

Saband Mower Sanborn's Island April 2nd 1849

Dear Mother Brothers and Sisters

Once more a favorable opportunity is presented that I may have the pleasure of addressing you through the means of paper and ink. It is true I have no much news to write, but I will make my scroll as interesting to you as I can. In the first place I will speak of my health which has been very good and so is at present. I need not speak of any wishes concerning you, for you most undoubtedly know what they would be. I heard very melancholy news a ^{than a month} or two better, since, which has caused ^{me} to be very unhappy ever since. It is the death of Mrs Baker my success mother, she I considered one of my near friends. In February, ^{me} sailed at the Swan Islands, and lay in port with the ship the Harpout. It was Capt Manwarring that brought me the news of Mrs Baker's death, I have tried to think that he was mistaking, but he assured me that he was correct.

I was much disappointed at receiving no letters, but on hearing of Mrs Baker's death I was not at all surprised about the letters, for Capt Manwarring told me that she died ^{on} the morning that he sailed. Little did I think on the morrow that I parted with friends dead under her roof, that it was the last time that I should ever see her. She now uncertain is ~~of~~ life

I left several letters at the Western Islands to be conveyed
to the U.S. One I directed to Mother one to Luc
one to Charles and one to Benjamin. We had a very
^{pleasant} passage from home to the Islands. But since
then we have met with very unfavorable wind and
weather. We have had head winds, calms, and several
of the most violent gales of wind that I ever witnessed.
We took on the 5th of November ^{at the Cape of Good Hope} out of the most terrific
gales of wind or hurricane, ^{accompanied with most tremendous sea} that I have ever experienced.
In which the Old Bachelor proved herself to be a
most valuable sea boat. Every mast stood quivering and
reeling as though they hung by a single thread
ready to go to the board at ~~any~~ any moment.
The fair wheel fringed trembled and groaned.
fore & aft, from stem to stern and to her very
center. It seemed that her top must leave her
bottom and she must founder. The gale lasted
48 hours. We have met with so much unfavorable
weather that we are rather dejected. Consequently
we have ~~not~~ had much time to cruise for whales
but for what time we have cruised we have been
very successful we have taken three right
whales, which has made about 50 lbs of oil. That being
much better than most ships have done ^{that} sailed
last summer we have heard of only two that ^{had} taken
the amount of 50 lbs the other part like the
majority had taken nothing. The whaling in the
south seas is about well up whales diminishes
and the weather grows more fearful.

If we find the whaling good in the Seas of Japan
& Okhotsk. We I think stand a very good chance
to make a one season voyage. I ^{don't} almost look
of these long voyages. And I think that if I live
to return that this will be my last voyage a
whaling. The voyages have got to be so very long
that they are very tedious. This season seems already
on age although it is not ^{half} performed.
I suppose it would be interesting to you to hear how
I get on with my official duties here. Well as I ~~the same~~
stated before we have taken three whales. We
have struck only four three of which I struck
myself and captured two Capt Benjamin has
~~the~~ struck ~~and~~ captured one Mr Benjamin saw
us get. I find although I have advanced ~~much~~
faster than common in the whaling business
that I can perform my duties as mate of a ship
and to laugh at them. They show this letter to
now but my most intimate friends. If you ^{do} to them
for the public will think that I am boasting of
my seaman ship & whaling propensities. I fear that I
think I will go a whaling tomorrow. I will not
promise certain I will ^{not} ~~not~~ get home and
see how matters are here. Yours Stewart is well
and sends his respects to your abel. He often speaks
about his visits to Greenwich and would like to be
there again and take another cruise up to the north
and down to the paper mill. He proves to be as
good a boatster as I expected. This far the best boatster in the ship

Tender my kind regards to all of my inquiring
Friends
Yours & Brother
Belle

Belle

A B

We shall remain here only one day
so that I have to not much time to write
I shall write to Lucretia so you
must excuse the bad penmanship of these
letters & be sure well God bless
He protect you

