a tremendous gale causing the sea to run mountain high. It lasted 24 hours. Some were seasick and some wished they were home. The wind came in squalls and it felt as though it would break everything to pieces.. "it howled like a tiger". At one point they came close to losing the topmast, but Mr. Mellus and Mr. Weeks went aloft and fixed it. The vessel rolled so badly it was hard to hold on...it was surprising to see her ride the mountain waves time after time... "a little spray has come on board but not enough tonock a tourekey pen off of two barells". Could anyone have said it better! A closer reading of Ball's journal reveals that Chapman's description was not just a humorous saying...there really was a live turkey in a pen sitting on the heads of two barrels...which were not disturbed at all by the heavy gale!! On March 12 Hatch wrote that the sea was running so high they thought the vessel " might be in danger of getting triped (tripped) so we made a drag by lashing a plank & spar together with the Big gun to hang underneath with about 3 fathoms of rope to keep it from jumping out of water". [Three dictionary definitions of the nautical term "trip" is not clear to this writer in the context of the quote.] What caught the eye was the Big gun...could this also have been referring to the cannon spoken of in the cannon caper? At the other extreme during a calmer sea, Hatch told of their progress on "a rolling old sea, heading up S&W going as fast as a louse can crawl on a tarred stick" (March 18).

## **Dangerous Waters**

To preface this part of the voyage, just a few remarks about the Strait of Magellan. The distance, depending on which article one reads is between 330 and 370 miles from the eastern point of entrance at Cape Virgenes to the western exit point at Cape Pillar. The width of the Strait varies from about 2 to 15 miles. The weather is often forbidding and foggy. Before the Panama Canal was built, ships used either the Strait or Cape Horn to go between the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean. Twice as many vessels used the Cape Horn route rather than the Strait, which divided the continent of South America from Tierra del Fuego. Although the weather was more severe going around the Horn, there was ample space for maneuvering, which was not the case in the Strait. Since this writer has not been able to find an actual figure for the distance between the Strait of Magellan and Cape Horn, readers are referred to a large atlas! A misconception arises, even in some of the journals, about the route taken by the *Damariscove*. It may have resulted

from a figure of speech. Both Kenniston and Chapman refer once to their journey around Cape Horn. this may also have been a result of the fact that when the *Damariscove* left Maine, no decision had been made regarding going via the Strait or the Cape. The newspaper account in the Christine Dodge book, (Vol. I, p. 335) said the *Damariscove* went by way of Cape Horn. [This is merely an incorrect perception, which is borne out by reading any or all of these accounts.]

The *Damariscove*'s officers thought they were entering the Strait of Magellan, but mistakenly began a run up the Gallegos River (Cape Fairweather). The Melluses told the captain and the pilot that the coast pilot (Johnston) had told them in St. Catherine that the Strait had deeper water than they were now in, indicating they were in the wrong place...but the Officers proceeded anyway. After they sighted another vessel which had gone ashore and realized how shallow it was, they managed to get themselves out (Kenniston). (March 21) It was Hatch's opinion that if it had not been for the pilot (Choate), and they had kept close to the coast, they would have been in the Strait by now. He felt they were deceived by a man who said he knew and did not.

Finally we have come to the "nugget". It is a rather lengthy diversion in this cold, winding, wet, miserable 22 day passage through the Strait. The hope is that the reader will find it worthwhile. They entered the Strait at Cape Virgenes on March 26<sup>th</sup>, at which time we find a great example of all the chroniclers giving almost identical descriptions of what occurred. "This afternoon the wind lulled a little bit and we tried to weigh anchor and take a new anchorage ground but the anchor caught a rock and held so fast that we thought best to give it up till it becomes more calm and we are afraid of losing our anchor" (Ball). The wind was blowing a gale and the water was very shallow. "We tried to weigh anchor but the anchor caught on a rock and we couldn't get it. We concluded to let it be till it was a calm." (Chapman). It blew almost like a tornado...the tide fell and we had only two fathoms of water.. "we expected to part our chains or drag, but we found that one of the anchors had caught on a rock and kept us from dragging to sea as the wind blew off shore." Wind blowing a severe gale all the last 24 hours...anchored too near the shore in low water where there were large rocks. Didn't hit any rocks but spent a miserable forenoon. On the afternoon of the 27<sup>th</sup> still hung to a rock by our anchor.(Hatch). The *Damariscove* finally proceeded toward Possession Bay where they anchored on the 29<sup>th</sup>. It was too foggy to run for the first narrows, so they were still in the Bay on the 31st.

### **Schooner *Damariscove* and The Franklin Expedition**

What happened while the *Damariscove* was anchored in Possession Bay in the Strait of Magellan, touched on a period in history, which was written about for many years. The writings of our four chroniclers on March 31, 1850 uncovered a tale that many of us would have not known about. They told basically the same story...yet it was also quite different in some details. One is reminded of a class of college students watching a re-enactment of a crime. Afterwards, one by one they are asked about the

details of what happened. Almost to a person, the versions are different in some way. What we do know is that the *Damariscove* was contacted by a British ship, (steam frigate - Ball; brig of war - Chapman; British man of war - Kenniston) with a request to take some passengers the British ship had rescued from a wrecked American schooner. Details about the ship, how many passengers and crew were involved, how many the *Damariscove* agreed to take and whether the Captain of the British ship came aboard the *Damariscove* or vice versa, and what another American ship standing by did. Only Hatch's account mentioned the name, Her Majesty's steamer, "gorgo." On April 3 he referred again to the steamer and said she was waiting for 3 (actually 2) ships from England, so they could proceed to the Arctic Ocean in search of the Sir John Franklin expedition. It was like trying to keep a fire horse from the fire, and this writer began a search that became far too extensive to be justified in this article. It is questionable as to which (the British ship or the Expedition search) produced the greater volume of information!

Internet search engine Google helped eliminate the name *Gorgo* as the British ship. Over a long period of time many Google searches were made. Adding an "n" to *Gorgo* had revealed that the British steamer was the HMS *Gorgon*, launched in 1837 from the Pembroke Dockyard in England and broken up (BU) in 1864. Although there are many websites pertaining to the *Gorgon*, this writer has stayed mainly with the history provided by the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich (Warship History Sheet 2, Steam Ships and the book: Paddle Warships The Earliest Fighting Steam Ships 1815 - 1850 by David K. Brown, RCNC (1993). The latter is an excellent resource for both general and technical information about the *Gorgon*. To begin with she was the prototype for 28 ships. She was built at a time when paddle wheel steamers were considered to be excellent warships. As the years went by, it was discovered that these steamers would be better as steam aids (including towing duties) rather than warships. She was a paddle sloop, about 178 feet long and 21 ft deep, 1110 tonnage, with the capability of carrying 1600 men. She carried 6 field guns. She was a two masted, brig rigged vessel (Brown) and as others of this type, could use sails, or steam or both to propel her. Deployments were as follows (briefly): 3 November '40, bombardment of Acre, Syria; 11 May '44 stranded in River Plate (Uruguay) where she was involved with the Anglo-French Operation in Parana River (Bay of Montevideo, Uruguay); 1845-20 November, Battle of Obligado. In 1846-47 she was in S.E. America Station, 1848-50 in Pacific Station (where we found her in the Strait of Magellan); 1856-57, Mediterranean Station. In 1858 she took part in the laying of the transatlantic cable (which failed 23 days later). 1858-60 she is listed as stationed N.A. and W.I...which is assumed to be North America and West Indies.

This writer first learned of the *Gorgon*'s Strait location through an article in the *Daily Alta California* on Aug. 5, 1850 under Ships...Intelligence... Memoranda, at which time the Schooner *Laura Bevan* reported (April 18, 1850) seeing 2 British ships who were headed for the Arctic in search of Sir John Franklin, as well as a British steam frigate, *Gorgon*, who intended towing them through the Strait. Many other references

placed her where she needed to be in terms of her connection with the Sir John Franklin search expedition of the *Enterprise* and the *Investigator*. One important source was the Journal of Richard Collinson, Captain of the *Enterprise*, edited by his brother, Major-General T. B. Collinson 1889. Among other things, p. 43 confirmed that the Gorgon had rescued crew and passengers from a wrecked American Schooner, including two ladies! We have never found an image of the *Damariscove*, but for those interested in “seeing” the Gorgon page 27 of the David K. Brown book has a beautiful lithograph of the Gorgon (Science Museum London). The same lithograph appears on the Website <http://www.Kenscott.com/>. These are, of course, copyrighted images.

Sir John Franklin left England in 1845 with two ships...the *Erebus* and the *Terror* to search for a Northwest Passage in the Arctic. When he had not been heard from in more than two years, the British Admiralty launched a series of search expeditions...probably at least 40. As time went on, some of these expeditions were searching for searchers! We have run across at least two articles in Washington Territory newspapers in 1853 and 1854 about the Franklin search expeditions. Americans sent two expeditions (Grinnell), in the early 1850's. American, Clarence Hall, went twice to the Arctic between 1860 and 1869 with the idea that their might still be survivors of the Franklin Expedition to be found. Disagreements abound as to what part various people played in finding the bodies of some of the survivors, what part the Inuits a.k.a Esquimaux played in providing help and information to the searchers, which individual rightly or wrongly collected the reward money, whether cannibalism was involved. and who may or may not have found the last link to the Northwest Passage. Since this writer is not an historian nor does she wish to make a career out of this study, she will just pass on these basics as part of understanding what happened re the small part the Gorgon played in one particular search expedition conducted by HMS *Enterprise* and the HMS *Investigator* 1850-1855. the Gorgon was not technically part of the expedition, since she never went anywhere near the Arctic. This was the one sea expedition that the British Admiralty ordered to approach the Arctic from the west through the Bering Strait...which meant it either had to proceed through the Strait of Magellan or around Cape Horn. It was soon established that the route they took was the former, and that it was the HMS *Gorgon* (under the command of Captain James A. Paynter) who was ordered to meet them and tow them through the Strait. The *Gorgon* waited in Possession Bay until April 10 when the *Enterprise* arrived...the *Investigator* came a bit later. The actual towing was mostly used for the *Investigator*, although the *Gorgon* towed both ships for a short time after leaving the Strait. She parted company with the British search ships about April 21. In addition, much has been written about the fact that the *Enterprise* and the *Investigator* became separated which resulted in some speculation as to why this was allowed to happen. For those interested in learning more about these search expeditions, two very comprehensive studies are: *Arctic Exploration and Development c. 500 b.c. to 1915..An Encyclopedia* by Clive Holland (1994) and an article in *Arctic*, March 2002 v55 il p.57(13): “The type and number of expeditions in the Franklin search 1847–1859, (Sir John Franklin)” W. Gillies Ross. There was a book

written as late as 1995, and perhaps others, which was still discussing what might have gone on during these expeditions.

It was during the *Gorgon's* "waiting time" that she presumably rescued both crew and passengers from the wreckage of the Schooner *Northern Light* (Boston). The wreckage (which was heard about and seen by all our chroniclers) was above the first narrows of the Strait. Hatch wrote that the *Gorgon* captain said the wreck occurred on March 21st. An account from the Journal of Sir Richard Collinson, Captain of the *Enterprise* told that the *Gorgon* had been in Possession Bay 20 days....which is about right for the March 21 date. It is a foregone conclusion that there had to be a minor search for the *Northern Light*! The following paraphrased information is courtesy of Beth Rollins of the Essex Shipbuilding Museum: The 70 ft. yacht (*Northern Light*) was owned by Col. William P. Winchester of Watertown, MA and was launched in 1839. He was a racing enthusiast, and the *Northern Light* was the longest, fastest yacht along the North Shore. We find that Winchester died 6 August 1850...surely he must have known of his yacht's fate. Unfortunately we have been unable to find any reference in the Boston area to the wreckage of the *Northern Light*. The painting by Fitz Hugh Lane (1845) seen on the [allposters.com/](http://allposters.com/) website shows a vessel so small that one could not believe it would have even made it to the Strait of Magellan! Probably Shipping Intelligence reports in the *Daily Alta California* would somewhere show "Memoranda" regarding the wreck. What we do know from the newspaper account of the arrival of the *Damariscove* on July 12, 1850, is that the *Damariscove* mentioned several contacts under "Spoken". There was no mention of the HMS *Gorgon*! It would be this writer's guess that she was not in need of increasing her self-esteem! She does mention a contact with the *Golden Rule* on April 17. There is a Shipping Intelligence item in the *Daily Alta California* on July 20, 1850 indicating the arrival of the Schooner *Golden Rule*, Captain Van Name, on July 19<sup>th</sup>. ...one passenger consigned to master. This passenger would have been Charles Robinson, whom the *Damariscove* transferred to the *Golden Rule* on April 16. If only we knew what "consigned to master" meant, it would be helpful. Hatch did speak of the two vessels sailing together on April 17, as well as saying that the reason for transferring Robinson to the *Golden Rule* was because there was a great deal of room...only crew on board.

The final word, so to speak, comes from copies this writer obtained from the National Archives in Kew, UK, of the *Gorgon's* Ship's Log (as kept by the Officer of the Watch). The printed heading reads "Log of Her Majesty's Steam (then proceeds with hand-written part) Sloop *Gorgon* at anchor in Possession Bay [Strait of Magellan]. The printed year was 184 on the Log, with the 4 crossed out and 50 written in. One sheet records two days...March 30 and March 31 1850 with two pages. The dates showing entries in the Log are Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>. The Log for April 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> were also included. The Officer wrote: "communicated with 2 American Schooners for California...discharged to them 2 male and 2 female American subjects wrecked in the "*Northern Light*". We still do not know who the 2<sup>nd</sup> schooner was, but obviously the *Damariscove* was one. (She took one of the male passengers, Charles Robinson as

mentioned). We know of one other American ship who claimed to have made this rescue; she never mentioned the British ship, the *Damariscove*, nor the two ladies...reason enough to believe there may have been a third vessel involved at some point: <http://www.MaritimeHeritage.org/PassLists/c106650.htm>. This website is where the S.S. *Columbus* was cited as arriving on June 15, 1850 (date since verified in Daily Alta as June 6) in San Francisco, after having rescued crew and passengers (Dr. Smiley and James Dunn) from the Yacht *Northern Light* of Boston which was lost in the Strait of Magellan. Only Chapman did not mention that there were two ladies on the British ship. Kenniston stated there was a gentleman, his wife and her sister. Hatch wrote that Charles Robinson, (taken on board the *Damariscove*) told them one of the women was expecting very soon. Ball noted there were six passengers, four men and two ladies. Robinson and the gentleman with wife and sister-in-law would account for 2 male and 2 female American subjects transferred by the *Gorgon*. But who were the two men named by the S S *Columbus* as passengers and why were no women mentioned? The June 15, 1850 date may be incorrect. This writer has found nothing in "Shipping Intelligence" reports from June 14 through June 17 concerning the arrival of the S.S. *Columbus*. However, there appears to be no issue for June 16....at least it is not on the microfilm.

Since both Ball and Chapman referred to the other ship as a morphidite brig (hermaphrodite...a ship both brig rigged and schooner rigged—a term no longer used) perhaps the British saw it as a schooner. Had the Captain's Log survived, we probably would have had the entire story, including names of ships and persons involved. It is easy to settle for getting this much in terms of documentation. For those who might be curious about some of the contents of the Ship's Log, among the myriad of items recorded were; current, course, knots, fathoms, water expended and water remaining, cleaning of engine room, shortening of cables; and duly noting each day at the appropriate time... "paddle wheels turned". Unfortunately the Crown Copyright only allows for transcribing the Log in a newspaper article. We hope to provide copies, within the National Archives (UK) restrictions, to some interested institutions.

Picture the little schooner *Damariscove*, 102 tonnage, carrying 22 men. Now picture Her Majesty's Steam Sloop, *Gorgon*, 1110 tonnage (capable of carrying 1600 men) coming along side the *Damariscove*----to ask a favor!! The British and the Americans joined hands...the British went to the aid of those on the *Northern Light*, and the Americans helped the British find a suitable solution for the rescued passengers. It seems such a thoroughly fascinating story to tell and to pass on; one can't help but wonder why cooperation between nations is sometimes so very difficult! A final comment concerning a quote given by Hatch, in which he says that the captain of the British steamer "told us that we have only seen the blossom yet we have got to see the pink by & by". The subject being discussed was apparently some of the bad weather which had recently been encountered. What was the analogy here? Perhaps the *Gorgon's* captain was just a very poetic man.

## Slipping through the Strait of Magellan

One important characteristic of the Strait was the extremes in weather...either very calm or very squally. All of the journals spoke of the willy woos (the men used different versions of the spelling). Actually these were called williwaws, defined as violent squalls that blow in the Strait of Magellan. It was often cold; there was lightning, rain, sleet, hail, fog and snow. Charles Berry even went up a mountain when some were ashore one day and brought down a snowball in this pocket. Of course, not everyone went ashore at the same time, which accounts for some of the differences in the events related. All of the chroniclers spoke of the mountains rising perpendicular to the shore as high as one to three miles. They were snow capped and there was often evidence of volcanic activity (lava) as well as glaciers. Only one of our chroniclers, Ball, appeared to be aware that they were seeing the Andes mountains.

The first week of April, the *Damariscove* was sailing along the Patagonian coast; the region of Chile and Argentina. The eastern part of the Strait consists almost entirely of dry flat plains, whereas the western area has rugged mountains, rain forests and glaciers. All four journalists commented about the Horse Indians (Patagonian natives), who rode along the shore on their horses. They were a bit formidable and by all accounts were quite tall (average about six foot). Narratives written by both Charles Darwin and Jules Verne on passages through the Strait included a fair amount of information about these Indians. They apparently were not nearly as unfriendly as the crew of the *Damariscove* thought. This was the area of the Strait where all the men commented about the thousands of different birds - ducks, geese, penguins, albatross, pelicans, cape pigeons. Hatch thought some of the men were "wicked" for catching the pigeons - "they were so innocent and handsome!". Game was plentiful. Ball said he thought that "Elizabeth Island is the greatest place for game that there is in the world: and a great place for guano (llama). Kenniston told that Joseph Hescocock shot a llama weighing about 300 pounds and it was most beautiful. Saw a whole flock of llamas, shot one (Chapman). "I never saw such droves of creatures there is along these shores as there are hundreds of them together" (Hatch). The men also spoke of the wild beasts that were seen and heard; lions, tigers, wolves...none of which they had any luck shooting.

April 8th Ball spoke of a man from the other schooner (not sure which schooner) whose name was Rufus McClanen (?) from Bath.. that "our men are acquainted with". Now would seem a good time to tell the story of the Schooner *Rochester* from New York. Each and every one of our chroniclers spoke about contacts with this vessel from about April 1st through April 11th . What the four men learned probably derived from having the Capt. of the *Rochester* visit on board the *Damariscove* . He told of losing a steward (it is presumed that the man died) after the vessel left Rio de Janeiro...his widow and four children still remained passengers. The Capt. also spoke of two of his men running away with the boat, some guns and provisions. All of our men knew that the *Rochester* had a young man on board who was very ill...two of them said he had consumption. On

the 10th of April shortly after the *Damariscove* was leaving it's harbor, it was noted that the *Rochester* had lowered her colors to half mast(Chapman & Ball). All concluded that the man had died. Two commented that the *Rochester* stopped to bury the man (Kenniston)..one lamented that it was such a forlorn place to be buried. (Hatch) It can easily be imagined that this event left an impression on these four men, who were fortunate enough, thus far, to have survived this venture. One last sighting was on April 11, when both the Schooner *Rochester* and the New York brig (never named) anchored with the *Damariscove* above Cape Gallant. The Goodman list shows Cole as Captain of the *Rochester*, but does not show her arrival date in San Francisco...notes, instead, that the ship was condemned\*. Since this writer has not seen the complete book, reference to the asterisk shown after the word condemned remains unknown. Updated information found in the *Daily Alta California* (San Francisco) newspaper on August 15, 1850 under Shipping Intelligence... ..Memoranda, for August 14 per Barque *Oregon* from New Orleans [not verbatim] that Sch. *Rochester*, from New York, bound for San Francisco was at the port of Talcahuano about June 25 in a leaky condition—a survey was to be held on her. We would hope to find the newspaper item telling of her being condemned, but that is unlikely.

The *Damariscove* anchored in many harbors including Port Famine where they obtained wood and water. This anchorage was where the Chileans had a colony of convicts. On April 6th, Ball, made an interesting observation when he spoke of the penal colony here with about 300 people, and one colony at Sandy Point which is a more pleasant place; he continues, noting that these people are going to move up there...about 20 miles to the east of here. Capt. Collinson's journal (p. 44) revealed that it was his understanding from Capt. Paynter of the *Gorgon* that the Chilean settlement had been removed from Port Famine to Sandy Point...and he intended to call there for water and supplies. On p. 46 Collinson remarked that this was only the second year since this colony was removed from Port Famine. It does appear that Capt. Paynter was not accurate in his information. As for Ball, he was the only one of our chroniclers who mentioned "sandy point" and a 2nd penal colony! However, again, we have variations in the comments regarding the number of convicts in the colony at Port Famine...from 30 to 500!

There was no anchorage at Cape Froward, which they knew to be the southern most point on the American continent. The *Damariscove* was anchored under Cape Holland on Apr. 8. The following day Hatch was ashore with Kenniston and Daniel Mellus when they encountered several "monuments" erected there by other ships who had preceded them...giving their names and the number of days passage to this point. Hatch said he carved his first three initials [presume he meant WMH] on a board with an ax. Some of the men put the name of the *Damariscove* on one board. After reading the names and times of other vessels it was determined that the *Damariscove* had made it to that point with the best time, with the exception of one other vessel (not named). Also on the 8th Chapman said part of us went ashore and saw boards nailed on trees as well as names cut on trees.

There was a definite unexplained discrepancy in dates and observations through the 14th. After reading the portion of Collinson's Journal dealing with the Strait of Magellan, another reference was found to names of ships on trees. Collinson identifies the area as Nodales Peak on the west side of San Nicholas Bay. This was west of Port Famine and Cape Froward, but the actual location is not known. It would be the writer's guess that there were several areas where ships carved their names in trees or on boards nailed to trees. Some writings named Borja Bay as one such location. If you were to take a cruise in the Strait of Magellan now, wouldn't you want to examine Cape Holland and Borja Bay very carefully for any evidence of these monuments? Finding it might be a problem, since the name Cape Holland does not exist now. It would not be likely that any boards survived, but perhaps the weather is cold enough that the wood might not have rotted away. Wishful thinking, but how exciting that would be!

At Port Famine Kenniston wrote that Capt. William Hatch of Bristol and he went ashore for the wood and water permit. There were many convicts from Chile here with a commanding officer and a guard who spoke good English. The chroniclers of the three journals gave a dismal picture of the living conditions for the convicts. However, Ball found a woman there to wash his clothes. When he went back to pick up the well washed clothes, she invited him into the house where she was baking biscuits; she dusted off the ashes and gave him one. It was good bread.

