

East of Japan Friday April 29th 1831
Remarks on board the ship, April 29th 1831

The Whales, it was then, and had been clear enough to see a whale five miles in any direction from the ship, for two hours past, I made sail and steered off before the wind, and on different courses, with every man at the mast head and on the yards, except the man at the helm and the Cook, and a country offered to the one that would see the whales first, but they were not seen, and where they went to, is more than I can account for. Some people have an idea that whales can remain under water for a great length of time which is the cause of their sudden appearance many times close to the ship in clear weather I have had sudden appearances, but never had so sudden a disappearance before. At sundown shortened sail and headed to the Eastward. Wind North Middle part moderate breezes with fair weather. Latter part moderate, wind North and S.W. with very pleasant weather. At daylight were ship and steered by the wind to the S.W. saw no kind of whale to day, neither were there any signs of a whale, ever being here. Latitude by Obs 29° 39' North. Long. by Obs 168° 50' East

Saturday April 30th

All these 24 hours light air and calm, with pleasant weather saw finbacks and porpoises. Latitude by Obs 30° 25' S. Long. by Obs 168° 30' East

Sunday May 1st

First & Middle part of these 24 hours light air and calm with pleasant weather. Latter part moderate breezes from S.W. steering to the westward weather pleasant saw a great many finbacks. Latitude by Obs 30° 53' S. Longitude by Obs 167° 45' E

Monday May 2nd

still pleasant weather, finbacks playing around the ship like porpoises, and to be seen as far as we could see in the horizon in all directions. At 5 p.m. discovered two right whale close to the ship, laying very still. My second officer being a right whale man, and very anxious to go off to have lance at one, I consented, not thinking he would kill her, he went up to the whale dove in his lance and set her to spouting thick blood, I should have taken her long, but it was too late, for before we could have got landed and along side it would have been dark, I saw the whale till it was

Coast of Japan Monday May 2nd
Remarks on board Monday May 2nd

quite dark, going to the S.E. very slow. Through the night light air and calm with fog and rain. Latter part, most of the time fresh breezes from South with rain. steering on the Eastern tack. Great deal of finbacks were seen in the water, I suppose that finbacks live on the same kind of food, they are very plenty, I should think that hundreds had been seen from the mast head, to day, although it has been very thick, and unable to see but a very short distance. At noon it cleared off so that we were able to Ob in the Lat 30° 52' Long. 167° 00' E

Tuesday May 3rd

Commenced with moderate breezes from the South with thick weather. At 1 p.m. wind veered to S.W. in a squall, steered South, water discoloured (which has been since yesterday morning) with a great many finbacks. Middle part steered S.E. under short sail. Latter part, wind North steered S.W. water blue and no finbacks. At 8 A.M. took a lunar observation which gives the Longitude 167° 37' East Latitude 29° 59' N

Wednesday May 4th

All these 24 hours moderate breezes from the Northward with fair weather, on the first part at 4 saw a sail on the weather bow, on the latter part saw three ships on a stem and two ahead. At 8 A.M. while japing spoke one of them, the Sarah Elizabeth of London, Capt William Swain, 7 months out, 150 t.b. oil. Latitude by Obs 29° 40' Longitude by Obs 168° 30' East

Thursday May 5th

All these 24 hours moderate breezes from North and S.W. with very pleasant weather for the season. steering on the Eastern tack, saw several shoals of porpoises, there were signs for whale last seen, but now all signs fail. Lat 29° 51' Long 169° 20' E

Friday May 6th

First part pleasant weather steered S.W. wind North. Middle part light air and calm. Latter part calm with pleasant weather on kind of spouting fish seen to day. Latitude by Obs 29° 30' Longitude by Obs 170° 25' East