Belle

Belle

page 57
The whale settled a few fathoms under water where
he remained for a few moments and then started with
great fury direct toward the ice running under me striking
Mr Benjamin's boat with great violence and contact with
mine unshipping my steering oar and ^{sweeping} all of ^{the} oars off one
side of my boat. I collected my oars as soon as possible and
with a piece of towline refastened my steering oar. But by
this time the whale has taken Mr Benjamin's boat
and disappeared in the ice. I pulled a short distance under
the ice but saw no more of the whale. On my return
I saw another near the ice but deeming ^{it} use less to
fasten to him with only one line, as Mr Benjamin
lost his so I waited until the Capt arrived. I told him
what had happened and that there was another whale
near by and would be up presently. That I had waited
for him considering it of no use striking one of those
whales with one line. By the by these whales be have
altogether different from any other species of whales. They
resemble the right whale more than any other but are
different from them. When they are first struck they
sound very deep generally to the bottom, and can
to all appearance remain there as long as they
like without coming to surface to blow. I have
known them to remain under water an hour and a
half. Consequently they cannot be taken by our
boat where there is great depth of water, and not stabb
off soundings. I ^{have} seen some of them take nearly all three
of our lines their length being 50 fathoms ~~in length~~
When one boat gets fast the others go to him as quick as
possible the first that gets there binds his line

to the line that is fast to the whale and the next
to his, ~~and~~ The whale generally goes to the bottom remains
some time but when he again comes to the surface
he is very quiet for a short time then the floss boats
go on to him and with the lance kill him. They are
a singular whale and are found only in the polar seas,
After the Capt had arrived a whale made his appearance about
a half mile off, I pulled for him but he went down before
I got there, Capt Benjamin remained where ^{he} was, about the
time that my whale went down one came up within
a ship's length of ~~the~~ ^{the} boat, he waked for me
and then went on to him, I pulled away for him as
fast as I could but being some way from him and
having to skim the ice for there was plenty
when we then was, before I could reach him the
whale had taken ^{his} line, I went into the ^{ice} with the
hope that the whale would come up near me,
and to rather have a chance to kill him or to
the line that was fast to him whited I with some
down as there was a bog dry dirt to the line,
~~A mile~~ I went some way into the ice but
saw no more of that whale, I worked my way into the
ice about two miles where I came to a ridge of solid
boulders of ice that was impuncturable, but standing
on the rings of the boat I could see over this
ridge and there I saw ten or twelve large
Polar whales all lying motionless like logs upon
the water. Oh think of my anxiety and vexation
there with me my sight and before me lay plenty

of large whales but out of my reach
Yes this was a beautiful scene, The ice was of a clear
white, The day too was very clear, The sun's bright rays
shone so bright and clear upon the ice as to cause a reflection
that dazzled the sight, Wholly here & there the scene
was dotted with the huge ^{black} ~~mountain~~ ^{mountain} of the deep, and
carelessly ^{glazed} about on the ice was to be seen great numbers
seals making their solemn & usual noise,
Northward 150 miles distant we to be seen the Russian
mountains with their ~~low~~ snow & ice tops
glittering in the sun's bright rays, With their
lofty peaks ^{peering} peering to the very sky, and many
volcanoes pouring forth volumes of fire and smoke,
While the moan of the seals and the ice as it
rolled together by the force of the sea,
causing a continual rumbling sound imitating
that of distant thunder, This scene to the eye was
grand & sublime ^{but to the} ear awful dismal in the
extreme, I stood and gazed around pure amazed
and perfectly carried away with this scene, Obsorbed
in my own thought, For some time I was not conscious
of my position, My thoughts had wandered but whether
had they strayed ~~to my most sacred dead~~
friends, for Oh could they I thought but what
this beautiful scene the beautiful works of
the Almighty Supreme, many people might have
viewed this scene and saw nothing remarkable
in it so ever gave it a second thought, Perhaps
not one in ten that would have been struck with

its singular beauties a like Henry Stewart and
myself ^{the} seemed to be as sensitive of this scene as
myself. He was ^{the first} to break the silence by exclaiming is not
this grand & beautiful. This remark aroused me to my
situation. I looked around me once more and
upon my boat's crew. They altho a bold set of
young men seemed to tremble with fear, and
to look up to me as ~~tho~~ though they depended
entirely upon my self possession and judgment
as their leader & guide. Peril with danger on
every side the ice as it roared to & fro seemed each
moment to threaten the destruction of the boat.
Those was the proudest moments of my life.
After satisfying my curiosity I picked my way out
of the ice and returned to the ship. The remainder
of the day was spent in evening new lines
and repairing boats etc. The next morning at
sun rise found me at the mast head where I
remained about half an hour during that time
I saw at least fifty Polar whales and a good
distance from the ice. We lowered away but
did not have a chance to strike until about
noon. About noon struck a large Polar whale
and at two o'clock had him along side of the
ship and commenced cutting. Finished
cutting at 10, ~~that morning~~. Next morning we
lowered away for a whale at half past two o'clock
you may think it rather early rising but in those