April 13 - April 17...At Borja Bay both Ball and Chapman commented on a waterfall...Chapman had one of his longest entries regarding the lofty peak of the rugged mountain which he and three others climbed. Near the top they found a small pond, "and where it emptied it fell from a tremendous height on the top of the mountain". There was nothing but stones running up to the top, while below it was soft with shrubbery. They rolled some boulders down, some weighing a ton...which went down the mountain "like a steam engine". It was as difficult to descend the mountain as it was to ascend. They could see mountains covered with ice on the south side of the Strait. Ball on the 13th of April commented that the mountains here rise a mile high almost perpendicular and some of the men went up to the top. He went on to describe the pond nearly at the top from which issued "...a splendid waterfall between the mountains which makes the harbor look very handsome." Kenniston speaks of the high chain of mountains from one to three miles high on both sides of the Strait. The comments about the waterfall and pond on the top of a mountain were widely divergent as to date and detail. Everyone spoke about the large number of cranberries to be found in this area and Hatch commented on the fact that lilies were blooming despite the cold.

April 13th Ball alludes to going on board the Schooner *Golden Rule* and said she was "splendid". The next day he stated that their anchorage was Snowy Bay (name not mentioned by anyone else) on the southern shore, and that it is the first time they have

anchored on that side. None of the others have ever mentioned any anchorage on the southern side.

Unfortunately, the names of the various anchorages were not used by each man...and some that Hatch listed were not used by anyone! To further confuse the issue, many of the names have completely changed over time and cannot be found on most maps. One notable point is that all of our chroniclers called the southernmost point of the South American continent Cape Forward. The correct name was Cape Froward. Between the 14th and 16th, all the men remarked about the Indians who came along side in canoes. They were almost entirely naked, but the cold did not seem to bother them. Both the *Damariscove* and the Schooner *Golden Rule* gave them some food and clothing. Kenniston described them as cannibals, and Hatch as man eaters. But all considered them pitiful and seemed to want to help in some way. The Indians were friendly and showed no signs of hostility. Perhaps it is possible that the men could relate to the conditions of the Indians, since many times they had no fire in the cabin area due to weather conditions; the only place they could go to get warm was the galley...where there was a fire. Wet clothing was often a big problem.

In Swallow Harbor on the 16th of April both Chapman and Hatch referred to some of mountains covered with ice which they supposed had been accumulating "for centuries". In some places the ice reached almost to the shore. These were the glaciers...too bad we do not know the names of any of them. By the night of the 17th, the *Damariscove* was clear of the Strait. Ball felt that all were glad to be through it. Hatch had written many times that he would be glad to never see the Strait again. One wonders, though, if perhaps their feelings were somewhat ambivalent; this was a 22 day experience of unimaginable sights, sounds and landscapes, many of which were quite beautiful. Sailing time to Juan Fernandez Islands (Robinson Crusoe Island) took 21 days, 2 days spent there, another 62 days to the Bay of San Francisco ...and ultimately to the gold mines.

To recap with a combination of Hatch's list of harbors and some named by the other three chroniclers, we list them, hopefully in some kind of proper order: Possession Bay, Gregory Bay (Cape Gregory), Picket/Pecket Harbor, Elizabeth Island, Laredo Bay (not mentioned by anyone), Fresh water Bay (not mentioned by anyone), Port Famine, Cape Froward, Nicholas Bay (not mentioned by anyone), Cortez Bay...perhaps Cordes Bay (mentioned only by Kenniston), Wood Bay/Harbor/Cove(possibly under Cape Holland), Fortescue Bay (under Cape Gallant) Elizabeth Bay, Borja Bay, Snowy Bay, Swallow Harbor, Playa Padria?(not mentioned by anyone), Cape Pillar, Harbor of Mercy, and rocks called the Evangelists. It is no wonder that today so many of these places are impossible to find references to. Capt. Collision's Journal spoke of several of the main harbors mentioned by our men; however, there were many names never seen in our men's Journals.

## Part III : Leaving the Straits California Bound

In 1830, Edward George Bulwer-Lytton wrote, “It was a dark and stormy night” (from his novel *Paul Clifford*). This phrase aptly describes much of the weather suffered by the crew of the *Damariscove* both before, during and after their trip through the Strait of Magellan. To continue with our narrative I return to the day which finally got the *Damariscove* into the Pacific Ocean.

### The Dark and The Stormy



An American Topsail Schooner by William Joy  
Courtesy of Colours-Art Publishers

[www.colours-art-publishers.com/images/an\\_american\\_topsail\\_schooner\\_by\\_william\\_joy.jpg](http://www.colours-art-publishers.com/images/an_american_topsail_schooner_by_william_joy.jpg)

*The Damariscove as described was probably similar to the ship depicted in the painting above*

The *Damariscove* sailed through the last miles of the Straits the night of April 17th. All four accounts state there was a fair wind. Kenniston appears to confuse his sequence of days at this point, attributing to April 17th the storm that hit them the next day. His account indicated that although they had a heavy (but fair) wind at first, they were also fighting the massive 6 mile current which got steadily stronger the closer to the Pacific they got. He wrote that “the weather turned nasty with snow and rain, that it was extremely dark except when the lightning flashed, and that the Captain was so

frightened that he would not come on deck – nor would the Mate so it was left to Daniel and Joe Mallus to lead the rest of the crew getting the little vessel out of the Strait. His ruminations may have been about the next day, April 18th. Ball indicated that they had spent 20 days getting through from the Atlantic to the Pacific, that they had been becalmed the afternoon of April 16th until an east wind sprang up allowing the *Damariscove* to sail out of the Straits at the rate of 7 or 8 knots. Neither Ball's or Chapman's accounts provided any detail about the conditions the night they sailed out into the Pacific but they do note the bad weather of the 18th.

Kenniston's makes reference to seeing the "burning mountain" (volcano) near the Pacific entrance to the Straits in this portion of his letter. Hatch mentioned some time later in one of his journal entries (while at their next landing) that at that point loud rumbling noises had been heard upon leaving the strait. Some of the crew evidently thought the noise was the settling of snow and ice in the ravines. In retrospect, he thought it was probably volcanic eruptions at the mouth of the Strait on the Tierra del Fuego side where there is a volcano. Lyman Chapman did not mention a volcano but did write of the "tremendous icy mountains" in his entry for the 16th.

Kenniston was the only one of the four to mention that the *Golden Rule* exited from the Straits the same day, even though the others for the previous three days had kept tabs on that vessel, noting when it got ahead of them and when the passenger from the *Northern Light* left the *Damariscove* for better accommodations.

The tensions of getting through the Straits may have also put some strain on relations between the crew for in addition to Kenniston's clear disapprobation of Captain Talbot and First Mate Thomas Hall's behavior during the exit from the Straits, Ball's entries hint at some of the underlying tension among the crew in his cryptic comment from April 16th that "Mr. Hall the first mate and Mr. Weeks the 3rd had a little tussle owing to Mr. Hall's interfering with Mr. Week's business", and his entry on the 18th where he states that "Mr. Look hired Mr. Roberson ..., the first steward to cook and he is going to do both, be cook and steward. He could not get along with Look any better than I did." [Roberson, aka Robinson or Bolenson. Ball called the crewman Roberson and the young man who came aboard from the *Gorgon* (off the *Northern Light*, Charles F. Bolenson. Chapman and Kenniston didn't name either one. Hatch named both Robinson for the surname)]

Though they may not have actually come up against bad weather the day they left the Strait of Magellan for the open sea again, it was not long before the "dark and stormy night" was again a reality. Ball stated on the 18th that they "had a very good run off the land until about 12 o'clock when the wind began to blow very hard." This obliged the vessel to "lay to" all that day. Kenniston again makes the next few weeks (21 days) sound harrowing stating that they didn't make more than 150 miles, that "there was snow and sleet falling more than three quarters of the time." Chapman simply stated (on April 19) that "The gale still blows on and is very cold and we are like to have a long spell of weather." Ball indicates that this particular gale lasted two days and died away by 12

o'clock on April 20 then picked up again by 6 o'clock that evening forcing the crew to reef the sails again. Ball, Hatch and Kenniston remark on southern drift during this period, (Ball being the only one to indicate the amount) so that the schooner was eventually 34 miles south of Cape Pillar, and the mouth of the Strait of Magellan.

Beginning April 22 Ball, Chapman and Kenniston maintain that the wind is making their northwest course possible. Hatch commented in his entries between the 18th and 25th that there were heavy gales, high seas, strong currents, (on the 19th it was almost too rough to write), and "it is hard to get to California against a N.W. gale." Kenniston contradicts his earlier statement (describing the 21 days after leaving the Straits described earlier in his letter), by saying that they "ran about four hundred miles and got into good weather." There is general agreement in the daily entries remarking especially on the weather's coldness and that all members of the crew are fine except for the two Hescocks and G.B. Williams (named specifically by Ball in his April 24th entry and referred to as "three" by Chapman) who were seasick since leaving the Strait and some of the crew with sore hands. All "hands" had become well again by May 3rd after the worst of the stormy weather abated and they were again in fair weather according to Ball and Chapman.

By April 29 with intermittent gales and calms, and with winds being capricious and in many cases being ahead so that they were forced to tack, there was some fear that the vessel was getting too close to land. According to Ball, the ship was within 60 miles of land "and if this tremendous gale holds on 36 hours more we must go ashore." He was also of the opinion that the wind "blew a hurricane" and it was the roughest night he had seen since they had started. Hatch described it as the most severe weather they had encountered during the voyage.... "the most trying times yet." Chapman simply stated that "the gale is tremendous and the sea runs mountains high and seemed to increase." By the time the gale blew itself out the next day (April 30) the schooner was within an estimated 36 miles of land.

### **Robinson Crusoe Island: (Juan Fernandez)**

The voyage went smoothly for several days, the runs being excellent and in one case at least, Ball commented that they had "an extra run." From Chapman's entry we can guess what this means. Evidently the schooner did 100 miles and had sailed across the 39th parallel. But there was a serious problem brewing: after several entries in which Hatch speaks of sun and moderating weather for the most part, his May 2 entry intimates that the course had been re-set and that the ship was now running for Juan Fernandez Island, as it was thought there may be a need to obtain more wood and water again prior to going much further on their voyage. Kenniston confirms the reason for the change, Ball and Chapman just indicate that the vessel was headed toward the island. Hatch mentioned that "some of the crew were curious to set foot on "Robinson



Early map of Juan Fernandez Island

Courtesy of Larry Voyer.com <http://larryvoyer.com/RobinsonCrusoe/crusoe%20pages/crusoe-selkirk.htm>

Crusoe’s Island”, (Daniel Defoe’s rendition of Alexander Selkirk’s true life sojourn on the island). Hatch’s May 9th entry speaks of Selkirk’s “lamentable poetry” and how Robinson Crusoe lived with his man, Friday and learned his goat’s dance,” showing that the story was familiar to at least several of our chroniclers.

They “made the island” (sighted) on the morning of May 7th. Kenniston. stated that they reached the island without any difficulty but the entries of both Ball and Chapman paint a different picture. According to both diarists, the wind was dead ahead and they didn’t land on the island until about two o’clock the next afternoon, when they found a “tolerable good harbor and came to anchor at the southwest end of the island (Ball) ; at the east side of the island (Chapman). The actual landing was May 8th according to Hatch who agreed with Ball and Chapman both. He wrote that they went to the Eastern end of the Island, turned and stood off the South shore. The main harbor was evidently on the northwest side, but the wind did not allow their anchoring there. On the 9th they sent the boat ahead to find an anchorage which was found at 2:30 P.M. Charles Berry, Col Curtis, Mr. Williams, S.W. Look, Mathew Tuck and Hatch went ashore to get water but none was found on that part of the island.

So what might Robinson Crusoe have found in the days after he was abandoned on this Pacific island? It is doubtful that there would have been much in the way of change had not man been there to alter the ecology. Over the two days spent on Juan

Fernandez, the crew of the *Damariscove* discovered the following: "The island is very mountainous and uneven but the hills are covered with grass which is very green and looks pleasant" (Ball); "The land consisted of a rich loam covered with grass that grew very stout." There was not trees nor shrubbery to be seen. The land is mountainous and presents a wonderful scenery as you sail along the rugged shore" (Chapman); The land was almost as forbidding looking as the Straits. If there were any wood to be had it must have been on the North side. It was said there was once a colony here. No inhabitants now. The company had hoped to obtain wood and water here, but found neither" (Hatch); "It is about sixteen miles long and four miles wide in some places and in others so narrow that we could stand in the center and throw a rock into the ocean on either side" (Kenniston).

All chronicled the abundance of wildlife, especially of dogs, goats and seals. They shot ten fur seals . Kenniston and Daniel Mallus got the largest ones worth \$25 dollars each. Kenniston's rendered 51/2 gallons of oil and both he and Daniel Mallus intended to keep the "handsomest things I ever saw. ... silver grey" skins to make muffs and capes for their wives and other female relatives (Kenniston). They couldn't hunt the goats because "when pursued they run out on the cliffs over the ocean where it is not possible for a man to go." (Kenniston). Several of the writers mention cattle bones and Kenniston made the observation that the Chileans had introduced the goats and I think it can be inferred that they were responsible for bringing cattle and dogs to the island as well. There was at the time no habitations on that part of the island - the only evidence found was the foundations of a double wall built on the island by the Chileans and the cattle bones (Ball thought them Oxen bones).

On the evening of May 8th three of the crew, Harvey and J.H. Hescoock and A. B. Weeks, set out to scale up the 200 foot embankment (Chapman) to the island's main plateau and "got off so far that they could not get back before dark" (Ball). Hatch put it more bluntly saying it would have been worth their life to try to get down the mountains alive at night. His account varies essentially by one day on the time frame placing this adventure on the 9th and subsequent events the day after the others (Ball and Chapman) record them (a result of his using "sea time" as explained by Rhea?). The three had to spend the night on the island and were picked up the next morning. While there they saw "one small stream of water and goats in great numbers and three dogs." (Chapman)

On May 9th more of the crew went ashore to hunt fur seal but did not fare as well as those that hunted the day before, managing to only get three small animals. Ball mentions that one of the men fell out of the ship's boat after one of the seal hunts and lost his gun: it turned out to be Lyman Chapman who had borrowed William Kenniston's gun. Kenniston remarked that "the gun is a small loss to what it would have been to lose him [Chapman]." Though Hatch does not corroborate this misadventure, he does mention another "gun" incident, that Capt. Talbot fell down and his gun went off, almost hitting Kenniston and Harvey Hescoock

The next morning (May 10th) they got underway for California again and it is at this point that William Kenniston's contributions ends until the *Damariscove* reached San Francisco Bay, though he concludes his remarks on the island by informing his wife that they managed to get what they came for - wood and water. Hatch provides the same information in his May 13 entry - ...Had 15 hogsheads of water which should be enough to get to California...there was plenty of coal. William Fullerton said he would make a grate to burn it in, in case they needed it.

### **Somewhere Far Northwards it Seems: On Course for Pacific Trades**

The schooner had difficulty leaving Juan Fernandez Island. There were head winds again and there were fears the vessel might drift back onto the Island. But at 8 o'clock on the morning of May 11th, after an overnight gale which forced the crew to reef the sails, the wind dropped and they got underway again. On the 12th the wind shifted to a more favorable heading but there was a heavy "head sea" and they still made very little progress. They were expecting to get into the Pacific trade winds at any time, and appeared to do so on the 13th when they were able to hoist the square sail for the first time since leaving the Atlantic. Their longitude traversing was finally getting them into warmer climes, and the weather for a time was "quite pleasant" (Ball).

Chapman remarking that the wind was south southeast and had "every appearance of the trade winds", compared their current situation of "pleasant weather" with the clouds near Cape Horn which "arose as black as Egypt and threatened to blow the spars out of our little schooner". He also made a cryptic remark about a few of his mates "who are disposed to make trouble all of the time". The following days alternated between fair and head winds, light or variable, and various other combinations which did not encourage anyone to think they were in the trade winds. In addition to Chapman's comment about some of his partners causing trouble, there was also another source of tension beginning as, on May 15th (according to Hatch) or the 16th (according to Ball) the company's directors began the negotiations for settlement of the company business, causing a great deal of dissension. Hatch wanted to put this off as long as possible. Some wanted the cargo divided up equally instead of auctioning it off.

Most of the members were probably just suffering from voyage fatigue. Lyman Chapman's words probably reflect the feelings of everyone on board: "I feel tired of the voyage and sometimes feel almost discouraged. But when I look forward to the time when I shall get my pay for my labors I feel encouraged again." Hatch, was commenting on how bad the weather had been since they left the Strait. He thought the Pacific was supposed to be a little Paradise and was feeling as anxious to hear from friends and family as he was to be digging for gold. Still, he must have felt some optimism because he wrote that all were in good spirits, under a warm sun...lots of talk about California, and his little black Magellan clouds, as he called them were far behind them. Most of the crew were in hopes of reaching San Francisco by July 4.

After two more days of squalls, head winds, light winds and a gale, etc. which at times required the sails to be reefed and forcing the vessel to "lay to", the schooner finally was presented with a south wind and though the seas were still heavy, it began to "make some pretty good headway" (Ball) And by Sunday, May 19th they were "doing first rate" and hoping that "this wind would carry them into the trade winds" (Chapman).

On the 21st the crew began repairing the vessel and "putting on the monkey rail" (Ball and Chapman); Hatch attributes the sprucing up to the time span of May 24-27). According to Hatch, Mr. Williams and some others set up a cap factory. Berry and Chapman could not work on the bulwarks because there was too much water flying. Colonel Curtis finished the monkey rails on both sides, and it took about 6 of the crew all forenoon and part of the afternoon to make a "Uncle Hall's patented scrub broom", a subject into which he goes into full detail but is too long for our history. The schooner continued journeying northwest by north, enjoying mostly fair winds. There were comments about seeing schools of porpoise (Chapman-May 22), (which someone on the crew tried to harpoon unsuccessfully because it was dark), and flying fish (May 26th); breaking out 6 barrels of flower from the hold (Ball-May 23rd); speculations on the number of days yet before reaching California (40-Chapman); repairing their clothes "for the diggins" (Ball-May 24th); "all hands have had a general shave" for the first time in 3 months (at least for Reuben Ball); and sailing by a jug which was picked up but proved to be empty (Ball and Chapman-May 26th); and the general complaint expressed by Hatch (May 28-30) that "All hands were sick and tired of the voyage." This last sentiment was a result of an ever increasing northern wind which caused the ship to make little headway toward their destination. There was fear of not having enough water on board to complete the journey. Chapman's entry on May 27th estimated that the crew used one hogshead of water per week and he and Hatch agreed that there were only 11 or 12 hogsheads of water remaining.

### **Company Business**

On the 28th and 29th the wind became a "fine breeze from the south southeast blowing at 7 knots (Ball and Chapman) and there began a debate amongst the investors concerning the sale of shares in the ship (Ball and Hatch). According to these two, a couple of members sold their shares (Ball names Look and Kenniston) to the Mr. Melluses. Hatch provided more details: Daniel Mellus offered 80 cents on the dollar on the bills at Damariscotta. Mr. Lock bargained away his share. Some of the company believed it was not fair nor according to the company's constitution to sell the vessel at sea..without consent or vote of the company....and not at 20 cents below par. Hatch was perfectly willing that Mellus should have the ship, but he did not intend to settle for anything less than full value. The gentlemen of the Board of Directors with the President had been collecting bills on the cargo and the labor of each person along with all the things each person had furnished in order to reach a settlement. Some were still talking about buying the vessel, which they felt was the easiest way to settle things. Mr.

Chapman was evidently oblivious to all of this however until May 31st as he comments on the 30th after two days of negotiations had taken place (according to Ball and Hatch), only that he "played a tune on the fife and we had quite a training".

On May 31st the crew was preparing to put up the top masts and painting - they were in the trade winds going at a rate of six knots an hour (Ball and Chapman) and were only six degrees south of the equator (Chapman) and although tired of the sea there was at least a little optimism that the voyage was on its final leg. Chapman wrote "I am tired of the sea and think if I get on shore again I shall stay there a spell." But all were pleased with the progress the schooner was making as it appears that they had finally picked up the trade winds on May 28th.

The wind stayed "fresh" and in the right general direction until June 7th. On the 4th the ship crossed over to northern longitude at latitude 111.20 at 5:00 a.m., with the fore top mast and topsail on (all canvas was on for the first time in the Pacific). They were four months and four days since they crossed the equator on the Atlantic side. Hatch commented that the Pacific Ocean is redeeming its character now. Chapman wrote that "We have nothing to do today but talk about California".

June 5th saw the broaching of the last keg of water - but it was "very poor and stinks (Ball). Hatch mentioned that he and Charles Berry "have been watch mates since the beginning of the passage". There had evidently been a fight on board also as he wrote that it seemed that there had to be some fights to keep everyone going...but nobody was killed or hurt. The water problem was solved on June 6th when a heavy shower allowed the men to collect fresh water (Ball mentions the showers but Chapman provided the insight on how important it was). Their daily progress through the first few days of June was quite substantial and at the rate of 6 or seven knots most of the time.

June 7th, the wind began to falter and though the schooner still made good progress (Ball) it meant that there was more tacking involved to do so. The Directors were back in session again also (Ball), "but they have not made out much".

The fairly frequent squalls with showers at the end of June's first week and beginning of the second meant that there was now plenty of water. On June 8, for instance, the crew "caught about a hogshead of water besides several tubs of water to wash in" (Ball and Chapman). But the wind on the eighth went calm in the morning and did not pick up again until late afternoon (4 o'clock). This was to be the pattern for the next several days. According to Chapman, the pinnacles of this day were the catching of two porpoise, and Chapman and Hatch both comment that the North Star was seen "for the first time since we saw it on the other side". Hatch identified Captain Talbot as he who saw the North Star "on his watch last night". Hatch mentioned what Reuben Ball had intimated in his entry of the seventh - that Thomas Hall and George B. Williams (two of the Company Directors evidently) were still hard at work on the ship's bills.

Ball actually named three of the directors in his June 10th entry - G.B. Williams, S.W. Look and W.B. Fullerton - there was some unidentified difficulty in settling the accounts because of these three so a full meeting of the Company was called for that afternoon at 2:00 o'clock to chose three new directors (Hatch). A portion of Ball's diary follows:

It appears that Mr. Look and Fullerton got put at each other for some little frivolous thing about a bill and Williams tried to settle the affair and Look thought he sided with Fullerton and so Look will not have any more to do with either of them nor will not resign unless they both will but we did not make out to settle and have spent the afternoon in frivolous bickerings.

Chapman observed in his next day's entry that a meeting was called "and chose three men to settle up all business for the company for the reasons that our five directors could not agree". Ball corroborates that a second meeting was held on the 11th:

The company had another meeting this afternoon which came off without any dispute and was conducted quite honorably, much to the satisfaction of all. I believe the meeting voted to alter the bylaws so as to chose three men to settle up the business of the company from this date. Made choice of T. Hall, D.C. Mellus and W. M. Hatch. Also voted that they should sell the schooner, remit home money to pay our bills at home and divide the rest among the share holders after we get into San Francisco.

Subsequently, Hatch posts in his diary that the Company's business was finished up on the 12th. Shares, at this point, stood at \$461.61. (The Schooner with all the cargo and fixings cost \$9,045.82. Captain and Pilot probably did not have a share...but the nephew of the builder, one Waterman S. Stetson who was already in S.F. did have a share. )...Hatch was not thrilled about being named one of the three responsible for selling the schooner.

With the completion of Company business and with the wind being an "excellent breeze" for that day, the schooner did a fair day's travel. Some of the crew began making hammocks to use in the "diggings". Harvey Hescoek volunteered to helped Reuben Ball on his and it was finished the next day. Chapman writes on the 13th that "The most of the company are engaged in making hammocks and bags ready to go to the mines."

