

Maritime History on the Internet: Whaling Extracts

by Peter McCracken



This issue's column will focus on whaling before the 20th century. Many sides of current whaling controversies can be found at sites like Greenpeace (<http://www.greenpeace.org>), the International Whaling Commission (<http://www.iwcoffice.org/>), or the World Council of Whalers (<http://www.worldcouncilofwhalers.com/>), but I'll review free resources that explore issues surrounding 18th- and 19th-century whaling, primarily from the United States.

Several museums in the US have strong web sites devoted to whaling; the most comprehensive is likely The Kendall Institute, at http://www.whalingmuseum.org/kendall/index_KI.html. The Kendall Institute is now a part of the New Bedford Whaling Museum (<http://www.whalingmuseum.org>), and together with the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, at <http://www.nps.org/nebe/>, they provide a valuable collection of resources. Kendall's "Overview of American Whaling," at http://www.whalingmuseum.org/kendall/amwhale/am_index.html, and their "Whaling—An Introductory Bibliography" at http://www.whalingmuseum.org/kendall/amwhale/am_index.html, are especially useful. A personal site at <http://www.whalecraft.net/Links.html> links many other whaling-related museums. Another interesting personal site is Amy Stimac's "America's Whaling History" at <http://web.simmons.edu/~stimac/project/>; this graduate school project focuses on American whaling before 1925.

When doing research on specific aspects of whaling, consider the Whaling Collection Archives at the New Bedford Free Public Library, at www.ci.new-bedford.ma.us/SERVICES/LIBRARY/library2.htm, click "Whaling Voyages Crewlist" which contains a searchable database of crews, vessels, ports, and more. The Whalers' Heritage Project at <http://www.explorenorth.com/>

whalers/ is a growing site with crew and ships lists, plus a forum for discussing and researching issues. (Note: you need to register and provide personal data in order to post messages.)

For southern Pacific whaling, Tasmania's Natural Resources Management Commission posts information about shore-based whaling from Tasmania at www.parks.tas.gov.au/historic/swhaling/index.html, while the site at <http://www.hawkesbay.com/places/mahia/whaling> describes off-shore whaling by Maori and Europeans in New Zealand.

The State Library of Tasmania has a fantastic collection of images at <http://images.statelibrary.tas.gov.au/>. Use the "Search" box to search by various terms, or click on "Explore by Subject," then 'W', to get to their many whaling-related images.

Of course, the best way to learn about 19th-century whaling is to read *Moby-Dick*. If you don't have a copy lying around, or want to search the full text of the book online, you can find it and many other free titles at Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.net>. The Melville Society, at <http://www.melville.org>, provides a central point for Melville studies online.

Finally, as an example of what the Internet can offer from people who deeply care about an esoteric subject, take a look at <http://www.netstrider.com/documents/ambergris/>, for all you could want to know—and more—about ambergris, "the fragrant raw material for perfumery produced in the gut of the sperm whale."

Suggestions for other sites worth mentioning are welcome at shipindex@yahoo.com. See <http://www.shipindex.org> for a compilation of over 100,000 ship names from indexes to dozens of books and journals. †††

National Maritime's Selection of "Great Reads"



A MOST FORTUNATE SHIP
A NARRATIVE OF OLD IRONSIDES
by Tyrone G. Martin

A fascinating book that gives shape to the men who sailed this famous ship. "This marvelous book is a must for naval history buffs, for readers who love the era of iron men and wooden ships, and for anyone interested in the period of history when American courage and ingenuity seemed to succeed in almost every endeavor the country attempted." Book-of-the-Month Club

HC: \$40.00

THE SCHOONER PILGRIM'S PROGRESS
A VOYAGE AROUND THE WORLD 1932-1934
by Donald C. Starr



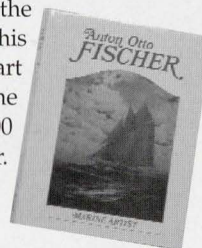
This book is more than just a seafaring adventure. It is one sailor's reminiscences of an era gone by, never to be recovered, as viewed through the eyes of an optimistic young man with the entire ocean to explore and all the time in the world in which to do it.

HC: \$16.00

ANTON OTTO FISCHER, MARINE ARTIST
by Katrina Sigsbee Fischer and Alex A. Hurst

A comprehensive and loving look at the artist's life and work as seen by his daughter. Beautifully produced on art paper with many personal photos, the artist's preliminary sketches and 200 of his finished works, 103 in full color.

HC: \$40.00



SHIPS AND MEMORIES
by Bill Adams

Much of Adams' work is in this one volume. It includes his great epic *Ships and Women* of his early life and his time on the *Silberhorn* at the turn of the century. Memories include many of the letters and articles which he wrote in retrospect long after his tragic severance with the sea, besides the most renowned of his stories and several of his poems.

HC: \$25.00

