

Off the Coast of Lower California

395 days out

Thursday January 12th 1854

Pleasant weather steering in toward Cape St. Lucas.
Two sail in sight. All hands on duty but there is but very little to do but they manage to keep the watch busy.

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Friday January 13th

The town of Cape St. Lucas in sight. At 2 P.M. lowered for blackfish but they were too wild for us. The ship Dover was to the windward of us and she ran down to help us but did not lower. As we were so near we concluded to have a game the Capt. went on board, we found the Dover was 2 seasons out Commissioned by Capt. Babcock New London had sent home all the oil 2600 bbls. Six of her men was sick in the blubber room. There sickness was occasioned by taking improper liberties with the Ladies at Cabin. The Ship Mechanic of Newport was to the windward and probably seeing that we was having rain down and joined us and we had an agreeable time till after 11 o'clock in the evening. Got about 3 bushels of large Irish potatoes from the Mechanic. One of our men by the name of Gethaway was seized with a fit of insanity while we was gone which lasted through the night and it was some trouble to keep him from doing himself much injury. Happy glad to say he is sane again this morning though not well but was required to do his duty on deck. At eleven lowered again for blackfish the Capt. steered into Manchester and fastened to a fish but drew I went in the starboard boat but could not catch a fish. Returned at dinner time.

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Saturday January 14th

Wind very light weather warm and pleasant. Working in toward the town which is not more than 10 miles distant. The watch busy doing their Saturday's work. The blacksmith making iron work for a fifth boat which will probably be on the cranes before we reach right whale ground. To day I finished a wash tub for Mrs. Ritchie for the tub and churn I may get I thank you in very broken English.

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Sunday January 15th 1854

Wind very strong from the Westward. At 1 P.M. a boat came from the shore with about 2 bbls of poor oranges and 3 or 4 cheeses and I believe they managed to sell and give away the worst of them by 5 o'clock when they left. We then stood off shore for the ship Dover which was edging toward us.

At dark Capt. Babcock came on board. He came in and had a look at all of our pictures which he complimented highly but showed great partiality to the Ladies and perhaps liked the Ladies quite well. At 10 he left taking 3 coils of Manila cordage. In the morning he was not in sight but a ship we call the Mechanic in sight sailing. Thus the time wears away our age increasing every day. Latitude 22.36 North.

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Monday January 16th

At 1 o'clock the ship Barnstable ran down and spoke us. Mr. and Mrs. Capt. Coon New Bedford 32 was out 6 1/2 sp. 1.80 wh. Our Capt. went on board and stayed till 10 o'clock. The B. sailed from Monday 1 o'clock shortly after we did and when about 3 days out the small pock broke out amongst the foremast hands but by taking proper care it did not get aft. They went directly to San Francisco and put the sick on shore where 3 died and to add to their trouble there was about a dozen men came from the shore armed with pistols and knives (in the absence of the Capt.) and went into the fore-castle and took 6 or 8 men and carried them ashore; the men was probably willing to go. The Officer of the deck asked them "by what authority they took the men from 35th the ship, one of them pointed a pistol at him saying here it is. They layed there about 6 weeks and finally came away with 8 men before the mast could get no more. They report several other ships about here with the same disease. I am glad to say that the Lady and 6 month baby is well and fat and cleaver. I did not see them this time as I did not go on board but I had the pleasure of seeing them in Mon. See particulars page 8 & 9. Latter part breaking out all 3 hatchways in the lower hold for the purpose of looking at and ascertain the quantity of bread and flour. Stowed our blackfish out in the main hold. Heading toward Cape St. Lucas.