### **Mutiny on the *Damariscove*?**

Somewhere in his entries between June 10 - 14, Hatch intimates that some of the men were second guessing the Captain and Pilot, they didn't think they were westward enough. This statement was yet another indicator that Captain Talbot did not have the full confidence of his employers who were also the crew. The other frustration came

with the wind changing course and now blowing from the north so that the true course could not be followed. This led Hatch to observe (in his June 15th entry) that the Pacific Ocean was a lonely place and he was tired of life at sea. However, he had weighed the matter carefully before making the voyage.

On the 15th of June another Company meeting was held to hear the report from the new Directors. Ball notes that the shares amounted to \$465.75 which meant that he still owed \$117.28 on the venture. Hatch notes June 16th as being the final settlement of Company business. The wind still was ahead. Chapman estimated that they were still 1000 miles from port and that had there been a "wholesale breeze over our quarter, six days we could reach there". But they were going north and even though it was June, it was cold enough that they all began donning their "reefing jackets" (Chapman), making about one degree and a quarter per day through the next five days.

Within the next fortnight (two weeks), the winds were rarely good. Either they were light when blowing from the right direction or they were blowing from the north causing very slow progress.

The following items took our writer's fancy, enough to comment on in this period. Ball: cold weather on the 17th; 18th - six months out from Damariscotta; the crew caught two albatrosses with a hook on the 19th but the still live turkey didn't take any notice of them (one wonders if the turkey also made it to San Francisco?); all hands were busy repairing the rigging (21st-22nd); the remaining comments through until the June 30th mostly observe the constant tacking the ship was forced to do against a merciless headwind with one exception - on the 25th in a heavy breeze the ship developed a list to starboard on the same side as the tack they were on. The crew had to move the ship's big gun (a nine pound cannon according to Ball in his autobiography) to the other side of the vessel (larboard) to balance out the weight.

Chapman: 17th - not seen a sail since leaving Juan Fernandez Island; 18th - saw a draw bucket and a chunk of wood afloat- all there has been seen to show that anybody has been there; the albatross capture on the 19th - he gave a fuller description of the birds than Ball then commented on the crew being well and in good health but dreadfully fat and lazy; and on the 20th, nothing to think about but California; 21st - 22nd, all hands busy with ship duties, clothes mended up ready for the diggins, hard wind blew on the 24th- 25th and they were obliged to reef.; They also had to contend with fog during this period, especially dangerous as the tack they were on (26th- 29th ) was taking them toward land; porpoise were seen the evening of the 27th, a sail on the 29th; were within one half mile of land on the 30th which prompted the schooner to be tacked back toward the open sea.

Hatch: June 17 said that Weeks can't let Choate alone and he wishes he would stop and think of their differences in age; on the 18th - he was reading an account of the Ship Edward Evert's (Everett's) voyage to San Francisco - the same account that Reuben Ball

commented on nearly six months earlier as the schooner cleared the coast of Maine; June 19-23 also remarked on the lack of other ships, porpoise or whale sightings since leaving Juan Fernandez; and Col. Curtis was making a gun part; he measured the distance to San Francisco on the chart as 610 miles, writes of going (Hatch's quote of June 23), "to the land where every step a man takes it is said he walks on Gold dust"; June 21st the wind changed and they were able to set the square sail and topsail in the morning - Ball said the wind was from the southeast, Chapman claimed east, and Hatch complained a few days later, June 24th - 26th that they needed better winds. Of the winds they had during the voyage, "the trades have been like angels - few and far between"; he would like to once more visit the House of God and worship; June 28th ...Very cold for the latitude they were in...He supposed the wind came directly from the Bering Strait where there is always snow; June 29th ....Saw a sail today! June 30th, a list of regular Bible readers and those 2 or 3 who he never saw with a Bible in their hands... "they get their instruction out of Epitome or Blunt's Coast Pilot..."; Never thought there would be so much fog - about 276 miles from their port...chances of making it by July 4 not good...; more on June 30th, Hatch said Lock/Look got humbled about a month ago, but was getting troublesome again. Some are blaming the officers for not standing further westward before they tacked the ship. Some are engaged in making powder horns(figuring them with birds and beasts) and making canes with pearl oyster shell heads - from the beautiful pearl shells Kenniston mentioned that they found on Robinson Crusoe Island (Juan Fernandez).

The questioning of the ships officers' competency arose again around June 30th as noted by Hatch's remarks and verified by Ball who wrote:

there has been a kind of flair up between the Captain and unknown others for tacking ship when they were "off to the westward far enough so that if he had kept off about 2 days longer we could have laid right for our port - but instead of that he tacked and stood for the eastward and fell about four hundred miles below the port of San Francisco, and here we are beating and banging about in the fog and afraid of running onto the rocks all the time

He continued: "The judgement that our officers have is enough to sink a gold ship".

July had arrived and the same routine, endless tacking due to northern winds. Chapman's entry for July 2nd shows the growing tension: "Our captain and another one had some hard words today." The crew was hoping to make San Francisco by Independence Day - they were sorely displeased to find themselves still 100 miles south of Monterrey on the third (Ball and Hatch). To make matters worse, it was cold - "so cold that we wear mittens in the night" (Chapman), though evidently, by the 6th there was pleasant weather again. Ball commented on the look of the land: "The land looks pleasant and part of it seems to be well timbered." Chapman's comment was: The land is mountainous, the wood is not very thick. The ground seems to be covered with dead grass with green growing up out of it."

## California Dreamin'

On July 4th Independence Day was observed on shipboard, "most miserably..., miserable because if our officers had made any calculations we might have been in port just as well as to be here." "All hands are so disappointed in not getting in today that they are sober and cross and anything like sport is as far away as North from South" (Ball). Chapman was a bit more severe:

We was in hopes to be in Francisco the Fourth of July but owing to the mismanagement of our Captain we are on the wide ocean. He is not the man that we thought he was when we started from home. I think if he could had his own way we should have been wrecked before now. He disputed the pilot's calculations and is despised by all on board.

Beginning about May 20 Hatch felt most had hopes of getting to San Francisco by July 4. On June 18th he is still giving the date of July 4th for arrival. On July 2 when it was apparent they would not make it, he "vented his speen" and told the navigators what he thought. Said he didn't care whether they "like it or lump it". Yet probably not 2 weeks prior to this he thought the men should not always blame the officers. On July 4th he had absolutely nothing to say about the significance of the day. Instead, he spoke of starting a letter to his wife.

On the 5th the general hope was that the schooner would be at the same longitude as Monterrey and the excitement for the day was "a large tree that they came near running into ...but saw it in season to clear it" (Chapman). The wind for the next several days was from the Northwest and they tacked ever so slowly against it and a heavy sea. On the Seventh there was another gale - and an emergency. The "bob stay" gave out in the forenoon and the crew had "to get out the chain through his hole and fasten to the windless. Got a guy (line) from the top of the main mast to the chock forward and secured everything as well as possible" (Ball). Hatch mentions that there was "lots of wrangling among themselves", from the 6th through the 10th. But they were now in sight of land and could see the highlands of Monterrey on the 8th, a little too closely it seems. Ball wrote on July 7th that it was "Sunday and we still hope it is the last Sunday but this by no means is certain." On the 8th Chapman told the story of how the Captain nearly ran them ashore:

It has been fourteen days since we tacked ship and stood in for land. The captain said that he thought the wind would free as we neared land. The pilot told him that NW winds prevailed here and it was best to keep on well W (west) till we could fetch our port. But the captain thought she must go as he said and kept her in to land in the fog till the sea and land birds was all round us. It being near night he said that if the vessel was his and he was commander, she should not go about that night. Scarcely an hour had elapsed when it was sung out breakers ahead, then he consented to go and if

we had kept on west we should been there before now but we are in hopes to get in yet.

On Tuesday July 9th Ball estimated that they were about 30 miles from port, becalmed in the morning but with a fair breeze in the afternoon. They were in sight of land all day. Both Ball and Chapman noted a sighting of "a great school of whales"... "all around us all day". And the weather had now turned pleasant and knowing that they were so close to their destination they began the process of getting ready to get into port. This (according to Hatch) consisted of cleaning the big gun, making cartridges to salute. The constant refrain for the next few days was "if nothing happens we shall get in tomorrow" (Ball). Both Ball and Hatch mentioned Joseph Mellus as being unwell, and Hatch sometime on the 9th or 10th wrote that he intended to send his book home by private conveyance as soon as he had a chance...for his wife and son-in-law to read, hoping that they would take good care of it.

On the 10th, they spied a sail, a bark, about four miles ahead of them. They watched as it made the attempt to enter San Francisco Bay, which it failed to do and turned back out to sea, it came nearly close enough to be hailed. They kept in sight of this ship for the next three or four days, both vessels making very slow progress, Hatch identified it with the spyglass as the *Winthrop Hallowell*. Once again all three journals complained that the wind and weather was preventing their entry into the Bay, the entrance to which they could now see (Hatch, July 11th); the wind being calm during the day with "a moderate breeze at night and ahead at that" (Chapman). The frustration was palpable - Ball wrote, "This is the third day that we have been becalmed so that we could not get in, and if we do not have more breeze than we have had today we never shall get in." There was also a strong tide preventing their entrance, but the sun was out and it was warmer. On the 11th they were becalmed all day and drifting on shore, within about a mile of the *Winthrop Hallowell* drifting along with them. They saw another sail and all three of our narrators mentioned sighting a Panama steam boat in the morning which disappeared into the harbor. Knowing their state of mind at this point in time it is inevitable that they were extremely jealous of the passengers on that boat.

## **San Francisco Here I Come**

July 12 arrived and so did the schooner *Damariscove*: Reuben Ball wrote:

Today we have got into the port of San Francisco and a cedar swamp it is for I should think that there is a thousand sail at anchor. We anchored at about 4 o'clock, went on shore, went to the post office but it was closed. This is a curious place, I know not yet what to make of it.

Lyman Chapman's reaction: "In the morning the wind sprung up from the south and at 12 o'clock we let go anchor in the Bay of San Francisco".

William Hatch, still writing on sea time (noon to noon being a day) evidently agreed with him on the time, just before noon (civil time).

Specifically he wrote "at last saw a ship on shore on the Starbord hand..soon after which i began to see the shipping & the city of San Francisco about 11-1/2 o'clock anchored at the upper part of the anchorage. The discrepancy in time between Ball and the other two diarists may perhaps be explained by Reuben Ball's description of their entering the harbor in his autobiography: He writes that "when we were sailing into the Golden Gate "fired... it (the nine pound cannon belonging to an artillery company near Damariscotta) a number of times, but before we got up to the city, they took it from the

carriage, lowered it into our long boat, rowed it over to Government Island and buried it before the custom house officer came aboard." They were afraid of being prosecuted for taking the gun, though it is doubtful that news of a stolen cannon would have proceeded them. In his autobiography (written in 1897), Ball commented "And I see by a San Francisco paper it was dug up this summer, and the paper had a vast amount of speculation how it came there, and I suppose the people down east, when it was missed, had just as big a speculation where it had gone."

William Kenniston rejoined the chroniclers at this juncture summing up the experience with his last entry:

It is with pleasure that I write you these few lines to inform you that we have arrived here after a long and tedious voyage of two hundred-twelve days. We are as well as could be expected considering the extremely rough passage that we have had, having suffered almost everything but death on the passage. Mary, little do people who are at home and in comfortable circumstances think or know anything of the suffering that some have to encounter to get to California by way of Cape Horn [see Rheas earlier comments about Cape Horn] in the season of the year in which we came. It is true we have been spared, but only through the providence of God and not by ourselves, for we have run a great many chances. We have had a very long passage but we have done everything in our power to make it shorter, but rough weather, head



San Francisco Circa the arrival of the Damariscove  
Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center,  
San Francisco Public Library  
AAC 1807

winds and calm weather have been the cause. My health is pretty good although I have been very much exposed during the whole voyage.

They had reached the shores of the golden land at last. Seeking the gold that drew them there was the next object of their venture but one which all of them did not share. Once in San Francisco some of the 22 went their separate ways. The next segment of this history will follow Reuben Ball's life in the California gold "diggins".



Abandoned Ships in San Francisco Bay circa 1850.  
 Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center,  
 San Francisco Public Library AAC 1809

**Shipping Intelligence.**

**FORT SAN FRANCISCO, NOV. 07, 1850.**

**Arrived.**

Nov 26—Ship Fortanorth, Marsee, 136 ds fr New York, via  
 Valparaiso 40 ds, no cargo.

Peruvian brigon Diana, Robinet, 25 ds fr Callao, to Howard  
 & Applewell.

Barque Allen Varley, Astoria, 18 ds fr Oregon, in water.

Barque Orloff, Helder, 65 ds fr Panama, in ballast, 6 pas-  
 sengers, in water.

Brig Angola, Cutting, 12 ds fr Portland, 3 passengers, in Win-  
 ter & Latham.

Brig Terquise, Halfrey, 12 ds fr Portland, Oregon, 15 pas-  
 sengers, to Clark & Co.

**Cleared.**

Ship Pioneer, Shield, China, 1 passenger.

Ship Lady Armitage, Glover, Calcutta.

Br. barque Rebecca Berkley, Orlan, Valparaiso, 20 pas-  
 sengers and \$10,000.

Barque Griffin, Helder, Panama, 6 passengers.

Brig Josephine, Helder, San Diego.

Brig Bericova, Bully, San Diego, 12 passengers.

**Discovered.**

Barque Aron 17 1/2 wts to sail from Oregon on the 14th inst,  
 but John Davis was heading on the 14th. The brig reported as  
 having been picked up, adrift outside the bar, proved to be  
 the Aron. She had been safely moored inside, and a salvage of  
 \$200 claimed on her.

Shipping Intelligence Article from the Daily  
 Alta California

## Part IV Golden Times: Everyman's Diggins



San Francisco at the height of the gold rush  
Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

AAC1808

### Everyman Ball

As a starting point, getting to know a little more about the man Reuben Ball might be in order. His parentage and ancestry have been referred to earlier in this series. Ball was a boot and shoe maker in 1849 and this, in his words, is how he became involved with the schooner *Damariscove*.

In 1849 I had a great deal of trouble with my legs and ankles, standing at the bench, and in October I received a letter from one of my wife's brothers [William B. Fullerton] stating that he was going to California and wanted me to go with him. So I closed up my business in Weymouth [Massachusetts], bought a share in the vessel, and about the first of December sailed for the Golden Gate. [It is obvious that he didn't refer back to his diary when he wrote his memoirs as the dates are considerably off from the reality expressed in the diary]. My wife wanted to go with me, but her mother being in poor health, concluded to stay with her. We started from Damariscotta where the vessel was built, and which was called or named the "Damaris Cove". We loaded her with provisions, with the exception of a small house framed and ready to set up when we got there. There were nineteen owners and two passengers and a pilot for the straits. I was chosen secretary for the camp, and my duty aboard the vessel was that of steward.

There was not an immediate rush to the gold. Certain preparations had to be made first and this included some of the business activities agreed to on board the *Damariscove* mentioned earlier - the selling and distribution of the company's assets so that the men could continue to the prospecting area. Ball's diary entries show the company remaining in San Francisco between July 13 and August 11 to which he refers as a week to ten days in his memoirs:

We can infer then from his diary entries that some of the men from the *Damariscove* (some still living on the vessel) probably spent the next month in the following way: "Today went on shore and got three letters from home". "Today is Sunday and I have been to meeting twice and some very smart preaching". "Today we went on shore to see what I could find to do had several offers". Reuben wrote very little (his own acknowledgment in the diary) between this time and when the partners began their winter mining in January, 1851. He had acquired the book in which these accounts are written in San Francisco on July 12th, the notations of the voyage evidently transferred from a sheet of paper. The transcription must have been another way in which he spent the month of semi-idle time before starting for the gold fields.

One member of the company, D.C. Mellus must have been one of the better off of the expedition's financiers as he hired Ball, and presumably some of the other partners to work for him on several occasions. Between July 22nd and 24th Reuben worked for Mellus on the company house - that pre-fabricated building that had been part of the *Damariscove's* cargo. A few days later and Ball was working for Roberson and Company in the lumber yard. Was this company somehow affiliated with the same Daniel H. Roberson who had originally been a passenger on the *Damariscove* and later was hired as steward and cook? Ball doesn't provide a clue beyond the name, but he did earn \$10 dollars for two days work.



Stockton, California in the late 1800's

Courtesy of Chronicle Books,

<http://www.chroniclebooks.com/Chronicle/catalog/0811826309-stockton.jpg> by permission



Map showing San Francisco Bay circa the arrival of the *Damariscove*.  
Courtesy of Heritage Map Museum  
<http://www.carto.com/maps/020914580.jpg>

## Going for the Gold

On August 4th he and his partners began “fitting up” for the mines, intending to sail up the inland passageways to Stockton in the *Damariscove*. (Arthur Chapman in his narrative continuation of his father’s journal states that Lyman Chapman took a steamer up San Francisco bay. This may have been possible by the time the *Damariscove* arrived in the San Francisco Bay area but not long before, according to Leonard Kip’s *California Sketches*, (Albany, N.Y.: E.H. Pease & Co., 1946 from the original 1850 pamphlet. This version and the Carson document mentioned below are available full text on-

line from:

[http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cache/perscoll\\_AmMem-calbk.html](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cache/perscoll_AmMem-calbk.html)

for a valuable full text set of documents on California history) and at least one other writer of the time (see next reference, p. 38), there was only one steamboat that crossed the Bay and it went up the Sacramento River, not the San Joaquin River which led to Stockton. The Bay is so configured that it is possible to travel up the inland waterways all the way to either Sacramento or Stockton, but the San Joaquin was much harder to navigate. James H. Carson, in his “Early Recollections of the Mines”, (Original pamphlet written in 1850, reprinted in *The Magazine of History* in 1931, p.64), provides an excellent detailed account of navigational difficulties on the San Joaquin River. The draft of vessels choosing to go to Stockton in the late 1840’s early 1850’s had to have less than 4 to 5 feet of draft in order to be able to reach their destination, and that is where the *Damariscove* partners that included Ball and Chapman went to - Stockton.

Ball’s memoir does not mention obtaining new supplies or working in San Francisco, only that they spent enough time in the city to get and send mail then headed for Stockton “in their vessel”.

We stayed in San Francisco a week or ten days, got letters from home and sent ours in return, then took our vessel and provisions that were left and started up to Stockton, where we engaged teams to take us into the mines. Most of us went to Hawken’s Bar on Tuolomy [Tuolumne River] River where we commenced mining with cradle and tin pan and those who were in any

way lucky, made from two to six dollars per day which was considered pretty good for novices, for mining has to be learned as well as any other trade.

Hawkins Bar was (or is) in Trinity County on the Trinity river, (a tributary of the Tuolumne), below Jacksonville, California. It began to falter in 1858, was a ghost town six years later and completely vanished by 1870. Today (2005) the access road to Hawkins Bar is ten miles east of Willow Creek on Highway 299, opposite the Hawkins Bar Store. It is a popular place for easy white water rafting, "tubing" fishing, sunbathing and swimming. See the following internet site for additional information:

[http://gorp.away.com/gorp/resource/us\\_national\\_forest/ca/pad\\_six.htm](http://gorp.away.com/gorp/resource/us_national_forest/ca/pad_six.htm)

He mentioned the perpetually sick Joseph Mellus, who was down with a case of diarrhoea on August 11th, provided the news that everyone else was in good health. Everyone else, just a third of the *Damariscove* complement, consisted of: J. And D.C. Mellus, W.M. Curtis, J. Little, H. Hescocock, L.N. Chapman, and Ball. They had been joined by several new partners including: F. Little (John Little's younger brother), H. N. Curtis (a possible relation of William Curtis?) and a T. Slater.

They continued mining at Hawkins Bar until about the first of October (ten weeks during which Reuben mined about \$300 in gold), when most of them moved on to Sullivan Creek near its junction with Curtis Creek. Here, in a place called Chillia diggins or Chillian Camp, they built a log cabin for the winter of 1850-1851. ["Chili Camp", Tuolumne County. Mining on Curtis's Creek 3/4 mile from Camp]. Reuben was sick for four weeks while the cabin was being constructed and this may be the time that he felt his life was saved by ingesting calomel (by which he probably meant the *Acorus calamus* or Calamus plant) which he refers to at the end of the diary, having contracted a fever once he returned to Massachusetts. Calamus, similar to the cattail but more closely related to skunk cabbage, its "dried root powder is infused one ounce to a pint of water, then taken in wineglass doses for fevers and dyspepsia" (Hylton, William H. ed., *The Rodale Herb Book*, Emmaus, Pa: Rodale Press Book Division, 1974, p380).

His memoirs add some additional details that happened while living near Curtisville:

Curtisville was up Curtis Creek about two miles and was quite a large mining camp, and as there had been some claim jumping, the miners had a meeting and chose an arbitrating committee to whom was referred all claims which could not be settled between contesting parties. They also made rules governing the camp and woe to him who did not obey those rules. One man was caught stealing gold dust out of a camp, he was stripped, tied to a large log, and whipped with a band saw, the teeth bringing blood at every stroke, then given two hours to get out of camp, and ordered never to show himself again there. That was the last ever seen of him for he obeyed the mandate to a letter.

Meanwhile, one of the partnership's number (unfortunately not named) went back to Stockton for winter provisions. They were calculating that the winter would be wet but were disappointed, having only one rain storm until the first of January 1851. This was critical for mining gold as river and creek water was the primary means of sluicing the gold out of the dirt by the use of "Rockers" or "Long Toms"-

Also called a Broad Tom , this is a modified sluice box. In its simplest form, it consists of two sections. The upper section, called a tom, is a long trough in which the dirt is placed and acts as a large hopper. At the down slope end is a grating or screen set at a 45 degree angle. The second section is a riffle box, with the upper end set under the lower end of the tom. This receives the classified dirt that passes the screen on the tom. While water is directed into the upper end of the tom, the dirt is worked with a rake to break up any lumps of clay, clean off organic matter and knock any dirt from the rocks. The fine material flows through the screen and into the riffle box. This is usually a two or three man operation. This type of equipment is little used these days, especially in the desert, and is not used by club members.

[Knight, Ray: <http://home.att.net/~desert-gold-diggers/equip/equip.htm#LongTom> ].

Early in the new year (1851) it did begin to rain a little, alternating between wet and warm pleasant weather. The journal entries for this period include mail received and sent, and the fact that he was involved in a very good Choir of singers (January 19th entry) at the Sunday meetings held in the store at Chillian Camp. Ball and his partners were evidently in Chillian camp subsequent to the dangerous situation that occurred there between American miners and those from Chile, of which there is an excellent rendition at [http://www.perseus.org/cache/perscoll\\_AmMem-calbk.html](http://www.perseus.org/cache/perscoll_AmMem-calbk.html)

February 11th the partnership dissolved with a settlement that saw six of the company leaving for San Francisco and some of these left for their homes. Harvey Hescoock and Ball's partner all winter - Lyman Chapman went home to the states (though this is not confirmed and from Arthur Chapman's writings it seems that Lyman Chapman stayed in California until 1852); F. Little, J. Little, H. N. Curtis, and T. Slater. Before Harvey Hescoock left for the east, he returned to visit and to inform Ball that he had sent a draft (check) for \$300 dollars, the price of what gold Ball had prospected to that time back to Reuben's wife. (It is not quite clear whether this was the same \$300 mined at Hawkin's Bar or an additional \$300 mined separately at Chili Camp).