Page 9
light north ^{the sun rises} ~~at 3 o'clock~~ at 3 o'clock & sets at 9
consequently there is day light to ^{be} seen the whole
24 hours at this time of the year. Before
the twilight is gone in the west it can be
seen in the east. And when the sky is clear
one can see to read coars print at any
time of night, that is on deck. As I was saying
we were clear of the ship before 3 o'clock
But a dreadful accident happened with us
that day by which we lost one of our best
men from the fore-castle, about an hour
after we towed the whale came up near
the Capt he went on and fastened to him
the whale struck at the same time breaking
several of his oars but hurting no one. And then
went down, I being nearer to him than the 2nd mate
pulled to him and bent my line to his. The 2nd mate
pulled off a short distance from us in the direction
that we supposed they ^{whale} would come up and
there lay on his oars. The ^{water} ~~water~~ but a
few moments when the ^{whale} came up directly
under his boat and striking very violently
at the same time. We heard the crash and
saw a great quantity of white water and
several ~~pieces~~ broken oars flying in
the air. And then all was still again.
I came to the conclusion that ^{the} boat was not
stove that the crash we heard was the breaking
oars. But the next moment Mr Benjamin's

700^{lbs} at But I heard of her the last of the season with
1100^{lbs}, ~~that~~ I heard of the Hellsport at the
same time with 100^{lbs}, I had like to have
forgoten to tell you of an excursion we had
on the coast of Russia, some time in August
we were cruising a-tune that ^{coast} party near the land
And supposing that the whales must be close
in shore as we could not find them off shore
One pharant morning capt. Benjamin requested
that I should take two boats and pull in shore
(the ship being about twelve miles from the
land). To ascertain whether there was any
whales there or not. Well in I went I saw
three whales a coming very quick to the southwest
I gave chase but could not come up with
them one so at night pulled back to the
ship next morning went in shore with
three boats but saw no whales. The sea being
very smooth we went on shore a land upon
landed in one of the pharant's best valleys that
I ever saw. It seemed a very refreshing everything
~~so~~ looked green and growing thickly. The ~~sea~~
valley was bounded with very high and ragged
mountains. We saw no people but saw
several Bears some were black and others
a sort of yellow or brown color. Returned on board
at night and bore away from the bay.

Lahaina Mookie Sandwich Islands,

Dear Mother Brothers & Sisters

November 1st 1849.

And other opportunity is permitted that I may address you by letter, And praying that this letter may find you all enjoying the best of health and prosperity I take my pen to address you, as for my own health I have never enjoyed better, ^{than} I ^{have} not lost a single whatek on deck since I sailed from home.

You must make this letter answer for all of you as I have not much time to write neither have I much news that would be interesting to you, I can think of nothing that would be ^{very} interesting, so in order to write something of a letter I give you a brief account of our cruise in the Cohetok Sea, when we sailed from here it was our expectation to take oil enough to send us home in one season. But I ^{am} sorry to have to inform ^{you} that our anticipations have not been realized, altho we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have improved every moment for what time we have had to take oil, The whaling was very good indeed for what time it lasted, But its duration was very short, For the two last seasons there has been so many ships cruising in that sea that the whaling has become very bad, This season there has been from six to seven ships cruising from the middle of May to the twenty fifth of September, in the Cohetok, and the general average of three oil is from six to eight hundred barrels, and out of this ^{number} of ships we have heard of only one that has taken as much oil as the Shepherd did, she have now about fifteen hundred barrels,

On the 2nd of April 1879 we sailed from the Sandwich Islands,
Round the Sea of Okhotsk. On the 11th of May off Kamtschatka,
we took a right whale. On the 1st of June we entered through
Bussok Strait into the Sea of Sachalin or Ochotsk Sea.
Bussok Strait is a passage through the Corial Islands.
The Corial Isls. are a chain of islands extending from
the southern extremity of Kamtschatka to the eastern
extremity of Japan, separating the Sea of Sachalin or
Okhotsk from the North Pacific Ocean. After passing
this Strait we steered a Northward course bound to that
portion of the Sea off being in or near the 53rd Degree of
North Lat. & the 150th Degree East Long. Where we expected
to find plenty of Whales. On the morning of the 7th of June
about sunrise in Lat 57.10. Long 142.50. The men from
the mast head hailed the Deck with a report of three
she blows. Where away I how far off. Once I. Three points
of the weather low and away in the horizon. I
went below for a spy glass to take to the mast head
to ascertain more clearly what sort of a whale they
had raised. The moment that I arrived on deck the
mast head hailed again. That the horizon was full
of spouts ahead from four points of the leeward to
fore points off the weather bow. My heart sickened for
the truth flashed across my mind that instead of
whales it was ice that they had raised. The next
moment I was at the mast head. Think of my sorrow and
disappointment. On the very spot where we expected to
find plenty of whales and to fill our ship. The spot
for which we had spent ten months of time and taken

