

Journal on board

S.P.O. December 1871

Monday Dec 11th

Calm. there is nothing I think that a sailor dislikes so much as a calm. it makes one restless and uneasy while on deck and when below the motion of the ship is so different it is difficult to sleep. however tired we may be.

Tuesday Dec 12th

A strong breeze and very cold. two sails in sight. and a few humpbacks. land in sight. as in fact there is almost every day.

Wednesday Dec 13th

A strong breeze again today we were on the port tack all day and as the wind is usual - was south we were heading off shore.

Thursday Dec 14th

Put on the "off shore" tack and under double reefed top-sails. nothing in sight a strong breeze and cold enough.

Friday Dec 15th

No signs of better weather yet. and the mastheads in this weather are unpleasant. but I find myself growling about the weather again. so I'll jump in the bunk and read awhile then go to the land of dream.

Saturday Dec 16th

This is Chili in more senses than one but for all that a stranger would say we were all taking a vast deal of comfort which I suppose we are only but few of us know it. wet weather is not agreeable to any-ones feelings at all times.

Bark Alfred Gibbs

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Sunday Dec 17th

This morning we wore ship and now we are heading in towards land a light breeze from the south and three sails in sight.

Monday Dec 18th

A strong breeze. but pleasant for all of that. how smoothly and swiftly these days pass off. they are really pleasant. nothing to be seen.

Tuesday Dec 19th

A strong breeze this morning. I think we must be very near our old cruising ground the water is black and has a muddy look and almost every time we get on it we see whales. who knows but what I will get the next bounty?

Wednesday Dec 20th

All hands were called at six this morning to chase sperm whales. three boats lowered and pulled paddled and sailed until 1 o'clock then gave up the chase. we did not get very near them. three sails in sight.

Thursday Dec 21st

A pleasant day indeed. but not a trace of sperm whales could we see today. dullness "reigns supreme" here just now.

Friday Dec 22nd

A good breeze from the south and we on the Starboard tack going for that famous cruising ground of ours. several sails in sight no work. which of course don't bother me at all.

Saturday Dec 23rd

A strong breeze all day we were on the Starboard tack heading in shore under double reefed top-sails and just at night we heard the cry of "land ho!"