The remaining partners tried prospecting in a few new locations, "Murphies [Murphy's] diggens and back by the plaice called Angels" [probably Angel's Camp]. Murphy's Diggins was founded by John and Daniel Murphy on Angel's Creek (gold was struck in July 1848). The camp reached its peak in 1855. A Hotel, Murphey's was constructed in 1856. Angel's Camp was founded in 1848 by Henry George Angel who

established a trading post around which the camp sprouted up. The partners found "nothing worth moving for" and went back to their Chilian Camp claim.

### **Frontier Justice**

Another memory or story from the time was not noted in the diary but well told in his memoirs and illustrates the quality of law and justice that was common at the time:

One night in march a gambler and his valet rode into camp and put up at the hotel, grocery and saloon combined. After supper when the miners came in he asked if anyone would like to play a game of poker. Long Jack, as he was called, offered to play him a game, so they sat down at a table and played until about 11 o'clock, when Long Jack won considerable money from the gambler. This caused the gambler to accuse Jack of cheating, but finally they settled the quarrel, took a drink together and played on till morning, had another drink and parted seemingly good friends. The gambler ordered his horse and was about to start, when he took out his pistol and went across the street to Jack's cabin, opened the door. (Jack was washing himself in the back of the cabin,) on seeing the door open. he fell to the floor and the ball went into a log over his head. The valet seeing what his master was about to do, caught the gambler around his arms and said, "Don't shoot him." Jack, seeing his arms pinned by the valet, raised up, and the gambler having the pistol in hand, fired as Jack raised up and the ball entered his head. By this time the hotel man and another miner had got there and they caught the gambler and bound him. The news of the shooting flew in all directions and by nine o'clock nearly every miner in that vicinity was present and demanded a trial. The council appointed a windy miner to plead the cause of the gambler. A jury of six men was appointed to try the case. The windy miner plead the drunken and insane dodge. The gambler became very pious and tried the popular theological dodge of going to Jesus and appeared to think that while the lamp held nut to burn the vilest sinner might return. One of the council said, "Do not hang the man until his victim is dead." Capt. Jo, another council man said if they had quarreled, made up and drank over it that ought to settle it that the man should be hung for his treachery even if his victim lived. Still others cried out, "Do not hang the man until his victim dies." By this time Dr. Pillbox, as he was called, who had been sent to Jack, reported that he could not live an hour. This settled it. The jury were called upon and their verdict was guilty, the rope was put around his neck and he was pulled up twenty feet. He was dead before his victim breathed his last.

The question came up what shall we do with the dust and his horse [the gambler's], (the valet having gone with his own horse.) One said let the community take charge of it, but here Capt. Jo said, "You know Bill Gage has

been sick all winter and wants to git home to Herkermer county, New York. I move we give it to him." "I second the motion," cried fifty voices. Then shouted another, 'As he lives near the Stetson camp, let Ball take it to him and see him on to the stage at Sonora. So the next day, I procured a mule and went with poor Gage to Sonora, saw him on the stage bound for Stockton, and that was the last I heard from him, but I shall never forget the tears and God blessing I got from poor Gage for taking him there and hope he lived to get home.

The effects of Jack were sent to his folks in missouri. And thus ended the hanging in Curtisville nearly forty years since.

Reuben was indeed living near the Stetson camp - he had bought one sixth of the team Long Tom and additional equipment (a pair of wheels to make a cart, a horse and harness) Team members in the Stetson's, Hescoc, Otice and Company, included Captain James Stetson, Waterman Stetson, H.G. Otice, of those named. Whether it was Harvey Hescoc or one of the other Hescocs from the *Damariscove* who was a partner in this team is not mentioned. Ball received five shares worth 63 dollars of what was taken out the week of March 9th.

His memoirs summarize the next couple of months of 1850:

I worked here until April or may, when the creeks became dry, so we settled up to move, my partner thought he had enough of California and concluded to come home to Maine. I sent three hundred dollars and some gold specimens to my wife by him.

According to the diary, the breakup occurred on April 26th. Part of the group went to Dry Town to try their luck (on the Mokelumne River - the partners who left are again unfortunately not identified). Was this the exit of Harvey Hescoc referred to in the diary as taking place in February - did H. Hescoc change his mind and not go home until May? Neither the diary or his memoirs clarify the point but the memoirs next mention another change of partnership. His diary entry notes the day as May 4th when:

Then I formed a co-partnership with my brother-in-law [William Fullerton], bought horses and carts and a long Thoms, so called, and commenced mining on a larger scale, moved up to Calevarus River, where, on the fourth night, our horses were stolen, and it cost us three hundred dollars for another horse and mule.

The diary through this period provides one or more entries every week to ten days. On June 1st they moved to the other branch of the Calaveras because they were not finding enough gold to make working that claim pay. On June 22nd, he complains of sore hands and having to repair the long tom and that the water has failed. On June

29th the water in the river evidently dried up altogether. This prompted the following entry in the memoirs:

We mined on this river about six weeks then moved to the Mocalomy River [Mokelumne River], where I finished my mining in December 1851. The bar we mined on was about three hundred feet from river to bank and composed mostly of boulders washed down the river from the mountains. Our claim was two hundred feet from the rivers it took three men four days to make a road from the claim to the river for our carts. When we got ready we put on four carts and two thoms, two carts in mine to be filled while the others were delivering their loads to the thoms. We had from ten to fifteen men working – cooks, teamsters, shovelers, and watchmen. Our payroll was from \$150 to \$250 a week. The grain for our horses cost us \$40 a week, our provisions about \$100. We had to pack all our provisions, tools, grain, etc., on the backs of our mules down the banks of the river which was over a mile high and as steep as old Saddleback mountain, and to get up and down one had to travel about four miles in a zig-zag way to make it.

The Mokelumne River (which retained water year round because it was fed from snow melt as well as rain), appears to have satisfied Reuben Ball's gold fever for the remainder of his stay in the California. He mentions another partner in his July 6th diary entry - an O. Corvell, who had joined W. B. Fullerton on a trip back to San Francisco to purchase tools and powder (for blasting) "and other things recusit to work in the quarter". He sent \$200 dollars worth of gold dust by his brother-in-law to be sent by draft from San Francisco to his wife.

### **Miners' Culture**

The next few entries are typical of the work and leisure activities that miners did to occupy their time: On July 13th, when they had finally reached their new diggings on the Mokelumne, he sent a letter to his wife. On July 20th he writes of "cutting wood for coal" (charcoal - probably used for cooking and heating during the winter), and it is in this entry that he mentions that three of the partners have become discouraged and quit, leaving the remaining four partners to pay all the bills and dispose of the tools which were now surplus. (These they sold for triple what they had cost them). Another July entry on the 27th Ball identifies another of the partners, a Mr. Jorden [Jordan?], who was "quite unwell this week". He also "maied a peace of composition in verses and put them into a letter to send home".

The August diary entries begin with the 3rd, but refer back to July 29th. Ball was prospecting on "Spruce Gulch" as he describes it, "one of the most dismal looking playces that ever I was in". On the first of August he "moved down the main river about 14 miles to a plaice called povity [Poverty] Bar. They made little for the rest of the month - barely making expenses, but by late in August he indicated that the partners

were doing pretty well and the 31st' entry provides evidence that their luck had changed somewhat. They hired three men and had taken out three hundred dollars in the past week. In September they were joined by a new Partner - Mr. Joy and several additional hired hands (up to six, making eleven in the company). They were making an average between \$60.00 and \$96.00 per week apiece. (These amounts are perhaps misleading since Ball states in the September 7th that it is \$74 dollars apiece but in subsequent entries through until he left the company he describes the partners as splitting the sums given which are in the range indicated).

The rainy season was now upon them. The week of October 12th they cut a road through the riverbank so that they would not have to cart the dirt as far. The total amount of gold taken out continued to decline.

Ball's diary entry for October 19th, in addition to reporting on the value of gold divided provides some more insight into the living conditions and the coarse justice practiced in the area: He was up visiting Mokelumne Hill on the 12th, and "was in the greate excitement gut up owing to a man being shot by Officer Dunihue [Donnihue?]. He [Donnihue] was brought up for trial immeditly but afterwords I believe he was given over to the civel arthorities for a second tryal. It was proved that he had no provication to shute him".

A note about Mokelumne Hill: the Mokelumne river was named after the Indian tribe that lived in the vicinity, and a trading post located on "a rise south of the river...was known as Mokelumne Hill". (Varney, Philip and Drew, John and Susan. Ghost Towns of Northern California: A Pictorial Discovery Guide. Stillwater, Mn.: Voyager Press, Inc., 2001). Moke Hill as it was called was the county seat for Calaveras County untill 1866 when due to the decline in its fortunes the citizens of San Andreas successfully wrested the political center to their more successful community.

The week of October 26th, Ball had some bad luck, his cart's axeltree broke twice costing him \$29.00 to fix. William Fullerton was down on the Calaveras but not able to do any mining because there still was insufficient water. Ball bought a mule for \$80.00 and sold it for \$215.00 and divided takings of \$46.00.

### **Homeward Bound, I wish I was**

In November the diggings yielded gold valued between \$56.00 to \$93.00, but at a price. Their attempt to do anything on the Calaveras River was still being stopped by lack of water in the river. (Lack of water in the Calaveras was evidently a regular occurrence. In Carson's Early Recollections of the Mines cited previously, the Calaveras River is described as one that depends exclusively on rain - no glacial or snow pack melt provides water (p.63)). Mr. Jordan was "quite unwell" again, and Ball received the letter from home (on the 16th) stating that his daughter had been sick for eleven weeks,

which would eventually lead to his decision to start for home. December's diary entries are again summarized well by Reuben in his memoirs:

Sometime in December we had a heavy rain and the river rose so high it ran over our bar or claim, and we had to quit and had hard work in saving our carts and thoms from washing down the river. Just at this time I received a letter from my wife that our little girl had died, and wanted me to come home and she would come back to California with me. So I sold out my claim and teams to two men who had been with me from the start and started home.

One of the two men was a Daniel Mehrtens..(a possible identity for this Mehrtens is the Daniel Mehrtens born 1825 in Germany. He was by the time of the 1880 census a farmer in the Tulare valley, California). Ball sold his horses and carts to Mehrtens for \$225.00, and then went up to Mokelumne Hill to see what job he could get. The week of December 14th he worked as a hired hand for the Company he had been a partner in for \$4.00 per day. It was on the 14th that he received the news of his daughter's death. The diary entry goes on to express his emotion:

Othat awfull news which has allmost dethroned my reason has quenched my thirste for golde and encreased my desir to return to that lone one: who like Rechal [Rachael] morns for her children and will not be comforted becaus they are not".

Upon reading the letter he determined to return home on the next steamer. He was going to accompany an acquaintance who was going to San Francisco at the same time. He started for San Francisco on the 21st, went to Spanish Bar on the Mokelumne first, to Jackson, Suttersville, Herbert Town, Amadore Creek Ranch and stopped at Dry Town overnight, where he saw the first gravelly bar he had ever seen in the country (most of his mining had been done in dry gulches, to which water had to be brought to separate the gold from the dirt).

They took the stage at Dry Town to Sacramento, passed the old Dayles Ranch and also Sutter's fort . He described Sacramento as "quite a large city and is about two miles long and from three quarters to one mile wide". They arrived in San Francisco on December 23rd when secured his sea chest from storage. On the 31st he paid \$100 dollars for his ticket on the Steamer *Oregon* departing for Panama the next day, January 1st, 1852 at 7:00 a.m. On his arrival in San Francisco he commented on how "the city has so altered since I was here before that I hardly know where I am". It had of course seen one of its many destructive fires (1850) between his first and second arrivals, and had been rebuilt.

When I got to San Francisco, I weighed my gold dust. I had eleven pounds and was foolish enough to sew it into a belt and bring it to New York around my person, which caused me an immense amount of misery. But

no one aboard the ship, or crossing the Isthmus, I think, mistrusted I had an ounce of gold about me.

### **Everyman's Voyage Home**

The *Daily Alta California* (January 1, 1852 page 2 Column 6), San Francisco's main newspaper of the time confirms that a R. Ball was a passenger on the *Oregon*. The diary provides additional detail about his homeward journey: The Steamer *Oregon* made stops at Monterrey, San Diego, and Acapulco. Measles broke out "and a great menny wer sick". It took them 16 days to get to Panama, their arrival occuring at about 10:00 o'clock on January 17th.

As many travelers did at the time, he "walked across the Isthmus [30 miles], and was the third man [from the steamer *Oregon*?] in Gorgona [the western most settlement on the Chagrus River from whence travelers rode the river to the eastern shore of the isthmus; named after the island off the coast of Colombia probably because "Chagres River travelers found some eddies which reminded them of the currents off Gorgona Island in the river at this location" (<http://www.czbrats.com/Towns/thetowns.htm>)], "notwithstanding the eleven pounds pressing me down, came down the Chagrus [River] in small boats". The diary entry for the trip down the Chagrus states that the "seanry on the banks of the river as well as crosing the land part of the travel was most splended"

On January 22nd he boarded the *Ohio* - another steamer - under the following circumstances:

Had to wait here four days for our steamer which had been delayed by bad weather and when she arrived had to anchor three miles out in the bay, so we had to go out to her in small boats, one or two of which were swamped, the passengers and crew drowned on account of the big waves caused by the storm, which delayed our steamer. There was one whale boat carrying passengers off, and I waited until I got a passage on her and got aboard safely. Soon after I got on board she started; stopped two days at Havana, Cuba, for coal, then steamed for New York.

His own diary belies what Ball writes in his memoirs to a certain extent. The January 22nd entry does state that four men, two natives and two men from "the Empire City" drowned while he was in Chagrus awaiting the arrival of the *Ohio* - but the mass drownings of passengers attempting to board the *Ohio* as recounted in the memoirs is not supported in the diary - there were no drownings, only "the gratest difficulty" getting the passengers on board due to stormy seas.

It took the *Ohio* five days from Chagras to Havana where it stayed for three days. While stopped here, Reuben "tuck a tramp over the town and a pruty plaice it is for a

Spanish Town but still the streets are narrow and all the houses have the same look, but the arches through the wall of the city and the public walks and gardens are most splendid". He also commented on the curious carriages in which people rode about the city, the gallantes, "a kind of chase with thills (the two shafts between which the horse is hitched to the carriage), about fifteen feet long and the horse and driver about ten feet before the carriage".

On January 29th the *Ohio* set off again, the reason for the wait at Havana was evidently so that the *Philadelphia* could take off the passengers going to New Orleans. The *Ohio* arrived in New York on February 4th. Reuben's memoirs explain what he did from that point until he arrived home:

As soon as the steamer was made fast I hastened ashore, went to the express office and got rid of my load (and never felt more relieved in my life), sent it to the mint in Philadelphia, had it coined, then sent to Boston. As soon as relieved of my gold dust, I bought new clothes and shirts, went to a bath house, washed, shaved, and had my hair cut, burned up all my old clothes with all the lice they contained, for the lice were so thick on the vessel that one could see them crawling about.

### **Home and Hearth**

It evidently took him a day to "clean up" as the diary has him leaving for Boston "on the Boston Con and New York rail road" the next day, February 5th. His memoirs claim "As soon as I was cleaned up, I started for home which I reached in two days"; in his diary he writes that he stopped with his brother at Weymouth, Ma. overnight, traveled the next day by railroad to Portland, Me., and on the 7th of February 1852, arrived home in Woolwich about 11:00 o'clock where he:

"found my wife well, and but for the death of our little girl, should have been the happiest man in the country".

But it did not last long, for on the third day, I was taken down with the chagrus fever and should probably have died if I had not ordered the doctor to give me plenty of calomel [calamus]. It saved my life once in California and I think did the same this time, so I praise it while others curse it.

Between February 23rd and March 10th he traveled to Wiscasset and Damariscotta. There he met with four of his mates from California (again - unfortunately not named). On his way to Boston between March 10th and 16th, to pick up his gold from "Adam's Express" after coming back from the mint, he spent two days at his father-in-laws home in Woolwich, Me., came to Weymouth, Ma., stopped in Bath, Me. for two days and got to

Boston on the 18th where he bought medicine for his wife's sister who had "the spine complaint".

When I was able I went to Boston, having received notice from the express company that my gold was there; although I had the N.Y. receipt, I had to get some one to identify me, and found my old employer, Show [Nat Show, the owner of the boot and shoe factory he had worked for before sailing on the *Damariscove*], to do so. And when he saw the two thousand dollars turned out on the express counter, all in new twenty dollar pieces, he slapped me on the shoulder and declared it as beautiful a sight as he had ever seen.

While in Boston, I met S[tephan] F. Harvey, who married a cousin of mine. He was in the boot and shoe business at Waterville, Me., and wanted me to work for him. So I took my wife, went up there, commenced working for him and boarded with Charles M. Morse, who was Supt. of the R.R. of that place at the time. In less than a month after commencing work for Harvey, I received a letter from my wife's brother in St. Paul, Minn. [probably J. E. Fullerton], wanting my wife and I to come out there, which we concluded to do.

They commenced this journey on May 10th 1852 and arrived as pioneers in the Minneapolis-St.Paul area in June .

Thus it was that Reuben F. Ball concluded one adventure and started another. The fact that he came home with a stake (though a moderate one)- was in some ways unusual. Many of his contemporaries in the California mines didn't return as they spent mostly everything that they mined in the gambling halls and other iniquitous pursuits, or worse, ending up in debt or dead from disease (probably William F. Fullerton and William Hatch's fate), or violence. Some saw more profit in profiting off other miners, others chose to stay in California as pioneers, living off the land as farmers or city folk catering to the trades required to keep a growing population content, starting families, and making the land into gold rather than taking gold from the land.

Our next section attempts to trace what happened to some of the members of the *Damariscove's* crew, to the extent that we have been able to trace them within a limited time span; in addition, we will add what we have gleaned from the writings of our chroniclers about many of the crew members.

## Part V: Voyage Epilogue

Now that our men have completed their voyage, their mining experiences and their business interests we will speculate concerning some of the unanswered questions; we will include some additional information about the men.

Who exactly owned shares in the company and how many men were there aboard? Ball said there were 19 owners, 2 passengers and a pilot for the Strait. Chapman did not address this question at all. Kenniston said there were 16 who had to sail the vessel, a cook and two others who were stewards....this made up the company, nineteen in all. He did not include Choate, Robinson/Roberson, R Hescock nor George B. Williams; he did not indicate that there were 22 men on board and the numbers just do not add up. Hatch named 22 men but did not address the numbers in the company. There is no doubt that there were 22 men, but beyond that it was unclear as to who owned shares.

When Ball listed "a pilot for the Strait", it raised a question. All the chroniclers pretty much agreed that a decision about whether to go through the Strait or around the Horn had not been reached prior to nor when the *Damariscove* left Damariscotta. It would seem reasonable that Choate was the pilot, with no distinction as to limiting his duties to the Strait. Hall was apparently the navigator for the voyage.

Was the confusion about William M. Hatch being called Capt. Hatch ever entirely clarified? Information not discussed previously in this article indicates that "Capt. Hatch" had, at some point prior to the voyage, been involved in trade in the West Indies. This appeared in some family notes. We do know that he had previously been to sea from statements in his Journal. As for the West Indies trade, Rhea has a copy of a deed executed by William in March, 1841 to his half-brother, John Hatch...in which William identified himself as a mariner. This is the only mention she has found of his being a seafarer. Primarily William's occupation was farming. Could this have been confused with the fact that one of his daughters (Rhea's great-grandmother) Sarah Maria Hatch married a man who reportedly made trips to Cuba on his own vessel?

The article has not broached the subject of the schooner's name. She was named after Damariscove Island. There are stories about Lyman Chapman's aunt contributing money to the voyage, in return for the vessel being named after the island, which was her place of residence. Waterman S. Stetson reportedly returned to Damariscotta when his father became ill. Waterman bought Damariscove Island and lived there until his father died. (Christine Dodge Vol. I, p. 661). Dates unknown.

Another topic not discussed was the approximate distance of the voyage. Arthur Chapman's estimate for the voyage's length in the supplement to his father's diary was 30,000 miles, clearly in error even if he were including the return trip through the isthmus of Panama (known as the isthmus of Darien at the time). Stilson prepared an estimate for the outward bound expedition based on latitudes and longitudes which

came to about 13,500 nautical miles. The Maritime Heritage Project website: [www.maritimeheritage.org/ports/southamerica](http://www.maritimeheritage.org/ports/southamerica) gives the distance from New York to San Francisco via the Strait of Magellan as 13, 135 nautical miles. Figuring from Damariscotta, Maine to San Francisco should be very close to Stilson's calculations.

We proceed with bits and pieces from the Christine Dodge books Vol. I and II, George F. Dow, Stilson and Rhea; journals of Hatch, Ball, Chapman and Kenniston's letter---with as much accuracy as we can muster---so that our readers might enjoy some vignettes about the men of the *Damariscove*.

## Dramatis Personae

**Reuben F. Ball** –one of our four journal keepers. His journal or diary includes the time spent gold mining and his return home with 11 pounds of gold dust which netted him \$2000. He first went back to boot and shoe manufacturing in Waterville, Maine



From a family photograph

but was coaxed out to St. Paul, Minnesota by his wife's (Rebecca Fullerton) brother, most likely Joseph Emmerson Fullerton, seventh child in the family, Rebecca's next oldest sibling - probably the brother who introduced Reuben and Rebecca). On the way they were passengers on the first train through to Chicago from Detroit on the Michigan Central Railroad. He was one of the pioneer founders of Minneapolis, which when they arrived at St. Paul, (but a village itself at the time), Minneapolis was non-existent. Reuben Ball was an entrepreneurial man who experienced many livelihoods and gained and lost several small fortunes over his lifetime. In Minnesota he and (presumably) Joseph E. Fullerton were dry goods merchants, suppliers for lumberjacks. Over the years he spent in Minnesota he owned several stores, more than one of his partners took off with the profits of his work. Later he participated in real estate, making claims and selling them; taught music, threshed grain, did mill work (after briefly moving to Pascagola near New Orleans where his wife's sister's husband owned a mill- either Susanna Hodgdon Fullerton or Martha [Jane] Fullerton). This same brother-in-law sold the mill when Lincoln was elected and moved to Vineland, New Jersey, invited the Balls to be storekeeper in a store he built there. The Ball family remained in New Jersey during the Civil War years doing a successful business. Reuben lost his money again in another entrepreneurial enterprise investing in territory for selling spring beds. While endeavoring to sell these contrivances to get back his \$5000 investment in the Illinois territory, he and his family settled in Peoria. Here he was swindled again to the tune of \$300 by another partner. He drove a baker's wagon, then manufactured vinegar (but the factory caught fire and ruined the business). He returned to the grocery business, took in his now "come of age" son as a partner until his son caught "western fever" and went west. The store was sold to accommodate his son's move. Reuben started another store but it also caught fire and Reuben got only \$475 in insurance on the goods. He returned to the bakery delivery trade but two years

later (at the age of seventy) was forced to give that up because the baker he worked for could not get along with his employees. At the age of seventy he retired having some small investments, including the sale of lots in Duluth, Minnesota. For years Reuben Ball was an ardent "letter's to the editor" writer. A regular contributor to his home town papers the *Mirror*, *Sentinel* and *Record* of Wilton (Me.), an unidentified city's "*Journal*" and the *Peoria Star* (Il.). His obituary appears in the Friday, October 26th 1900 issue of the *Peoria Star*, "An Old Resident Gone. Death at an Early Hour This Morning of Reuben F. Ball" at the age of 78.