so much pains to arrive at. Through storms and cold to those
northern regions through Bussok Strait the Corial Isls
where but a few years ago navigators thought it more than
mens lives and ships were worth to undertake. Then I
instead of finding what we came after to see as far Northward
as the sight with the help of the glass could extend
nothing but one vast body or desert of field ice.
For my own part I was almost discouraged for no one knew
how long this ice was to remain in our way. Capt. Benjamin
had not yet turned out. I went below and told him what I had
discovered he appeared to be more discouraged than myself.
This morning we fell in with two ships the Mary and Flannery
of New Bedford it was the opinion of their captains that
the ice could not remain much after the 1st of June.
We coasted along the ice all day saw several fine back whales.
In the afternoon spoke the Ship Charles Phelps of
Stoughton. She was a baling had taken a Polar Whale
the day before. We lay near the ice all night but day
took a gale of wind. Considering it unsafe to remain
so long as the ice remained there. We bore away to the S. E.
with the intention of cruising along the coast of Kamtschatka
after running two or three days made the land. Cruised
for a few days along the shore but saw no whales.
One pleasant day lowered away the boats and went on
shore out of curiosity. We effected a landing in the
after noon saw several of the inhabitants. They appeared
civil and friendly. But we could not converse much
with them as we could not speak the others languages.

After spending a few hours on shore we returned on board of the ship, and bore away for the place where we had left the ice. On the 17th we again raised the ice ahead. In the afternoon as we were coasting along I was at the mast head I saw a whale blowing about a mile from and another very near the ice. I saw that there spout was altogether different from any whale that I had ever seen, I told Capt Benjamin that I thought they were Polar Whales he was of the same opinion. The whales were by this time about two miles apart, we lowered away the boats the Capt pulling for the whale farthest from the ice the 2nd ^{mate} and myself pulled for the one near the ice. ~~Agreed~~ before we separated that of either of us was fortunate enough to strike the whales that the ^{1st} boat was to set a signal that the others ^{mate} know and go to his assistance, we then separated the Capt charged us that if we did get fast and the whale should run into the ice to cut from him, as being towed into the ice the boats would be stove to pieces and the crew lost. I pulled to the ice on whale I saw the whale and soon up the 2nd ^{mate} done the same. After being in that position for near half an hour the ^{whale} made his appearance he was about a half a mile from me and very near Mr Benjamin. We both pulled for him I saw that with half a dozen good strokes with the oars that he would be on to the whale. I got out my signal to signalize the Capt, at that moment the boatman stood up for the whale and hurried two oars deep in his back.

Sept 15th On the 26th of September we left the Sea
of Coho^{la} bound ~~to~~ to the Sandwich Islands
The 26th was a pleasant day with a fine morning
gale. As we passed out through Anroa Strait
the Caribb Isles appeared beautifly the
most of them are volcanic some of them
have two and three volcanoes the fire
and smoke as it burst forth made
strang and beautiful appearance.
We had a very rough and to passage from
the sea to the Sandwich Isles had four
very heavy gales of wind, we had we were hurried
one of our men of the passage, He was taken
sick about the time we left the sea
and died of the 3rd of October, We arrived here
on the 30th of October, You must
excuse the bad spelling and impermanency
of this letter, for I am very much in haste
and have to write as fast as I can. Let
none but my most intimate friends see
this letter as I am rather ashamed of its
impermanency. Give my respects to all
enquiring friends, And tender my kind
Mr & Mrs Leonard and Mrs Andrews,
And to Mr Maples tell that when
I do ever come around that was
again that I shall be glad to
see that cart rope, that promised
him, And so fare you well, Yours &c
W. H. H.

A B this is, the third letter that
I have written to you since
I left home, I have likewise written
three to my Lucy,

N B The following I wish for
Charles or Andrew to have published
in the Norwich papers,

Shut up by a Polar whale on the 18th June
1849 in Lat 54.10 North Long 15 1.00 East Cohobok
sea Charles M Woodman alias Charles Marks
aged 19 years or thereabouts ~~at sea~~
~~at sea~~ at sea on board
of Barken Shepherd of Mystic, Ct.
and a native of New York, New York
papers please copy.

Died Oct 3rd 19 on board Barken Shepherd
of Mystic Ct at sea Lat 45.45 North Long 16 6.10 East
Thomas Woodman aged 19 years or
thereabouts a native of Middletown Ct.