**Charles Berry** - helped build the gun rack for the big gun. Basically a kind man who shared a watch with William Hatch the entire trip. Hatch felt he was a good man with a temper. As previously mentioned in the article, we do know that he did not leave the *Damariscove* to proceed to California on another vessel. We do not know whether he returned to Maine.(Rhea). Dodge compilation...Vol. I lists him as husband of Persia Fowls.

**Lyman Nathaniel Chapman** – also kept a journal...well liked by most of his traveling companions. One of the four fellows whom Hatch considered as one of the "best boys". He worked on the big gun carriage with Berry. Left Reuben's mining group in Feb. 1851 presumably to go home. Lyman's son, Arthur, said he mined almost two years. This appears to indicate that Lyman returned home in 1852 rather than in Feb. 1851. The 1852 California Census shows a Nathaniel Chapman as a miner in Placer Co. in Aug. 1852...right age (27)...born in Maine...might have been Lyman, whose middle name was Nathaniel. It is interesting to note that Lyman is listed in the 1880 U.S. Census (Wisconsin). He gave his birth year as 1822 which would have made him 27 when he sailed from Damariscotta. Census ages were often not correct. It is possible that the 1850 Census would have been closer to the correct age...and yes, these men were listed in that Maine Census, even though they were not there at the time!(Rhea). Lyman returned to Maine and later settled in Wisconsin.



From a family photograph

**Capt. Francis Choate** - spoke Portugese Choate told Hatch he should stop smoking and his cough would get better nothing is known of him after the voyage. Rhea did see a genealogical internet site listing a Francis Hervey Choate born Beverly, MA (Choate was known to have been from Beverly, MA) who died at sea in about 1851. This is an old entry with limited information. (Rhea)

[http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/framset\\_search.asp](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/framset_search.asp)

**Col. William Curtis**– In the gold mines with Reuben Ball. (Stilson). George Wharton Rice book states that William Curtis did not return home and was never heard from again...Rhea thinks the author confused Curtis with William Hatch. Curtis

returned to the Bristol area and died in Maine in 1883. George F. Dow states that one of Curtis' daughters married a son of Abner Stetson, the builder of the *Damariscove*.

**William B. Fullerton** –brother-in-law of Reuben Ball. William shared names with his immigrant progenitor, William Fullerton from Tyrone, Ireland. There were several other William Fullertons in the subsequent generations until he was born with only one Captain James Fullerton (b. 1733) separating him from being in the direct oldest son family line (James was third generation from his immigrant ancestor). William B. Fullerton was said to have shared blacksmith skills with other ships during the *Damariscove's* voyage. Hatch said Fullerton's trade was very popular at St. Catherine's. According to family records, William B. Fullerton died in 1852, which may mean he never returned from California, or he died soon after returning. He was known to have been alive in April of 1851 as Ball refers to him as his partner in his diary and is mentioned again as heading for San Francisco to pick up tools for the partnership on July 4, 1851. On October 5th of 1851 Ball notes that Fullerton and a Mr. Jordan (another partner-not one off the *Damariscove*) are "quite unwell" and on October 26th he sites Fullerton as on the Calaveras River "not done eny thing owing to there being no water there". On November 2nd Ball sold his share of a recently bought mule to Fullerton and that is Ball's last mention of him.

**Thomas Hall** - "good old friend" of Hatch. Thomas was the navigator on the *Damariscove*, and he was Master of the *Damariscove* when it was sold Nov. 2, 1850. William often called him Uncle Hall... he was the oldest of the group. Nothing further is known of him (Rhea). Dodge compilation Vol. I shows two entries for a Thomas Hall which might fit. One states he was a 52 yr. old who sailed on *Damariscove*...the other states a Thomas Hall was a 52 yr. old boat builder born in Scotland. Died June 20, 1873. The information is really not conclusive.

**Ephraim C. Hatch** - was not, to our knowledge, related to William M. Hatch. He fixed an orange drink for the crew once. Did not have his own berth until Feb. 14 and had been shifted around constantly (Rhea). He was a native of Nobleboro, Maine where he returned. Ephraim died in 1904 at age 91. He was also known as Capt. Hatch (George F. Dow & Dodge Vol I). Oddly enough the Dodge book does not list Ephraim as sailing with the *Damariscove*.

**William M. Hatch** –Liked to read. He hung daguerreotypes on his cabin wall of wife, Nancy and daughters Emeline (Sears) and Margaret (who later married Francis Milliken). William died in California---place unknown (probate papers in Lincoln Co. state he died on or about Oct. 15, 1850). The Dodge book reference gives Dec. 1850 as the date of death and mentions a funeral service in January, 1851. This would not seem to be accurate, in view of the probate records. Final irony - two sons, Reuben and John were lost at sea and possibly a third, Miller Hatch (the Dodge compilation lists all three sons lost at sea, referenced by Hatch, Hall, Clarke papers, which Rhea has not yet been

able to locate. Son, Josiah Higgins Hatch, served in the Civil War (Muster & Descriptive Rolls). Rhea has been unable to trace him after the War. However, the search for information in the Dodge books about others of the crew revealed something, she should have noticed long ago. There was a Josiah Higgins, b. 1804, who was a Methodist clergyman with pastorates in Bristol, Newcastle and other places. William's son, Josiah Higgins Hatch was born in 1842. It would seem quite apparent that he was named after this clergyman! All of which proves that it is never too late to stumble on something previously missed! Now it will be a real coup if someone reading this knows what ultimately happened to Josiah Higgins Hatch and whether or not he had descendants. It is also noted in Dodge that Josiah went West. The "baby" of the family, Charles Sears Hatch also appears in Muster & Descriptive Rolls of Illinois Civil War Units, giving his residence as Loami, IL. He had to have lied about his age, since he was only 15! He was mustered out in 1865 in Louisville, Kentucky. Charles was killed by a train in Ontario, Canada on April 13, 1876. Rhea's great-grandmother, Sarah Maria (Hatch) Perkins Wrightsman's first husband, John Wesley Perkins, of Maine was said to have been lost at sea. Current research continues on that marriage. William's widow, Nancy, settled in Illinois in 1854 after marrying a local Bristol man, Peter McMurphy. He deserted her in Illinois, and she divorced him in 1862; then she married Abner Foster (22 years her junior!) whom she outlived. Nancy died Feb. 2, 1888 in Loami, Sangamon County, IL. (Rhea, Dodge Vol. I & II)

**Harvey [Henry] Hescoek** [Hitchcock or Hiscock]—played the accordion, was keeping a journal (if any of our readers know the whereabouts of this journal, we would appreciate hearing from you), and gained quite a bit of weight at one point. Hatch used one of his accordions at times. Second of the four whom Hatch considered some of the best boys. Harvey owned the book by Jean Henri Merle D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation" which Hatch borrowed to read. The Dodge book Vol. II indicates that Henry H. of Damariscotta and Ann H. Huston of Bristol filed an intention of marriage on Dec. 15, 1854. So Henry did return to Maine. While in California he was one of the partners over wintering with Reuben Ball in the gold fields during the winter of 1851. He and Chapman supposedly left for San Francisco in February 1851 on their way home to the states. Ball sent \$300 worth of gold home to his wife through Harvey (Henry) Hescoek (Hitchcock) who returned to the mining area on February 20, 1851 to inform Reuben that he had sent a draft for that amount to his wife. On March 9th, Ball notes he has bought into the team with the Stetsons, Hescoek Otis and Company. Whether this is Harvey (Henry), Richard, or Joseph Hescoek (Hitchcock) being referred to is a mystery. Ball notes that on the 18th of July part of the company became discouraged and left leaving the remaining four partners with all the debt. If a close reading of his diary is sufficient to make a guess at identities, those leaving at the time were the two Stetsons (Captain James and Waterman), H.G. Otis [Otice] and Mr. Hescoek (Hitchcock), whichever one was part of the partnership at the time (may have been Joseph since he is alleged to have been related to the Stetsons). (Rhea and Stilson)

**Joseph H. Hescoock** [Hitchcock or Hiscock]—was the “bully cipherer” (based on a mathematics contest). Joseph asked Hatch if he was going to have an abstract of his book that he might read it when he was old and gray....pretty astute for a 21 year old! Third of the four whom Hatch considered as one of the “best boys”. (Rhea) He died June 8, 1905 in Maine. George F. Dow tells that he was a nephew of Abner Stetson, builder of the *Damariscove*. Joseph built the wooden bridge across the Damariscotta River. The Christine Dodge (Vol. I) book relates that Joseph returned home a physical wreck after crawling on hands and knees over part of the Isthmus.

**Richard Hescoock** [Hitchcock or Hiscock] - He was one of the 12 owners of the *Damariscove*, when she was a fishing vessel between July and December 1849. Richard was born in Bristol. At age 19 he had been converted in a great revival (1833) at the Second Baptist Church of Nobleboro. Richard did not return to Maine, except for a visit with his brother, Elisha in 1854. He was disabled in the Civil War. Richard was a Pioneer settler in Great Bend, Kansas where he engaged in stock raising. (Dodge Vol. I and George F. Dow).

**William Kenniston**— wrote a long letter to wife, Mary, telling of the voyage, so that his children would also know what they went through. He especially liked Chapman and the Melluses. He found beautiful stones on Juan Fernandez Island...all melted together from the heat of a volcano. William wanted to go to San Francisco with the intention of going into business. George Wharton Rice's book, p. 93 (*The Shipping Days of Old Booth Bay*) states that Kenniston owned and operated a coastal and fishing schooner named *Concern* in 1867. He was the first to have a business shipping ice from Boothbay. He died in Maine in 1888, murdered by a former farm hand. Interestingly enough, the Dodge book gives his name as George Keniston, a 43 yr old... sailed on *Damariscove*. (Kenniston, Dodge Vol. I)

**John Little**— the second man to have gained a great deal of weight. John died in Washington state on March 23, 1890. A brother, Frank, also was in Washington; both mined with Reuben Ball. John came from an illustrious family. His mother, Sophia Lincoln, was a daughter of Colonel Benjamin Lincoln. Col. Lincoln owned a shipyard at Damariscotta Mills. He owned and developed the Lincoln block just east of the bridge and the outlet of the Damariscotta River. (Stilson, Rhea, George F. Dow, Dodge Vol. I)

**Samuel W. (S/LW) Look or Lock** – he sold his shares when Daniel Mellus offered 80 cents on the dollar before the settlement. (Rhea) Tuck replaced him as cook. (Ball). Nothing further is known of him. The Dodge books compilations list him as sailing on the *Damariscove*...but no other information was given.

**Daniel C. Mellus** - considered a very capable seaman who was the Capt. of the *Damariscove* when she was a fishing vessel. He and Joseph took very good care of William Kenniston when he was quite ill; in addition both the Melluses were able to get the ship and crew out of more than one difficult situation. Daniel is not mentioned in

the Dodge compilations (although a Samuel Mellies is). It is not known whether he returned to Maine (see addendum on Mellus). It is known that he was with the Ball party over-wintering in "the company cabin" in January of 1851 (Rhea, Stilson, Kenniston)

**Joseph Mellus** - also considered a very able seaman...see above regarding caring for Kenniston. There was never an indication of his relationship with Daniel Mellus. One pictures them as brothers, ( see addendum for further explanation and death date), since the Dodge compilations do not mention Daniel at all. Joseph married Almiry Hutchings. There is no indication of whether he returned to Maine. He was also mining with the Ball party in January, 1851. Both Joseph and Daniel were owners from the time the *Damariscove* was a fishing vessel until it was finally sold in San Francisco. (Rhea)

**Daniel Robinson/Robertson/Roberson** –served as cook Apr. 25- Mar. 19 A good, smart tough fellow according to Hatch...fourth of the four whom Hatch considered as one of the "best boys". Hatch felt that Daniel, in his short stint as cook, had the worst time of anyone...wading from cabin to galley innumerable times a day..and having to work with green wood (Rhea).

**Waterman S. Stetson**, nephew of Abner Stetson who built the *Damariscove*. Waterman was already in California when the *Damariscove* arrived. He held a share in the vessel from the beginning and had business interests in Calif. Also mined with Reuben Ball and Capt. James Stetson.. James, if Rhea is figuring correctly, was a grandson of Abner Stetson, builder of the *Damariscove*. The Dodge compilation gives him as the oldest of the town's retired sea captains , who made several trips around the world. There is no mention of his being in California during the Gold Rush. However, his age...born May 30, 1822 certainly makes this plausible. Both Waterman and James returned to Maine. Waterman married Anna Hutchings who was apparently not related to Almiry Hutchings, wife of Joseph Mellus. He apparently bought Damariscove Island (no documentation) and lived there until the death of his father (William D. Stetson...no date of death given). Waterman died in Boothbay, Maine Feb. 19, 1907.at the age of 79. (Rhea, Stilson, Dodge Vol. I & II). A fairly recent postscript concerning *Damariscove* Island, which lies 5 miles off the shoreline of Boothbay, shows that the Boothbay Region Land Trust (newsletter of 2003) was offered ownership of the island by the Nature Conservancy Trust which had owned the 210 acre preserve for 37 years. Ownership was to become effective in 2004. Those who might like to read more about Damariscove Island can access the newsletter:

<http://www.bbrrt.org/Newsletter%20Spring%202003.htm>

**Capt. George W. Talbot** –held Certificate of Masonry. Nothing more is known of him after the voyage. Rhea thinks it possible that his father was Royal A. Talbot of Cape Elizabeth and Portland...who had a son named George W.....time frame also fit.

(See Genforum genealogical site <http://genforum.genealogy.com/surnames/> Access Talbot family genealogy...search Royal A. Talbot...then scroll down to the listing. There is also a Rootsweb site: <http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com> - enter Royal A. Talbot.

**Mathew Tuck** –spoke Portugese and many other languages. When he was a young boy he went on a whaling ship around Cape Horn. The Captain took him ashore everywhere and saw to it that he learned as much as possible about the language.(Rhea) The Dodge compilation lists the surname as Tucker...sailed on the *Damariscove*. Nothing else is known about Mathew.

**Alexander B. Weeks**– also kept a journal (again, if any of our readers know where this journal may be residing at this date, please let the writers know). The California 1852 Census (San Francisco county) lists an Alexander Weeks 25, sailor, born Mass....could be our Alex since the age is correct (Rhea) He returned to Maine, but he died N.Y. on June 2, 1907 in Sailor’s Snug Harbor, age 75. (Dodge Vol I.)

**George B. Williams** –ill much of the time, slender build, good man, never offensive to anyone–arithmetic was a daily vocation. Dodge compilations list him as sailing on the *Damariscove*. (Rhea, Dodge Vol. I. See also addendum after the index).

## Parting Words

In parting we would say that the officers and crew of the schooner *Damariscove* were neither perfect nor remarkable; they had the usual strengths and weaknesses of most mortals. What really motivated each and every one to involve himself in this venture was seldom revealed to us. With that said - our hats are off to you - we will always remember you!

It is with great reluctance that we leave the men of the *Damariscove* and move on to the “Afterlife” of the schooner. Although we know quite a bit about the ownership of the *Damariscove* from November, 1850 until December, 1854, we know nothing of the men who sailed her during that period of time. It is our hope that perhaps some descendants of those men might read this and contact us.

## **Part VI: The *Damariscove*'s "Afterlife"**

Having completed the narrative of the *Damariscove*'s voyage and what we know of the mining experiences, business interests, and vignettes of her crew, it is now time to speculate and sort out some of the confusion of fact, unanswered questions, and inaccuracies about the schooner's "afterlife" voyages. This entails reconstructing as well as possible, the ownership issues, timing and destination of subsequent voyages, and corrections to the existing record based on information brought to light by our research. We have depended heavily on information supplied from official sources such as the National Archives and everyday sources such as local newspaper coverage. The paper trail is disappearing - sometimes it is replaced by a newer (but hardly more easily used) technology such as microfilm. At other times (as we have been told by the helpful staff at the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Maritime Museum Library in San Francisco), the records have been purposely disposed of, as in the case of the licensing records for ships from the period we are studying. This may not be as drastic as it sounds as the licenses that were said to have been destroyed are, we think, an abbreviated form of Enrollment Certificates. Even if the Enrollment Certificate did not survive, the licenses were usually recorded on an index or some other summary record of importance. To locate the records that are available we have subscribed to on-line historical newspaper web sites, ordered microfilm roles through interlibrary loan or gone ourselves to (or depended on surrogate researchers) to the most convenient repositories that hold the resources that we were able to find.

Details are what makes history interesting and more accurate. We have tried to track down those that could be verified and to locate evidence to support or refute various rumors about the *Damariscove*'s activities subsequent to the voyage to California.

### **A Few of Our Sources with Explanation**

The following history is quite convoluted, so we are providing some of our information sources here with annotations to help the reader understand the complexity of the problems we encountered. To avoid some repetition we note that the newspaper headings about ships were always listed under Shipping Intelligence/Marine Intelligence or Marine Journal with, sub-headings of Arrived, Cleared, Sailed, Spoken and Memoranda. We will only identify the sub-headings when appropriate. Works we have included in our research are:

Bancroft, Hubert Howe. *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Volumes XXXI : History of Washington, Idaho, and Montana 1845-1889 and XXXII : History of British Columbia 1792-1887*. San Francisco: The History Company, 1890 and 1887 respectively. - The *Damariscove* is mentioned in both volumes under different spellings. Volume 31 contains a note on page 53 mentioning that the "*Demaris Cove*" was one of the vessel's departing from Olympia - derived from Simpson P. Moses, the first Customs Collector's memoranda and on page 55-57 a fairly complete

account of the *Georgiana's* wreck and crew's rescue, including a list of the rescued crew's names and a description of the memorials sent to the U.S. government for payment of expenses incurred in the rescue. (Hicks article (see below) also has the list of crew and passengers as well as a mention of the Congressional memorial and the appropriation of money for restitution). Volume 32 mentions the incident on page 344-345 where he writes that the *Una* was still active (taking miners to the Islands) in the spring of 1852, several months after the supposed wreck in December of 1851 though on page 57 of Volume 31 an unsubstantiated footnote claims that the *Damariscove* rescued the *Una* Crew as well.

Barman, Jean. *The West beyond the West : a history of British Columbia*. Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991. - Provided a brief overview of the gold seekers impingement in the Canadian Northwest which resulted in the *Georgiana* disaster. The incident is mentioned on page 63 but the ship is not identified.

Crooks, Drew. "Shipwreck and Captivity: The *Georgiana* Expedition to the Queen Charlotte Islands", *Columbia: Journal of the Washington State Historical Society*, Vol. 8, no. 2, Tacoma, Wa. : The Society, Summer 1994. The article is by far the most detailed of the accounts, giving information about the situational antecedents of the wreck, details obtained from primary documentation (from several journals, diaries, and letters of participants) of the unfortunate crew's detention by the Haida natives; and the consequent appeal to Congress for financial redress by those who had expended their own means to effect the rescue. The *Damariscove* and Captain Lafayette Balch are mentioned frequently... not always in good light - at least from the Commander of Fort Simpson, the Hudson's Bay Company's headquarters in that region. The story provides additional insight into what the schooner *Damariscove* was used for during her sojourn in the Pacific Northwest.

*Daily Alta California* - San Francisco's early newspaper (hereafter we will refer to the paper as the *Daily Alta*). - An excellent resource for tracking ship movements, at least to some extent. See some of the comments further in to the text of this article about the accuracy and amount of information provided by various newspapers. One of these ships was the HMS *Gorgon* (see part two of this article). An item from Dec. 29, 1852 under "Memoranda": tells that our old friend, *Gorgon*, left to return to England on Oct. 29, 1852. Perusal of many issues of this newspaper between 1850 and 1854 revealed some background, especially in 1850 regarding conditions in San Francisco, Sacramento and the mining districts. Murder, robbery and mayhem were reported almost daily. By October, it was evident that cholera had become a daily cause of several deaths in both cities. Any record of William M. Hatch still eludes the authors.

Dodge, Christine Huston. Vital records of old Bristol and Nobleboro in the county of Lincoln, Maine, including the present towns of Bremen, Damariscotta, South Bristol, and the Plantation of Monhegan. [Portland, Me.] 1847-1951 Vol. I *Births and Deaths*,

Vol. II *Marriages*. - The Dodge books have been used extensively throughout the entire article but to clarify another misconception, one found in Vol. I p. 335, as follows: .... "and one of the company bought the ship as she was about to enter San Francisco Bay", [this statement in the book was taken from a newspaper article (1907) telling of the men and the voyage. To date we have been unable to obtain a copy]. As previously noted, in the final days of the passage, the men were making a settlement of their shares. It is difficult to ascertain how anyone could have indicated that one person bought the *Damariscove*. The Certificate of Registry mentioned below, and the chronicles are proof that more than one person was involved. Because of the time lapse between their arrival in San Francisco (July 12, 1850) and the sale of the schooner (November 5, 1850), we really do not know when the final ownership arrangement between the crew took place.

Ficken, Robert E. *Unsettled Boundaries : Fraser gold and the British-American Northwest*. Pullman, WA. : Washington State University Press, 2003. - Supported the research reported by Barman (see above) that reported the British Columbian government tried to maintain control over the extraction of gold in their territories - making an attempt to keep secret the gold strikes and limit the intrusion of (especially American) miners into the area. It also gives a fairly detailed account of the *Una's* wreck (pg. 29) and what its crew were doing just previous to the disaster - though it does not comment on who or what ship rescued the crew. According to Ficken, it was news from the rescued crew of the *Una* that reached inquisitive ears in Washington Territory and beyond leading to the sailing of several gold seeking excursions, including the *Georgiana*. The *Georgiana* wreck is mentioned (but is not identified as such) on page 30. The resistance of the native Haida Indians to incursions by the miners is well illustrated in the narrative.

Gibbs, James A. *Shipwrecks Off Juan de Fuca* . Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort Publishers, 1968. Gibbs ( pp.21-24). (Most references we have seen re the title of the book are incorrect...i.e. *Shipwrecks Of Juan de Fuca*). Gibbs tells us on p. 24 that the *Damariscove*, owned by Balch and Palmer was the first American vessel enrolled in the Puget Sound District...May 24, 1852. This may in fact be an error of both name and date, since the other claimant to this distinction was the *George Emery*, another of Lafayette Balch's vessels (Neufeld, p. 116 quoting Lewis and Dryden, p.31). The NARA Index (explained under NARA records) does not show this date in connection with the Brig *George Emery* or the *Damariscove*. The customs district was authorized by Congress in Feb. 1851, though the Collector was not named until November 10, 1851. On November 14, 1850 the *George Emery* was enrolled (Certificate # 415) in San Francisco...Lafayette Balch owner. This was surrendered in San Francisco October 24, 1851...reason: license renewed. James Bachilda owned the *George Emery* from October 24, 1851 until November 11, 1852...License Granted. Nov. 11, 1852. Cyrus Palmer, Balch's business partner, owned her (Balch could have been a co-owner, since the Index

always listed only one owner) . Jan 17, 1854...License Expired. There seems to be no time frame when the *George Emery* could have been obtaining a license in the Puget Sound District in November 19, 1851. However, it is entirely possible, since we understand there are no records obtainable for Puget Sound Enrollments, that the November 19, 1851 granting of a license is correct. That date is also cited by Lewis and Dreyden, p. 31 as well as appearing on Karin Morey's Balch Website, p.7. Perhaps someone in the Pacific Northwest can aid in further documentation of this date, as well as the May 24, 1852 date mentioned above regarding the *Damariscove*. Gibbs also states on p. 24 that the vessel (*Damariscove*) held the first coasting license issued at Olympia, April 20, 1850. This is presumed to be a typographical error, since the *Damariscove* was still on the way from Maine to San Francisco on that date, and the Index of Enrollments shows the license was granted on April 20, 1852, six months after she left San Francisco (October 20, 1851). This was her first voyage to the Puget Sound region; she was headed for port Steilacoom, and the newspaper mistakenly identified her as the *Damariscotta*.

Gough, Barry M. *Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-90*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 1984. - Describes the native Haida's reputation for savagery and the *Georgiana* disaster and a mention of the *Una*'s pre-disaster mission on pages 96-98 (with map of the Queen Charlotte Islands on page 97), and a note on page 243 with further information on the *Una* and her demise - with a possible source for discovering more about the wreck at Neah Bay, Washington Territory gleaned from the *Queen Charlotte Islands Papers* [1853], Cmd. 788, p.1. which we have not had the privilege of consulting, but which might lay to rest the question of what vessel rescued the *Una*'s crew.

Hicks , Flora Weed. "The Wreck of the Sloop *Georgianna*", *The West - True Stories of the Old West*. Freeport, N.Y. Maverick Publications September 1967 pp. 16-19 & pp. 53-54 - Based on participant journals, this is a thorough accounting of the *Georgianna*'s wreck and the crew's travail and rescue, which closely follows Bancroft's account and the History of the Pacific Northwest - Washington and Oregon.

Morey, Karin. " *Lafayette Balch*" Website <http://members.aol.com/karigen/jblafe.htm>. - Karin Morey, is Balch's great-great grandniece. Everything you will ever want to know about him is contained in a wonderfully complete Website entitled " *Lafayette Balch*". Morey describes Balch's complete fleet of ships and covers every aspect of his life and businesses. Karin's site shows that one of the captains listed for the Brig *George Emery* (owned by Balch) was a Captain Collins (mentioned above). Morey states in her web page that the *George Emery* was first licensed to carry forest products from Puget Sound to San Francisco on November 19, 1851. Lewis & Dryden also give this information (see above). She tells also that on Dec. 27th the *George Emery* lost a man overboard during a heavy gale and

sustained the loss of fore topmast, staysail, etc. during this time; a story also told by Carol Neufeld. This information is verified in the Daily Alta, Jan 31, 1852 paper.

NARA - *Certificates of Enrollment and Registration in San Francisco*. These have been far and away our best source of documentation for the technical specifications of the *Damariscove* and its ownership. NARA-Index to Certificates of Registration and Enrollment Issued for Merchant Vessels at San Francisco, California (1850-1877). Microfilm Series M 1867 - Roll 1. Referred to hereafter as the Index.

Neufeld, Carol. "The Ships of Lafayette Balch" in *The Sea Chest: Journal of the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 116-120 - This was the first article in which the authors found a date for the final "demise" of the *Damariscove*...given as Demaris Cove. On page 119 is a table showing the ships that Lafayette Balch owned at one time or another and gives the final disposition of some of those vessels, the *Damariscove* included. Ms. Neufeld's article was used as a reference by both Karin Morey on her website and Joan Curtis in correspondence with Rhea. We have been in touch with both Morey and Curtis regarding the new information and necessary corrections.

North Pacific History Company of Portland, Oregon. *History of the Pacific Northwest: Washington and Oregon*. On-line:  
<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/or/county/union1/1889vol1/VolumeI.htm> - A very extensive history originally published in 1889, now transcribed on the Internet by Janine M. Bork. It has all kinds of caveats on Copyright.

Rathburn, J. C., *A History of Thurston County, Washington from 1845 to 1895* by J. C. Rathburn Editor of the Paladium, Published at Olympia, Washington, 1895. Electronically transcribed June, 2000 by Edward Echtle. [Online:

<http://www.olympiahistory.org/texts/rathbun.txt>].

Rice, George Wharton. *The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay*. Somersworth, NH: New England History Press and the Boothbay Region Historical Society, 1984. - Several items which involved the *Damariscove* are given in Rice's book on pp 93-94 . Rice had obviously researched the San Francisco newspapers of the time, since one item was quoted almost verbatim. (See arrival of *Damariscove* as shown below in the *Daily Alta*). However, he did not reference any of the material about the schooner's activities after reaching San Francisco. He did cite a book titled *Marine History of the Pacific Northwest*...no author given. (It is possible this was not the exact title). We thought it might be the Lewis and Dryden book; however, that was not the case. Rice points out another date from the book, i.e. 1852, stating the *Damariscove* was coasting north from

San Francisco in 1852 and then relates the Sloop *Georgianna* and *Una* incidents. Bancroft, also refers to 1852 in terms of the *Una*...opening the door for doubt. Rice states, correctly, that the *Damariscove* lay in San Francisco harbor until November, (1850) when she was cleared for San Diego. He then stated that she had arrived in San Francisco from Paita ( a.k.a Payta), Peru, South America in March 1851...which prompted him to say that she had apparently gone from San Diego to Paita and back and the time involved indicated a fast run and a quick round trip.[See documentation discussed in item of Certificate of Registry #342]. The thought has passed through our minds that perhaps one or more of the Officers of the *Damariscove* might have signed on with her for that South American sojourn. An intriguing idea which could be answered only by descendants who might have known this. It should be pointed out that the newspaper referred to the Captain as Shelby, while in official documents it appears to be Shelly. Errors in names of ships occurred fairly regularly when the names were somewhat similar, i.e., misspelling *Damariscove* as *Damariscove* and mistaking schooners *Damariscotta* and *J.C. Demarest* for schooner *Damariscove*. The key to knowing which was which lies in the names of owners/or captains listed in the shipping sections. The name following the ship was always the captain [who in some cases was also the owner] This system worked pretty well until newspaper items revealed the Brig *George Emery* at one point had a captain named Collins, as did the Schooner *J.C. Demarest*. At first Rhea thought Captain Collins may have been the Master, at different times, of both ships. A stroke of luck sorted this out in the *Daily Alta California* dated February 1, 1852...p.5, Col. 2. This issue involved the entire month of January. Arrived: Jan. 17...Schooner *J.C. Demarest*, Collins, 12 ds fm Oregon . January 19...Brig *George Emery*, Collins, 30 ds fm Puget Sound. Since it is a well-known fact that one cannot be in two places at once, we can happily put that puzzle to rest.

*The Columbian*, Olympia, WA. newspaper. Later known as *The Pioneer Democrat*. - *The Columbian* turned up references to a Capt. Hathaway of the *Damariscove* in October and November of 1852, Lafayette Balch, owner. A rather interesting history on the Internet spoke of Capt. Eli Hathaway and the *Damariscove* rescuing the people who had been held captive by the Indians at Queen Charlotte Islands. The dates given and all of the other details are simply not documented in any way and do not agree with the preponderance of evidence showing Capt. Lafayette Balch and the *Damariscove* as the rescuers. *The Columbian* is also a great source for Balch's company advertisements and notations of the *Damariscove* arriving and departing from various harbors in the Puget Sound region. The vessel's name is most often reported accurately. Occasionally there is found also other articles of interest related to the *Damariscove* story. In the September 11th, 1852 edition, pg. 2, col. 3 is a brief story on what the coastal trade vessels carried besides lumber, i.e., whale oil and salmon. The longer story on the same subject is referred to below. There is also a mention of a visit of the *Damariscove* and the *George Emery* to Puget Sound in the November 27th, 1852 edition, pg. 3, col. 2, and several articles were found referencing the attempts to locate (and one that claimed the

discovery of) the Franklin Expedition (30 bodies - 16 December 1854 edition). The last mention of the *Damariscove* we located in this paper was in the July 9th, 1853 paper, pg. 2 col. 5, telling of the schooner's arrival in San Francisco, 10 days out from Steilacoom.

*The Oregon Spectator* - Oregon City's and Oregon Territory's first newspaper. - This paper provided a few announcements about the comings and goings for various ships of interest. It also provided an article on the wreck of the Brigantine *Una*.

*The Oregon Statesman* - Oregon City's second newspaper and Oregon Territory's third, missing out second place to the *Portland Oregonian* only because the ship delivering their press did not arrive on time. This paper provided us with the clue that a more local paper to the place that ended the *Damariscove's* career was available. In the July 18th 1854 edition page 3 column 1 under the title "From the South" is the notice that the *Damariscove* ran aground going out of Coos Bay. The notice was a verbatim copy of the one that appeared in the *Umpqua Weekly Gazette* (see below).

*Umpqua Weekly Gazette*, Scottsburg, Oregon Territory - also known as the *Umpqua Gazette* and the *Scottsburg Weekly Gazette* . - The December 23rd 1854 article in this paper is, we think, the final word on what happened to the *Damariscove*. It is also the paper that reported the earlier grounding of the schooner in June of 1854 at Coos Bay, which was picked up by the *Oregon Statesman* On July 18th, several weeks later.

Wright, E.W., ed. *Lewis and Dryden's Marine History of the Pacific Northwest*. New York, Antiquarian Press Ltd. , 1961.(The Lewis & Dreyden book was originally published in 1895). One of the errors found in many of the secondary resources involves the question, (which we have alluded to briefly in passing in an earlier part of this article), "What is the Schooner's true identity?" Is it the *Demeriscove*, *Dameriscove*, *Damariscove*, *Dariscove*, *Damariscover*, *Damaras Cove*, Dam this or the other? She was named after Damariscove Island in Maine. According to one "legend", Lyman Chapman's aunt contributed money to the voyage in return for the vessel being named after the island, which was her place of residence. Waterman S. Stetson reportedly returned to Damariscotta when his father became ill, bought Damariscove Island and lived there until his father died. (Christine Dodge Vol. I, p. 661 dates unknown). Lewis and Dryden's work appears to be the progenitor of the "Damaras Cove" name error found in Neufeld and some of the other secondary source materials.

## Name and Ownership History

Most definitely, the name of the Schooner was the *Damariscove* - it is listed as such on all the official Certificates of Registry and Certificates of Enrollment. All of the incorrect spellings we have encountered came from other sources. For a better understanding of shipping history, it is helpful to know that Certificates of Registry were required for the registering and recording of Ships and Vessels, while Certificates of Enrollment were for the purpose of Enrolling and Licensing Ships or Vessels to be employed in the Coasting Trade and Fisheries and for regulating the same. Both were in pursuance of an Act of the Congress of the United States. Copies of these pertinent records were obtained with the exceptional efforts of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) people. A brief history of the Schooner *Damariscove*, according to the aforementioned documents, may help us sort out some of her history in the Pacific Northwest.

1) The Certificate of Registry #334 dated 3 November 1850 in which the *Damariscove* was duly Registered and Recorded in San Francisco, California. Owners of the vessel are Thomas Hall, of San Francisco together with Daniel C. Mellus, Waterman Stetson, Joseph Mellus, William Keniston, Alexander B. Weeks, George B. Williams and William Hatch of San Francisco. (This item leads to another baffling aside in the *Damariscove's* story regarding William Hatch. Unless an owner was not required to be living at the time of ownership transfer, this would seem to prove that Hatch was still living and had not yet died in October, 1850 as reported in Probate papers).

The question of being present and living when the papers were issued for the purpose of becoming a vessel's owner is called into question by the fact that at least three of the owners had gone into the mines by August, 1850.. It might be assumed that Thomas Hall remained in San Francisco at that time. This assumption is based on the document cited - it stated that "Thomas Hall is at present Master, and a Citizen of the United States .... as he hath sworn." This is followed by a complete description of the vessel as presented in part one of this article...as well as her only known Registry (#7) in Nobleboro, Maine. In the left margin of the document (Cert. of Registry #334) is written "Cancelled San Francisco Nov 5, 1850."

2) On the 5th day of November 1850 Certificate of Registry #342 states that William W. Shelly together with William H. Mitchell of San Francisco are the owners and William W. Shelly the present Master. Left margin entry: "Cancelled San Francisco April 19, 1851, property changed E & L" (Enrollment and License). The first intriguing bit of information about the *Damariscove* after her sale to these gentlemen is as follows: *Damariscove* sailed to Payta, South America and back as documented in two Daily Alta articles - November 27, p. 2 Col. 4...Nov 26 .Schr *Dariscove* (sp) Shelly, San Diego, 12 passengers (cleared and sailed the same day). Daily Alta on March 18, 1851, p. 2 Col. 6 shows under "Arrivals", March 17, 1851...Sch. *Damariscove* (sp) Shelly 37 ds fm Payta,

produce to W. H. Mitchell. Rice's notation of months and year helped locate the documenting articles.

3) Certificate of Enrollment # 89 (the number is quite faded) issued April 19, 1851 did not survive; the Index mentioned above is still extant. This certificate was surrendered October 18, 1851. Reason: Register Granted. The Index shows that a Certificate of Registry #372 (missing) was granted October 18, 1851 to Lafayette Balch. Vessel surrendered or transferred at Olympia, O.T. [Oregon Territory] April 20, 1852...reason... E & R (Enrollment and Registry granted). We note this is the date of the license granted to Balch & Palmer, mentioned on p. 6 of Karin Morey's Website. The licenses were, no doubt, much smaller papers than the Certificates of Enrollment and gave more specific information. The *Damariscove* actually belonged to Balch as of April 19, 1851. This was a temporary Register until October 18, 1851. A perusal of two or more long columns of shipping information in the Daily Alta after October 18th turned up the date of October 21 1851, (p. 2 col. 4) under "Cleared" (previously noted above) - Schr. *Damariscotta*, Balch, Port Stillacome(sic). Now we see very clearly how it helps to know ships and ports involved, since this item was pretty well mangled! There is, however, no doubt that the *Damariscove* is the schooner in question. [there actually was a Bark from Newcastle, Maine named the *Damariscotta*]. There were many arrivals and departures listed over a long period of time during Balch's ownership, found in Pacific Northwest and Northern California seaport newspapers.

4) Certificate of Enrollment #381 dated 23 November 1853, states that Geo. S. Wright is the owner and present Master of the vessel *Damariscove* of San Francisco. After stating the year and place that the *Damariscove* was built, it goes on to show per Enrollment number one, issued at the Port of Olympia, O.T. Jan 1, 1853..now cancelled, property changed...surrendered San Francisco 26 Nov 1853. This would seem to indicate that Mr. Wright bought the schooner on Jan. 1, 1853 in Oregon. George S. Wright was obviously a man of prominence as later a steamer was named after him, though the owner of the *Damariscove* may have not been the same individual. (This George Wright was probably not the Colonel George Wright who was instrumental in suppressing the Native Americans in Washington Territory during the Indian wars, though he may have been the George S. Wright, Captain of the *Hermann* who is recorded as being kicked into the harbor by a camel in Barkerville, Alaska during that state's goldrush era). Shortly thereafter on March 2, 1853, Washington Territory was split off from Oregon Territory. NARA informed us in August, 2005 that Washington D.C. does not hold any Customs records for Oregon Territory for the time frame we were seeking.. What remains unanswered is why Capt. L. Balch of the *Damariscove* is still listed as late as July 9, 1853 in *The Columbian* (Olympia, WA) newspaper. The only plausible explanation would be that he sold the schooner to George S. Wright in January of 1853, and Balch and others may have captained her for several months.

5) The last Certificate of Enrollment, #386 is dated 26 November 1853. It states that E.R. Wood is 1/3 owner together with C T (?) Macy 1/3 and Geo. H. Bunker 1/3. Albert

[middle initial is either S. or L.] Blake is Master of the *Damariscove* of San Francisco. Vessel was surrendered at Umpqua Oregon .... date 18 December 1854...cause of surrender...Vessel Lost. This Certificate obtained before there ever was a plan for this article, gave Rhea the first indication that the date of the loss of the *Damariscove* was not, as noted in other sources, in December, 1853.. We will return to this later.

### The Balch Years

One does not speak about the Pacific Northwest history of the *Damariscove*, without dealing with Lafayette Balch, a prominent figure in shipping between San Francisco and the Puget Sound. Lafayette was born in Trescott, Maine He was the founder of the town of Steilacoom, Washington on January 23, 1851.

**BALCH & PALMER,**  
**MERCHANTS & SHIPPING AGENTS,**  
**Steilacoom, Puget Sound, and**  
**San Francisco, California.**

CARGOES of piles, hewed timber, ship spars, sawed lumber, shingles, laths, cord wood, salmon, halibut, codfish, oysters, whale oil, potatoes, grain and Oregon produce generally, furnished at the shortest notice and at the most reasonable rates. The attention of ship owners is respectfully solicited.

Their line of packets trading regularly between Puget Sound and San Francisco.

Schr. "Damariscove," Capt. Hathaway,  
 Brig "Geo. Emery," Capt. Wilson,  
 may be relied upon for safe carriage of freight and comfortable accommodation of passengers.

Orders for goods carefully filled and without delay.

For particulars apply to the Masters on board, or to

**LAFAYETTE BALCH,**  
 Steilacoom, Puget Sound,  
**CYRUS PALMER,**  
 California street Wharf, San Francisco.

A typical announcement from *The Columbian*, Olympia, Washington Territory. Another from May 28, 1853, Page 2, column 2 reads: "Schooner *Damariscove*, Captain Lamay, arrived at this port Sunday last, from Steilacoom She is consigned to A.J. Moses"

One might know that the *Damariscove's* history would be intertwined with a "larger than life" figure such as Lafayette Balch, whose enterprises were legend for the 12 short years of his life in the Pacific Northwest. Balch died suddenly in San Francisco on November 25, 1862 at age 37.

Early on Lafayette Balch had established a store in Steilacoom, which he kept well supplied with goods shipped from San Francisco for the settlers of the area. His fleet of ships returned to San Francisco with lumber, coal (from Coos Bay and other sites- probably the cargo sought when it went aground the first time in June, 1854). Salmon and fish oil (*The Columbian* articles 9-11-1852 pg. 2 column 3 and 1-18-1853 pg. 2 column 1 and 2), and other raw materials from the Puget Sound area. The newspapers of the day were full of ads for his business. As nearly as can be determined, the *Damariscove* remained in Balch's fleet of ships until January 1, 1853. Balch had at least two business partners that we know of at various times, Cyrus Palmer and a man named Webber. Palmer co-owned the *Damariscove* with Balch. It is not clear whether Webber might have co-owned the vessel at a later time.

Schooner "Damariscove," Capt. L. Balch, arrived at San Francisco on the 18th ult., 10 days from Steilacoom.

## Schooner *Damariscove* to the Rescue

Two interesting adventures were said to have been undertaken by the *Damariscove* under Balch's captaincy. One, the rescue of the crew of the Sloop *Georgiana/Georgianna/George Anna/Georgina* which ran aground and broke up in the Queen Charlotte Islands north of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, is fairly well documented. A second incident pertains to the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) Brigantine *Una*, which ran aground at Cape Flattery, the northwestern most point of land in the continental United States near Neah Bay and the entry to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. References to these incidents abound (see the annotated bibliography above), as do the variations of the stories (possibly caused, for example, by newspaper articles - one being published within six weeks and another within about nine months of the event. It seems rather strange that the account in the San Francisco paper appeared perhaps six weeks after the event, while *The Columbian* of Olympia...closer in distance to the event, did not publish it until 9 months later!). We will attempt to present them in chronological order. We suspect when all is said and done that an entirely clear picture of what actually happened and when may not emerge!

Our paper trail begins with the notation in the Daily Alta paper dated February 1, 1852, p. 5, Col. 2. Port San Francisco, January 31, 1852: Brig *George Emery* arrived Jan. 19, 30 dys fm Puget Sound. Under "Memoranda" per *George Emery*. We quote, "schr. *Damariscove*, Balch, for Queen Charlotte's Island, to relieve the crew of the sloop *Georgianna* lost [this refers to the fact that the vessel ran aground and was a complete "loss" in the insurance sense; the crew were all taken hostage by the Haida Indians] at that place some time since [ago?]; under same "Memoranda" *George Emery* Dec 22d, passed the Br. brig *Uno* [*Una*] lying at anchor in Near [Neah] Bay, Cape Flattery". A later item in the February 28th issue of the same paper mentions that the British Brigantine *Una* (vessel owned by the Hudson's Bay Company) was completely wrecked. If relying only on the California paper we might draw the conclusion that the *Una* wreck occurred between December 22nd when it was seen by the *George Emery* and Feb. 28th 1852. More often than not other sources give the date of the wreck as Dec. 26, 1851. The question of whether or not Balch and the *Damariscove* rescued the *Una*'s crew remains unanswered in this source.

An item from *The Columbian*, Sept. 11, 1852...p. 2 Col. 5 describes the basic outline of the wreck of the *Georgianna*'s story: "Sloop *George Anna*, wrecked on Queen Charlotte's Island...her passengers and crew taken prisoner by the Indians. Schooner *Damariscove* promptly sent to their relief by the Collector" The last sentence in this item says "Br. Brig *Una*, totally wrecked at Cape Flattery. There is no mention of the crew of the *Una* being rescued by Balch and the *Damariscove*. Another paragraph of this item "Custom House District Puget Sound, Olympia, November 10, 1851. [The actual District was authorized by Congress on February 14, 1851] The Collection District of Puget Sound was this day organized. The officers are...Simpson P. Moses-Collector of Customs &c., for the District...at Olympia and William W. Miller...Surveyor of Customs

&c., for the port of Nasqually [Nisqually]". We will hear more about Simpson P. Moses later. *The Columbian* has another article on Sept. 11, 1852 with a listing of Ships arriving and Departing from Port of Olympia between Nov. 15, 1851 and June 30, 1852. The Schooner *Damariscove* is mentioned three times and Brig *George Emery* twice. A huge disappointment here, since the individual arrival and departure dates were not listed for any specific vessel! Since the *Damariscove* and the *George Emery* are listed one after another once, it is easy to assume that Dec. 20, 1851 may have been the date implied by information about the Brig *George Emery*. The *Emery's* arrival on Jan 19 in San Francisco after a 30 day voyage from Olympia would possibly indicate that she saw the *Damariscove* on about Dec. 20th while the *Damariscove* was on her way to help the Sloop *Georgianna*. This information closely parallels two other accounts of the date *Damariscove* left on the rescue mission as December 18.

In Rathburn's work (*A History of Thurston County*..) there is no mention of the *Una's* crew being rescued by the *Damariscove*. Dianne Zarder, research librarian at North Bend Public Library, Oregon included a portion of this article in her responses to Rhea's inquiry (from the electronically transcribed June 2000 version previously mentioned). The pertinent information about the *Georgianna's* wreck appears in a section headed OLYMPIA. A part of the article from pg.17 col. 2 is quoted below:

S.D. Howe, Charles Weed, S.S. Ford, Samuel Williams, J. Colvig and the Sargent Brothers, Asher, Wilson and Nelson. On the 19th the vessel was cast ashore on the east side of the island, was plundered by the Indians and the crew and passengers held in captivity. Upon receipt of the news, the Collector of Customs at Olympia, dispatched the *Damariscove*, Captain Balch, with a force of volunteers and from Fort Steilacoom. The schooner sailed December 18th,[a very familiar date!] and returned to Olympia with the rescued men on the last day of January, 1852.

Hicks' article, "The Wreck of the Sloop *Georgianna*" tells the story in more detail - sent to Rhea courtesy of Joan Curtis, Historian, Steilacoom Historical Association. Ms. Hicks cites only these references: Charles E. Weed (undoubtedly her ancestor), and Samuel D. Howe (both passengers on the Sloop *Georgianna*) who left written narratives and George Moore (also a passenger) who kept a diary during the voyage. This is a very detailed account of the Sloop *Georgianna's* rescue as well as the ransom, and the Congressional restitution. There is no reference to the *Una* at all which suggests that if the *Damariscove* did perform the second rescue it was not accomplished while the members of the *Georgianna's* crew were on board.

North Pacific History Company's *History of the Pacific Northwest, Oregon and Washington 1889* has no mention of the Brigantine *Una* at all.

Mr. Gibbs' work, though not the source of the tale, (a footnote on p. 37 in Lewis and Dryden's *Marine History of the Pacific Northwest* was definitely an earlier reference),

starts his narrative on p. 21 with the *Una*. We paraphrase his account: The first date mentioned is December 26, 1851 - by which time the *Una* was wrecked off of Cape Flattery. Capt. Lafayette Balch, returning from the Queen Charlotte Islands where Collector, Simpson P. Moses had sent him to rescue the crew and passengers of the sloop *Georgianna* who had carried 22 passengers and a crew of five. Gibbs recaps the story of the *Damariscove* and the *Georgianna* exchanging greetings in Neah Bay. (just a few miles from Cape Flattery). This story is also mentioned in Flora Weed Hicks' account. Later the *Georgianna* was cast ashore among the hostile Haida Indians of Queen Charlotte Islands...where the ship was plundered and the crew and passengers captured. When approaching Gold Harbor, Balch (in the *Damariscove*) discovered the Sloop's fate but was unable to help so hurried back to Olympia to inform Collector Moses. Moses took it upon himself to order a rescue and outfitted the *Damariscove* with 4 cannon, 25 men and the regular crew and supplies. (It should be noted that apparently the Haida Indians made no threats to the lives of the hostages; they expected a ransom in the form of goods). Balch sailed back to Gold Harbor on December 9 (no dates are given for the length of time this took but a sailing time of seven days from Olympia in good weather was normal). A ransom of five blankets, two shirts, one bolt of muslin, and two pounds of tobacco was paid for each captive. When they were set free, they had been hostages for 54 days. This would make the date of their capture approximately October 25th.

It is at this juncture that time frames differ widely and become very difficult to follow. Again paraphrasing Mr. Gibbs, the *Damariscove* (p.23) undoubtedly saw the plight of the *Una* on the way back from the rescue of the people from the *Georgianna*. The *Una* wrecked on shore and was also plundered, by the Makah Indians, despite the protests from her Captain [William Mitchell]. Captain Balch anchored and rescued the survivors, (said by other reports to have been the crew- no passengers. See note on Bancroft Volume 31 above). Mr. Gibbs states that, according to Moses' report, the whole venture cost him \$11, 017.00. The Treasury Department questioned that Moses had the right to order this in the first place. Part of the reasoning was that U.S. troops were used without proper authority. It was not until months later that he (Moses) was finally reimbursed for his humanitarian act; (reimbursement was not requested until May 29, 1854 which seems a very long time after the event, and we are not sure when the final restitution took place). It should be noted that Collector Simpson P. Moses' name was not mentioned in Congressional records, and we do not know what restitution he may have received. Hicks article stated that Balch received \$5,000; the Hudson's Bay Company was paid for their goods, and the volunteers received \$100 each. Presumably Moses received the rest, but this is not so stated, nor do we know the original source of these figures.

The House and Senate Journals of the U.S. Congress are online and have been searched. Four references were found that speak to the restitution: March 20, 1854 House Journal; Mr. Walley, Resolved that the Committee on Commerce be instructed to consider and report whether further legislation is required to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury, or other officer of the government, to indemnify, at his discretion, owners

and masters of vessels for losses and charges which they may have incurred by reason of their rendering aid to vessels in distress, or by rescuing the crews of wrecked vessels and for which aid no provision of law now exists. Hicks refers to this date as that when a memorial was sent by the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Washington to the Congress praying that the expenses incurred in the expedition [rescue of Sloop *Georgianna* passengers and crew] be paid by the United States. On May 29, 1854 the House Journal states : "By Mr. Lancaster: The memorial of the legislative assembly of Washington Territory , relative to the claim of D. T. Balch, [ a presumed typographical error] for rescuing American citizens from the hands of savages; which was referred to the Committee of Ways and Means. On August 4, 1854 [Congressional Documents and Debates, p. 586...33rd Congress Sess. I CH.242] ...To enable the Secretary of State to defray the expense of releasing from captivity among the Indians of Queen Charlotte's Island, the crew and passengers of the American sloop *Georgianna*, fifteen thousand dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary". The aforementioned memorial was tabled on Dec. 22, 1854, [33rd Congress 2nd Session House Journal p. 102].

Two points of particular interest here are that the *Damariscove* was not still owned by Balch on May 29, 1854 and had wrecked four days prior to Dec. 22, 1854. There seems to be no explanation as to why these events are out of sequence. It is not at all clear whether there might have been two separate requests to Congress. We do note that the August 4, 1854 entry does not mention D.L. Balch nor Collector Simpson P. Moses. All of these points aside, the *Congressional Record* verifies that the rescue spoken of did take place. It does not substantiate dates of the rescue...nor does it include anything having to do with the British Brigantine *Una*. The assumption might be that the crew of the *Una* were probably British subjects, and no restitution would be asked for or made for their rescue. Two articles and Volume 32 of Bancroft's Works state that the *Georgianna* had come from Australia (as does Gibbs p. 22) seeking citizens in the Washington area to take passage in the hunt for gold in Queen Charlotte Islands. However, the *Congressional Record* refers to the Sloop *Georgianna* as American, the passengers being probably all Americans.

We are fairly comfortable with the fact that the rescue of crew and passengers of the Sloop *Georgianna* took place in late 1851 and that Balch returned to Olympia with those rescued, probably at the end of January 1852. The entire issue of the rescue of the *Una* crew by the *Damariscove* is incorrect. Microfilm (through interlibrary loan) from the University of Manitoba in Canada regarding the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) was examined but had no information at all about the *Una*. However, direct correspondence with the HBC's Archives provided ample evidence to set the record straight. Even though an article on page 1 January 27, 1852 in the Oregon Spectator newspaper obliquely hints that the *Damariscove* may have played a part, this is roundly contradicted by the official correspondence between the Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) Chief Factor, James Douglas to Archibald Barclay, Secretary to the HBC in London, dated January 3, and January 10, 1852 from Fort Victoria which only mentions the schooner Susan Sturges (mistakenly identified as a sloop) as effecting the *Una* crew's

rescue. (See *The British Brigantine Una crew rescue update* addendum pages 89-92 for extracts from Chief Factor James Douglas's and Chief Trader W. H. McNeill's correspondence (Courtesy of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Archives of Manitoba Winnipeg, Canada)). For more information on the *Una's* wreck and the later attack of the Haida Indians on the *Susan Sturges* see the article *Gold on Queen Charlotte's Island, The Beaver* Winter 1966 by Bessie Doak Haynes. A side note of interest involves ownership of the *Susan Sturges*. The Hiram A. Balch Collection (90) in the G.W. Blunt White Library at Mystic Seaport shows that he was the owner of the Schooner *Susan Sturges* at one time; Hiram was the brother of Lafayette Balch!

When we begin the discussion of the incorrect year for the "demise" of the *Damariscove*, we realize how easily dates and events can be incorrect and stay that way for a very long time. All of this relates to what was pointed out at the beginning of this narrative, i.e. when one reads accounts by several persons (as in the journals kept by some of the *Damariscove* folks), one sometimes finds very different versions.

### **Natives and the White Man's Burthens**

In regard to the Native Americans' part in these events, whatever else various Indian tribes did or did not do, there were few remarks about them in the newspapers of the time which were in any way understanding of their culture nor their value as human beings. (Even the *Congressional Record* refers to the Haida Indians as savages but see addendum page 91-92 for examples of the pioneer American's "savagery"). This is well illustrated by an article in *The Columbian*, Saturday, January 15, 1853 in which the *Damariscove* figures as one of the vessels involved in this trade. The title is "Fisheries of the Pacific Coast - ultimate importance to Northern Oregon, &c." We quote:

It would be almost unnecessary to remark, even for the information of the people of the Atlantic, that these fisheries have been thus far suffered to remain almost undisturbed—that salmon is the principal article of Indian subsistence—that what little has been done in the business of securing the salmon, has been done solely by the Indians, through their crude method, and slender appliances, and that their lazy and worthless habits prevent a sufficient bestowal of time and attention, in furnishing any considerable quantity for export, beyond their own necessities, and what is required for present home consumption.

Also included in the article just quoted was the fact that four schooners...*Mary Taylor, Franklin, Damariscove* and *Cynosure* had been adding whatever oil and salmon the Indians of Queen Charlotte's, Vancouver Island and Cape Flattery had to dispose of to their cargoes; during the year 1852 they provided several thousand barrels of salmon and oil for the San Francisco market.

## Human Error and the Divine Stetson's Ship

In the process of trying to locate more information on the demise of the *Damariscove*, Stilson found a brief mention in *The Oregon Statesman*, based on an article in *The Umpqua Gazette*. This was in the July 18th 1854 edition p. 3 Col. 1 - under the title "From the South" and under that heading "Marine Intelligence".. "The Schooner *Damariscove* in attempting to go out of Coos Bay, got aground, and we understand was seriously injured". Rhea was sent two copies taken from poor quality microfilm of the *Umpqua Weekly Gazette* story from the Douglas County Museum (cited below). The first copy has a large blotch on it, though fortunately it falls in the text just after the *Damariscove* notice. The paper was dated June 30, 1854. In addition the research librarian, Dianne Zarder (North Bend Public Library) provided this from: *Shipwrecks of the Southern Oregon Coast* by Victor West., Volume 1, published in North Bend, Oregon by the author in 1980-82: "The schooner *Damariscove*, Capt. Wood, had entered Coos Bay a few times before June 1854 without any difficulty. On May 9th she sailed from San Francisco for Coos Bay for a cargo of coal (one of the first few vessels to enter Coos Bay for this purpose). While attempting to sail out of Coos Bay she grounded and was seriously damaged. (How long the *Damariscove* was out of operation at this time is a big question but she was not listed in the shipping news section of the San Francisco newspaper *Alta Californian* after May 9, 1854 according to Victor West).

West's first reference to the *Daily Alta* was found in that newspaper May 10, 1854...p. 2 Col.5 showing that the *Damariscove*, Wood, was cleared for Empire City on May 9th (Wood & Co.) She sailed the same day with the notation: "Schr. *Damariscove*, Wood, Umpqua River". West was mistaken about her not appearing again in the *Daily Alta*. Items in that newspaper are as follows: November 23, 1854 p. 2 Col. 7, shows that on Nov. 22 the "Schr. *Damariscove*, Whippey, Umpqua River Wood & Co...Cleared". The *Daily Alta*, Nov. 25, 1854 p.2 Col.5 shows: Nov.24th "Schr. *Damariscove*, Wippey (sp.) Umpqua river...Sailed". We will see shortly that this was the beginning of her last voyage.

Various writings stating that the *Damariscove* wrecked at Winchester Bay in December of 1853 have proven to be incorrect concerning the year and location. The official Enrollment Certificate giving the date of loss as December 18, 1854 and the place as Umpqua, O.T. was thought to be the accurate date and place. We felt the need to obtain a newspaper reference which would tell more about the wreck Where exactly did it take place; was there loss of life? We simply did not know.

It would seem that the San Francisco papers should have carried an article about the wreck, since she was always listed as a San Francisco ship. Rice's book, as previously noted, mentioned the only different date we have seen. - January, 1855. He stated that available information indicated that she wrecked then. A search of the *Daily Alta* did not bear this out. It just seemed to be such a coincidence that the date of the Certificate of Enrollment was December 18, 1854...five years to the day that the *Damariscove* left

Damariscotta! The *Umpqua Weekly Gazette* of Scottsburg, Oregon published on Dec. 23, 1854 (sent to Rhea in early July, 2005 by the Douglas County Oregon Museum...Karen Bratton, research librarian) contained an absolutely stunning article about the wreck of the *Damariscove*; stunning in the detail it contained. This was reported five days after the event, and Scottsburg, (at that time a busy port for lumber exports) was only 20 miles upstream from the site of the wreck. She apparently wrecked near the mouth of the Umpqua River...a village by the name Umpqua City existed then. Ms. Bratton explains that the town of Winchester Bay is several miles southwest and across the river from the north shore town of Umpqua City, which should not be confused with the present community of Umpqua located between Sutherlin and Elkton...some 60 miles east.

The estuary just inside the mouth of the Umpqua River is now known as Winchester Bay. Prior to the building of jetties to protect the channel into the bay, the sand bars formed by the action of the breakers were unpredictable as to location and water depth, especially along the river's northern shore. Thus it was imperative that ships entering the river did so from near the south shore. What this meant for the final days of the *Damariscove* is described below; we quote verbatim from the *Umpqua Weekly Gazette*:

#### Wreck of the Damariscove.

The schooner *Damariscove* in attempting to come over the bar at the mouth of the Umpqua, on the 15th inst, ran ashore about sundown on the north spit. We understand that Capt. Whiting and the crew made every exertion in their power to save the vessel, but it proved of no avail. They abandoned her on the 16th about 8 o'clock. No lives were lost and considerable freight was saved. The vessel was a complete wreck. She had only about 20 tons of freight on board. The *Damariscove* was owned by Wood & Co. San Francisco. She left San Francisco about the 20th of Nov., and had been laying to at the mouth of the Umpqua, for a favorable wind to bring her in, about eleven days. It is stated that there was a strong ebb tide and very little wind when she got on the bar. The Captain not being acquainted with the channel ran too far to the north. This is the first accident of this character that has occurred at the Umpqua for two years. The loss is estimated at about \$42,000. Since the above was in type we have been furnished the following list of the persons who had freight on the schooner, and the amounts of their loss:

Wood & Co., \$10,000; Brown, Dorn & Co., \$3,000; Nicholson & Co., \$2,500; James Maxey, \$2,000; John Walker, 500; Lord & Co., unknown; John Lang, \$500.

## Wreck of the *Damariscove*

The schooner *Demariscove* in attempting to come over the bar at the mouth of the Umpqua, on the 18th inst, ran ashore about sundown on the north spit. We understand that Capt. Whippy and the crew made every exertion in their power to save the vessel, but it proved of no avail. They abandoned her on the 19th about 8 o'clock. No lives were lost and considerable freight was saved. The vessel was a complete wreck. She had only about 25 tons of freight on board. The *Demariscove* was owned by Wood & Co., San Francisco. – She left San Francisco about the 20th of Nov., and had been laying to at the mouth of the Umpqua, for a favorable wind to bring her in, about eleven days. It is stated that there was a strong ebb tide and very little wind when she got on the bar. The Captain not being acquainted with the channel ran too far to the north. This is the first accident of this character that has occurred in the Umpqua for two years. The loss is estimated from [10 \_\_\_\_] to \$12,000.

Since the above was in type we have been furnished the following list of the persons who had freight on the schooner, and the amounts of their loss: Wood & Co., \$10,000; Brown, Drum & Co., \$3,000; Nicholson & Co., \$2,500; James Maxey, \$2,000; John Walker, 500; Lord & Co., unknown; John Lang, \$500.

### The Story is Told

We can't help but think of the old proverb, "Good things come in small packages". A small newspaper in a small town delivered the closure we fervently hoped for in writing the final chapter. (Even the spelling of her name was close!). It is interesting to note that immediately after the wreck, it was reported in *The Oregon Statesman* in the January 9th, 1855 edition that on 26th of December 1854, a memorial was introduced in the Oregon legislature for a lighthouse and buoys at the mouth of the Umpqua, and that in the June 30, 1855 edition of the same paper it was reported that by Act of Congress, money was appropriated for a lighthouse. The lighthouse was started in 1855



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and finished in 1857 and had disintegrated by 1864, undermined by the sea as it had been built on sand. It was not rebuilt until 30 years later. Ms. Gaylyn Bradley, Keeper/Coordinator/Curator at the Umpqua River Lighthouse and Museum, south of Winchester Bay, OR supplied the following information: the original lighthouse (1857) was built on the south bank of the river near the mouth which was at that time located about 200-300 yards to the southwest of its present location. It was not built on the North Spit as has been noted on more than one Oregon based Website. There had been calls for navigational aids along the Oregon Territory coast earlier, though had the lighthouse existed at the time of the *Damariscove's* grounding it is unclear as to whether that would have helped prevent the accident.

Ms. Bradley also clarified the location of Winchester Bay and Umpqua City; both were near but not at the mouth of the Umpqua. Prof. Stephen Dow Beckham's copy of a Survey Map of the Umpqua River dated 1854 verifies this information showing distinctly that Umpqua City and Winchester Bay, although on opposite sides of the river, were not directly opposite one another. Umpqua City was a mile further upstream, on the North Spit. The map (see fly leaf and end paper) has a section entitled Sailing Directions which reads in part; "*the River is accessible to steamers of light draft, but should not be attempted by a sailing vessel without a pilot, or full knowledge of the currents &c*". We know that Captain Whippy was not familiar with the channels and went north, thus running aground on the North Spit. Both Professor Beckham and Ms. Bradley have provided invaluable help for our understanding of the unstable conditions of the channel entrances to the estuary prior to the construction of jetties (first one constructed in 1919 more added in the 30's, 50's and the last in 1968). Sand bars filled, washed away and reformed constantly, forming new channels. Although the jetties and dredging by the Corps of Engineers has helped achieve more stability in the harbor's entrance since the *Damariscove's* accident, the Umpqua River bar and estuary remain a danger to the unwary.

We must make this final comment as we draw this article to a close. Abner Stetson built many a fine ship - it is unknown to the authors how many of these, of comparable size, had the same kind of record as did the *Damariscove* - for when compared to many other ships of the time, the *Damariscove* has a singular quality - to our knowledge, not a single person was lost while in her care. May her memory live on for the New England descendants of the Gold Rush voyage, as well as for the descendants linked to her service in the Pacific Northwest.

## Addenda

*Jennifer McCombs Quirk writes on her GG Grandfather George Bailey Williams:*

I live with my husband in Placerville California. My great great great grandfather is George Bailey Williams, one of the passengers on the *Damariscove*. Two years ago I began to discover my family history in Maine. Thanks to my grandmother, Clareda Ludwig Williams, who is no longer living, but who left behind a detailed account of family history in the Montsweag area, and thanks to a gentleman named Roland Bailey who is a remarkable historian that lives in the area, I was able to discover my roots in Maine.

My husband and I traveled to Maine two years ago and again this summer. On my first visit to Maine, I carried with me "My First Fifty Years" by George Roscoe Williams (son of George Bailey Williams). This account led me to the Montsweag/Woolwich area. I won't go into the details now, however through a remarkable series of inquiries and discoveries, I found some cousins I never knew I had. One of them is Marjorie Wentworth and her husband Nelson, the other is Roland Bailey.

Roland Bailey took me around to all of the sites mentioned in George Roscoe Williams's account of his childhood in Montsweag. This summer my husband and I went back to visit. It was Roland who informed me of your series in the paper. He asked me to contact you. He thought you might be interested in hearing from a descendant of George Bailey Williams.

I was thrilled to hear about your series. In the account I have, George Bailey Williams traveled to California on the *Damariscove*. I couldn't find a mention of this boat. I knew there must have been an error, but hadn't yet spent the time to try to figure it out. So, your series provided an answer to the mystery. Thank you very much!

If you are interested, I would be happy to provide you with information that I have gathered. If you would like a copy of 'My First Fifty Years', I would be happy to provide that for you. Roland, Marjorie and I all descend from children of a Captain John Bailey who is a descendent of a John Bailey of Chippenham, Wilts, England. This was the John Bailey who traveled to Maine on the *Angel Gabriel*, the ship that was harbored at Pemaquid Harbor when a storm tore it apart in 1635.

*Glenda Mattoon writes about her ancestor's brothers Joseph and Daniel Mellus:*

I've just returned from Salt Lake City having spent a week researching the Mellus line in the Family History Center there. I think I've identified the Joseph who sailed on the *Damariscove* pretty conclusively. Daniel C. is a bit more iffy - still working on that.

Joseph (born Jun 1806) was the son of Henry Mellus Sr. and Mary Stephens, and was born in Hallowell, Lincoln, Maine. He is a brother to my Henry Mellus, Jr. The births of the entire family are found in Vital Records of Hallowell, Maine, Vol 1, P. 200. Born in 1806, he would have been 43 when the *Damariscove* sailed in 1849, just as the sources you quote indicated. He married Almira Hutchings of Nobleboro, 8 Oct 1831. Church records of the Baptist Church in Damariscotta show that Almira was discharged

by letter 11 Apr 1852 to Sonora, California. Exactly how he sailed in 1849 and got counted in the Maine Census in 1850 is a mystery.

Daniel's father, Henry Mellus, Sr. married Mary Stephens, daughter of Thomas Stevens and Mary Oliver. Henry Sr. died Feb 1832 in Hallowell, Kennebec, Maine. His death notice read:

Capt. Henry Mellus "one of party who threw tea overboard, Boston". He died at age 80. (Vital Records of Hallowell, Maine V2, P. 266.)

Henry Sr. was born in Boston, MA, and I believe him to be the son of John Mellus and Sarah. The record of the births of all their children are found in "Record of Births in the City of Boston 1630-1799". Vol 7, P. 73 on LDS fiche #6081203.

Joseph was followed to California by 2 nephews, (both sons of my Henry Jr.) Gustavus Bailey Mellus who was still living in San Francisco in 1890 and Henry J. Mellus who apparently died prior to that date. Death records are 5 rolls of very dim film - not indexed so did not spend a lot of time on it.

Daniel C. Mellus and my Henry Jr. were involved in a number of land transactions. A couple of the deeds reference "Daniel C. Mellus of Sacramento, California" or "of Volcano Diggings California". Another document Joseph Mellus of Calaveras County, CA appoints Asa Hutchings his attorney and Daniel C. Mellus is a witness. They were obviously all over the gold fields of CA.

Another interesting thing I found in deed records concerned Damariscove Island. My Henry Mellus bought from Abner & Betsy Stetson 1/2 of the island for \$1760. on 13 May 1851. On the same day he sold the same portion of the Island to Nathaniel Bryant for the same amount. What was that about, I wonder????

*and again she writes:*

The possibility is good that Daniel and Joseph were in fact brothers, both siblings of my Henry Jr. Henry Sr. and Mary Stephens had a son Daniel born 25 Mar 1812 in Hallowell, Lincoln, Maine. That makes him the right age to be the Daniel C. on the *Damariscove*. (In a later e-mail she suggests that Daniel C. Mellus may have returned to Maine, living with his sister at the time of the 1860 census).

*and, on the death of Joseph and Elmira Mellus:*

I found them on

1. <http://www.sfgenealogy.com/>. They are extracted from San Francisco Call Newspaper Vital Records 1869-1899. I found the following:

Joseph Mellus Died in 1880 Age 73 1880D-2994

Elmira Mellus Died in 1877 Age 70 1877D-2511

## Information Relating to the Damariscove's Wreck at the Umpqua

*Professor Stephen Dow Beckham writes in response to Rhea's request for informaton:*

19 September 2005,  
Lewis & Clark College, Portland, OR

Congress created the Umpqua District and Customs House on 20 May 1852. It funded the post of collector at \$1,000 per year. The first customs house was that at Astoria, established in 1850. Colin Wilson of Washington County, Pennsylvania, gained appointment as first collector for the Umpqua District. He posted his bond in June, 1851, some eleven months before Congress finally authorized the post. Wilson arrived at the Umpqua River in October, 1851.

Discovering that Scottsville/Scottsburg was some twenty miles up the river from the ocean, Wilson, on his own initiative, established his office in Gardiner City on the lower estuary. The promoters of Umpqua City, a site approximately three miles farther downstream on the North Spit, were irate that Wilson did not open his office in their fledgling town. Thirty-eight of them filed a protest with the Department of Commerce.

Wilson's tenure proved miserable. He was lonely. The nearest place to get funds was in San Francisco. He failed as a woodchopper. By the date of his resignation on 31 December, 1852, Wilson had collected no customs duties and spent all of his own funds. Addison Crandall Gibbs succeeded Wilson in 1853 and held the post for six years. The history of these misadventures appears in Beckham, *LAND OF THE UMPQUA: A HISTORY OF DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON* (1987), pp. 183-184.

The National Archives, Washington, D.C., holds the correspondence of Wilson and Gibbs in RG 56, Records of the Treasury Department, letters received files. On October 1, 1851, Wilson submitted a "List of Vessels," "Masters," and "Departed" dates for ships plying the Umpqua bar. These included:

<u>Ship Name</u>	<u>Captain</u>
Brig McClland	Burgess
Brig Emily Farnum	Woods
Steamshp Sea Gull	Tichenor
Schooner Ortolon	Racliff
Brig Almira	Gibbs, A.
Brig Fawn	Bunker
Schooler Ortolon	Racliff
Brig Orchilla	Elliot
Steam Prop Chesepeake	Hasty

I note that the DEMARISCOVE, a schooner, grounded at the Umpqua after leaving Coos Bay during the last week of June, 1854. The best coverage is in the *UMPQUA GAZETTE*, June 30, 1854, page 2, column 1. The wreck of the ship is covered, as you

note, in this same newspaper on 23 December 1854, p. 3, column 4. I know nothing further about Captain Whippy.

Some folders of customs house correspondence are included in the Addison C. Gibbs papers at the Oregon Historical Society. Gibbs later gained election as governor of Oregon. I believe that Gibbs retained the customs house location in Gardiner City. Umpqua City languished until the U.S. Army established Fort Umpqua at the site in July, 1856. It served as an army post site until 1862 and also became the location of the Umpqua Sub-Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1856-59. Beckham's LONELY OUTPOST: THE ARMY'S FORT UMPQUA and a consultant study that included an archaeological and historical survey of the Umpqua North Spit, ca. 1986, speak to more of the history of Umpqua City.

An early Umpqua estuary chart, ca. 1854, surveyed and engraved by the U.S. Coast Survey shows a shipwreck on the right (or east) bank of the river near the harbor entrance. This chart at NA II in College Park, MD., has an inked entry noting the location of the first Umpqua Lighthouse that toppled into the estuary during the great flood of 1862. The wreck may have been the hull of the BOSTONIAN lost on 1 October 1850 or that of the CALEB, CURTIS, ROANOKE, ACHILLES, NOOSA or the ALMIRA--all lost near the Umpqua entrance in the early 1850's.

Captain Bunker was commander of the ill-fated FAWN that wrecked at the mouth of the Siuslaw in 1857. See Beckham, "The Foundering of the FAWN: First Shipwreck in Western Lane County," SIUSLAW PIONEER, 1970, pp. 5-7.

Lafayette Balch was a close friend of George Gibbs who lived at "Chet-lah," a land claim near Steilacoom. A Harvard-educated attorney, cartographer, historian, linguist, and sometime collector of customs at Astoria in the 1850s, Gibbs was the subject of my doctoral dissertation.

### *More from Professor Beckham*

20 September 2005, Tuesday, Lewis & Clark college

2. Since Bunker was in and out of ports-of-call on the coast of Oregon in the 1850s, it might be that there are two men of the same surname, but I could argue against that just as readily.

3. Frances Fuller Victor, author of Bancroft's HISTORY OF OREGON, Vol. 2, 1848-1888, noted: "In January, 1854, the ship Demar's Cove from San Francisco entered Coos Bay with a stock of goods, bringing also some settlers and miners, and in the same month the Louisiana, Captain Williams, from Portland took a cargo into Coos Bay for Northup & Simonds of that town, who established a branch business at Empire City.

5. I know of no other source for the UMPQUA GAZETTE than the one with the ink blot for article about the grounding of the DAMARISCOVE.

*Professor Beckham continues: 22 September 2005*

The OREGON SPECTATOR of 27 January 1852 printed notice that the DEMERESCOVE had left Cape Flattery for the Queen Charlotte Islands to rescue survivors of the GEORGE ANNE [GEORGIANA], Capt. Balch, master.

This note was printed at p. 3, col. 4. I do not have this newspaper on microfilm, but it is held at, I believe, at the Bancroft and the Oregon Historical Society.

Bancroft's HISTORY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA gave account at p. 344 of the GEORGIANA's outfitting at Olympia in November, 1851, stop at Neah Bay and encounter with Capt. Balch of the "DEMERAS COVE," and noted that Balch was on an oil and fur-trading expedition. Details of this event were gleaned from pp. 9-19 of Charles E. Weed's "Queen Charlotte Island Expedition," a manuscript at the Bancroft Library. This is MS P-C 29 and is described in the Hammond and Morgan GUIDE TO THE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, vol. 1.

Stephen Dow Beckham  
beckham@lclark.edu

*Prof. Beckham (one more time): 22 September 2005, Lewis & Clark College*

When you complete this project and gain publication, please let me know. There are not many who work with these records, but I am one who has had long interest in these matters.

A sidebar: when THE FAWN foundered at the Siuslaw River she carried personnel and supplies for Fort Umpqua, the U.S. Army post at Umpqua City. Among the passengers were Dr. and Mrs. Edward Perry Vollum. I used the Vollum photo album at George Eastman House for illustrations. He and Lt. Lorenzo Lorrain purchased a camera and took the first photographs on the coast of Oregon in 1858-59. Their subjects included the fort, Indians, and military personnel. The Lorrain album is held by the Oregon Historical Society. Unfortunately, there are no photos of shipwrecks at the Umpqua River.

I have the survey chart of the Umpqua River, ca. 1854, but have not put my hands on it as yet. I have a massive collection with more than 200 archive boxes of correspondence, research notes, and other debris from decades of work. I can usually find things with ease--as when I looked for the Colin Wilson materials. The chart, however, has escaped me at the moment.

Your notes persuade me to look tonight at THE GOLD HUNTERS OF CAPE HORN, a rare volume about Americans who sought gold in Tierra del Fuego. I have a good collection of volumes at that part of the world, including the diary of Richard Williams, catechist to the Fuegian Mission (1854).

## British Brigantine *Una* crew rescue update

On October 28, 2005, Ms. Kathy Mallett, Archivist, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada reported the following regarding our request for documentation of the *Damariscove's* rescue of the *Una's* crew:

A copy of the ship's history was attached showing that the Master in 1851/1852 was William Mitchell. On December 25, 1851, the *Una* drove on the shore of Neah Bay near Cape Flattery in a gale during the night. (Previous accounts have given the date as December 26, 1851 but this was evidently the date that the natives attacked and burned the ship, see article below.) From the official Hudson's Bay Company report of January 2, 1852.. (in part). American sloop *Susan Sturges* bound from San Francisco to Nisqually delivered officers and crew, along with a cargo of furs and gold from Queen Charlotte Islands, to Fort Victoria. This sloop was not noted in anything we had read concerning the rescue of the crew until the response came from the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. Also mentioned is an eight page article entitled "Gold on the Queen Charlotte Island" by Bessie Doak Haynes, describing the ship wreck. In the Archives' search file: UNA there are two letters cited. The first is dated January 3, 1852 and the second is dated March 16, 1852.

The Oregon Spectator of 27 January 1852 (. (See "Difficulty with the Indians at Cape Flattery..." below) contains a news item on the *Una* crew and passenger rescue. It mentions that the people aboard the "schooner" *Susan [Sturgis]* were witness to the destruction of the *Una* and attempted capture of her crew and passengers. The article goes on to state that the *Una's* complement were rescued and returned to Fort Victoria by the United States Expedition to Queen Charlotte's Island, evidently the official name of the *Georgianna* rescue attempt commissioned by Moses.

We have found the reference in The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Volumes XXXI : History of Washington, ... volume 31 pg. 57 which gives the description of the rescue of the *Georgianna* crew and passengers and provides the information on the *Damariscove's* part in the rescue of the *Una's* passengers and crew. The information is consistent with the newspaper article in the Oregon Spectator but not with the information in the official record in the Hudson's Bay Company's archive. According to Bancroft, the *Una's* complement were rescued by the *Damariscove* and taken by that vessel to Fort Victoria.

The evidence below from the *Oregon Spectator* and HBC Archives, Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg, Canada removes all doubts about this event.

# Oregon Spectator.

OREGON CITY.

Tuesday, January 27, 1852.

O. P. Culver, Associate Editor.

The message of President Fillmore, published in full in to-day's paper, will, we trust, be attentively perused by every citizen of our territory. A message from the President of the United States is at all times a document of universal interest; and always commands very general perusal. On account of the exciting topics that have been under discussion in the States since the adjournment of the last Congress, and the dissensions and difficulties that have occurred; not only by the resistance so often shown to the enforcement of certain of the laws of the land, but by the organization of military forces in the heart of our country, to be used against a foreign power contrary to law, and treaty stipulations; and the course pursued by the President in regard to all these difficulties, this message, we believe we risk nothing in saying, was looked for with more anxiety and universal interest, than any similar production for many years. The uniform course pursued by the President in carrying out the laws, as found upon the statute book, regardless of the unprincipled combination of adverse factions, or of the strengthening or weakening of party ties, cannot fail to receive the hearty and willing commendation of all true lovers of their country. The message is long, but the facts contained in it are numerous, and the recommendations brief, and to the point. It touches upon a great variety of topics, more than any message within our recollection; and is more free from partisan allusions. The length of the message is not caused by the elaborate pettifogging of any favorite measure; but from the multiplicity of subjects contained in it, all being touched briefly, and without any unnecessary words. The notice taken in the message of the "vast development" of the interests of the United States on this coast, "in California and Oregon," will convince all our citizens that although situated remote from the seat of the general government, the importance of our resources is fully appreciated, and that our wants will not be overlooked. From the general tone of the press, we infer that this message has been received with more general favor in the States, than any preceding one for many years. It is, in our estimation, eminently deserving of a like reception here, and we confidently

## Difficulty with the Indians at Cape Flattery—a Vessel Burned and the Passengers Robbed!

Information has been received by Gov. Gaines, from Olympia, of an attempt having recently been made by the Cape Flattery tribe of Indians to murder the passengers and crew of a vessel belonging to the H. B. Company, which was stranded on that coast on the 25th of December last. We are furnished with the following extract from the letter received:

OLYMPIA, Jan. 7th, 1852.

"I am informed by the passengers and officers of the schooner "Susan," which has just anchored at this port, that on the 26th of December, while off Cape Flattery, they witnessed the robbing and burning of the H. B. Co's. brigantine "Una," by the Cape Flattery tribe of Indians. The vessel, it seems, was stranded on the 25th of Dec., and the passengers (among them three ladies) with their baggage sent ashore, when they were immediately beset by the savages, who made an attempt to murder them, but did not succeed. The passengers fled, leaving all their baggage. They were rescued by the United States expedition to Queen Charlotte's Island, and brought back to Victoria.

"There are nearly three hundred Indian warriors in this tribe, and whose treachery knows no bounds. Since this success, their presence at that point, where all vessels, both American and English, seek shelter from storms, render it highly necessary, for the safety of our commerce, that this matter should be investigated and these offenders chastised. In that vicinity there are large tribes who are in great confusion. They are only deterred from joining in a general outbreak, by fear of punishment, and I need not state what the result will be if this matter is allowed to pass unnoticed. There is much excitement manifested here, and we feel ourselves unsafe. This part of the country is almost drained of its male population, by the expedition which has lately volunteered to go to Queen Charlotte's Island, on account of the disaster that has occurred there. The Indians know this, and they also know that nearly all the soldiers have gone, who were our greatest source of safety, and their greatest dread."

The above account of the unsafe situation of the inhabitants in that quarter, is but another proof of the great error committed when the troops were requested to be withdrawn from this Territory. Our frontiers are now left unprotected, and the inhabitants compelled to leave their industrial pursuits, in order to beat back the large tribes of Indians by which they are surrounded, and maintain their settlement in the country. We sincerely hope relief will be furnished without unnecessary delay, from the present precarious situation of our border settlements.

# Hudson's Bay Company Correspondence pertaining to *Una*'s wreck

NO. 691 P. 1

1852-70, 08 Aug 95T for Arnold Clark

I Extract from a letter from Chief Factor James Douglas to Archibald Barclay (Secretary to the Hudson's Bay Company in London), dated Fort Victoria, January 3, 1852.

"The American, Sloop *Susanna* bound from San Francisco to Mesqually, but last at Neah Bay, called at this Port yesterday to land Captain Mitchell with the officers and crew of the Company's Brigantine *Una* which unfortunately drove on shore with two anchors down, on Neah Island, near Cape Flattery, in a gale of wind, during the night of the 25th Decr.

The Master of the *Susanna* ('Hoffington') then lying at anchor in Neah Bay very kindly and promptly rendered every possible assistance to the crew of the *Una* when he received on board the *Susanna*, with all her cargo, consisting of Fur and Gold ore from Queen Charlottes Island, so that fortunately no lives were lost and none of the cargo. The vessel with her stores and rigging became a prey to the Indians who either from accident or design, set her on fire and she was burnt to the waters edge, before the party left Neah Bay; there was otherwise however, no hopes of saving her, as she was forced among the rocks, and lay nearly dry at low water.

Captain Mitchell has duly noted his sea protest and all the documents connected with the recovery of the Insurance, will be drawn up, and transmitted, as soon as possible for the information of the Committee.

I feel great obligation to Captain Hoffington for his kindness to our people, and have paid him the sum of \$700 dollars, which he charged for the detention of the *Susanna*; a large sum considering the circumstances; but moderate compared with the loss the Company would have sustained had the cargo also fallen into the hands of the Indians.

The Indians of Cape Flattery with a few honorable exceptions behaved very badly on the occasion, having robbed and maltreated some of the *Una*'s crew, who landed soon after she was cast on shore.

This disaster has deprived us of a useful vessel at a season, when her services are greatly needed ...".

(H.B.C. Arch. A.11/78)



FROM 3039355756

II Extract from a letter from James Douglas to Archibald Barclay, dated Fort Victoria, January 10, 1858.

"I herewith transmit duplicate of my letter of 3rd Inst.

I have since discovered that in the hurry of preparing that letter for the proximate departure of the Mail; I was led into a mistake which I now beg to correct, in respect to the name of the American vessel by which the [his] officers and crew were brought to this place. Her name is the Susan Sturges, and not the Susanna as stated in my letter.

I also informed you that none of the Cargo was lost, according to the first report I received, but it now appears by the Invoice that 194 Gallons of Oil and 1300 Bushels of Potatoes were left behind when the wreck was abandoned; all the other cargo however was saved."

(H.B.C. Arch A.11/73)



From the collections of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada with permission.

Correspondence Related to Rescue of Sloop *Georgianna* & Brigantine *Una*

Fort Simpson, 8th January 1852.

James Douglas Esquire,

Dear Sir:-

I have to inform you of the arrival at this place of the schooner *Damaris-Cove* Capt. Balch the day before yesterday direct from Fort Victoria. She came for information as concerning the crew of the *Georgianna* lately wrecked on the *J.C.I.* She leaves this to-day for the wrecked people at "Gumshiwaa. Four of the *Georgianna's* company arrived here on the 1st December last in a canoe. I have victualled and clothed them to this date

Schooner  
DAMARIS-COVE  
CAPTAIN BALCH  
Rescue by  
THE  
Georgianna  
1852

- 8 -

They have now come on board the schooner and will proceed to Sitka by her. They stood a watch part of the time they were here, and I thought proper not to change them with the few articles of supplies they received from us at this place. Lieut Dement offered to return them. I have given Captain Balch two barrels of salt fish for his crew. A man on board the *Damaris-Cove* "Jackson" who was formerly on board the steamer tried all in his power to make the Indians here believe that none of the company's vessels would come here again, for three years and told our men the same. I went on board the schooner and complained to Capt. Balch of Jackson's conduct. I also told Jackson that he had better take care of himself or I would give him some trouble. The crew of the schooner are in a most disorderly state, they had a fight on board yesterday and struck the Captain several times. I was an eye witness to it. The Lieutenant wishes the voyage to an end. I was grieved to hear of the loss of the "Una" and the seizure of the *Beaver* and *Mary Dare*. This will cause much derangement in our affairs the coming spring, indeed I do not see how you are to replace the vessels in time for business.



I hear that the steamer may possibly be released if not, the loss of her services the coming season will be immense. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing her cast up here however in the course of six weeks. Matters and things go on here as usual. Men and Indians all quiet. The trade however is not near so good as former years. We have a supply of biscuit on hand for steamer and hope soon to put it on board her. We are now putting up a new fence around the garden and new barber houses in the Fort.

Fort Simpson, 2th January 1852.

Lieut. Dement and Captain Balch,  
Schooner Damaris-cove.



Sirs:

I learn that your volunteers are in the habit of bringing spiritous liquors on shore and dealing it out among the Indians, a thing not allowed in any part of the Honorable H.B. Company's or Russian American company's posts, this place in particular, spirits was served out last night and I saw some in a bottle in an Indian lodge this day. I have to request that a stop will be put to it, or otherwise evil consequences may ensue.

I am sirs,

Your Obedient Servant,

W.H. McNeill.

Fort Simpson, 26th August 1852.

The first of the above correspondence between W.H. McNeill, Chief Trader and head of the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Simpson and James Douglas, Chief Factor and at the time Governor of Vancouver Island and later British Columbia, describes the "United States Expedition to the Queen Charlotte Islands" sent to rescue the crew of the sloop *Georgianna* in December of 1851. As can be determined from the letter, the American crew and volunteers were not on their best behavior when calling on their British neighbors.

The second letter provides evidence that the Americans of European origin in many ways deserved what they got at the hands of the Native Americans and were plainly just as savage as the people they labeled as such. Unfortunately it was the reputation of Lafayette Balch and his vessel that was besmirched by the rowdy behavior of their American armed volunteer force. McNeill's letter seems to indicate that Balch was accosted by some of the men on board the *Damariscove*, suggesting that he may have tried to impose some discipline.

*Copies of correspondence from E.243/17 Letterbook, Fort Simpson, November 1851-November 1855 W. H. McNeill, Chief Trader; Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, with permission.*

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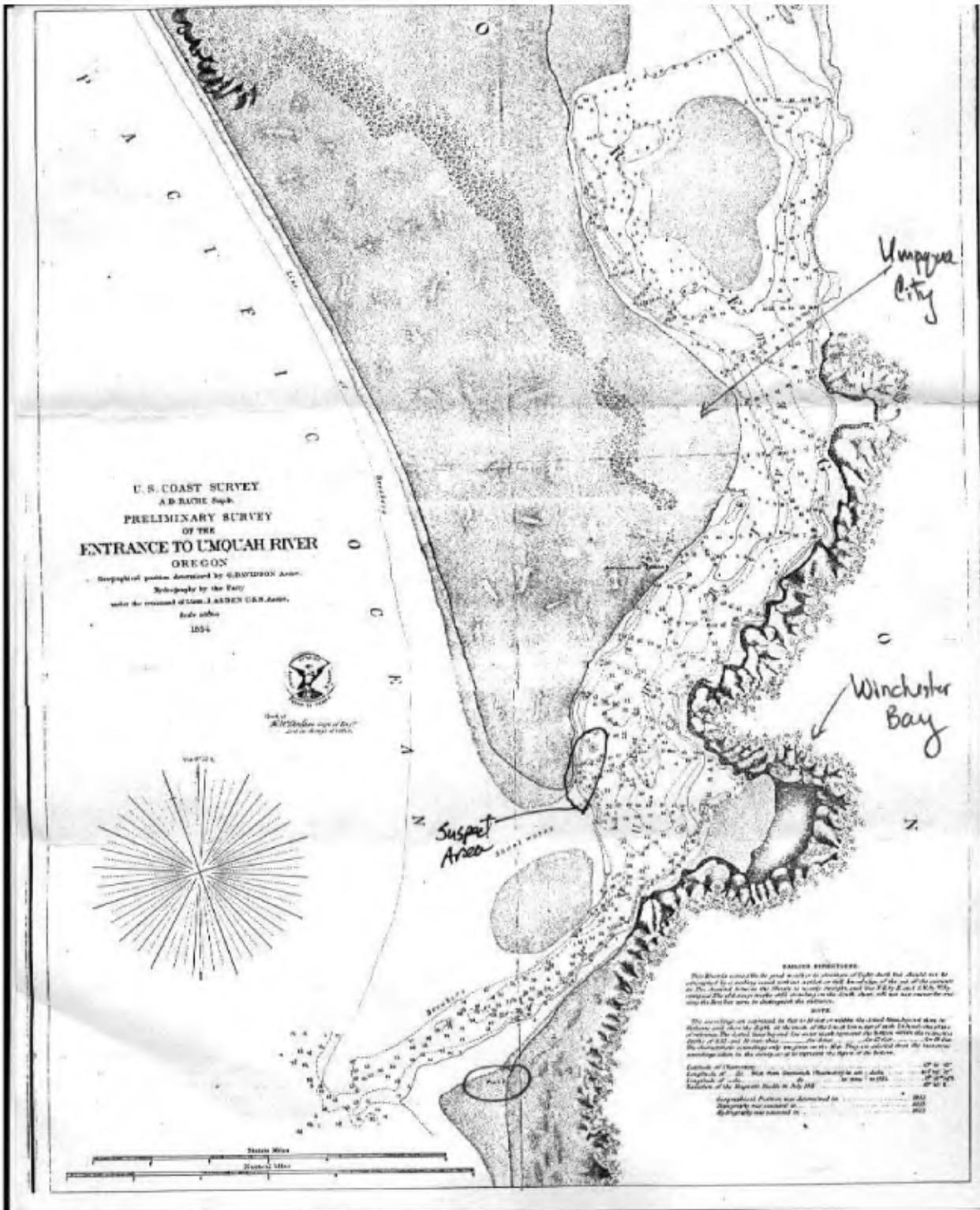
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# 1854 Map of Umpqua River Mouth



Showing suspected area of the Damariscove's grounding