

Journal at Sea December 18th 1844

Thursday hazy weather and strong breeze the crew of London in sight to leeward she is 5 years out 1800 ball sperm 900 of it she sent home in the afternoon we made Byron's Island about 4 p.m. Friday fair weather and fresh breezes the land about 10 miles distant the natives came off in their canoes to trade they brought coconuts hats cimet or to trade for tobacco the men were entirely naked having no covering on them whatever the women have a kind of cloth made of the bark of a tree round the middle they are the same color as sandwich islanders they stole the comb one god carried it ashore but two Europeans who lived ashore was aboard of us one of them went ashore with the captain the boat and got it again the man that stole it gave it up without any resistance only laughing at the trick as we landed in the boat hundreds of men women and children flocked around us carried the captain ashore on their backs then taking the boat carried it up clear of the surf two men being left to watch the boat the rest of us went to look round the first thing that met my eyes was a handsome young girl about fifteen entirely naked on seeing me approach she took to her heels and discouraged by the men made all sail in the chase of her and after running two or three times round the croud I overhauled her she seemed to be very much ashamed covered her face with hands and hanging down her head but I soon had to leave her and in turn had retreat as fast as possible for her mother an old squaw came bearing down upon me with all the fury of a mother eager to protect her child but on running away the girl came running after me and her mother giving up the chase we was left to pick up acquaintance with one another she seem a little shy but as soon as she see me stand still and look at her she came towards me touching my arms and rolling up my short sleeves feeling and looking earnestly at my skin she soon grew more bold and she began to speak with one another she had very handsome features tall and stout black eyes

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on the line with Wednesday fair weather and fresh breezes nothing in sight except porpoises 25th Thursday fair weather and light breezes nothing in sight except porpoises 26th Friday fair weather and light breezes nothing in sight busy this day stowing down oil 27th Saturday fair weather and light breezes raised at noon of sperm whales in the morning and lowered the boats and all three fastened but the starboard boat iron drawn and we lost the whale but the other boats got theirs and took them alongside and cut them in 28th Sunday fair weather and fresh breezes trying out until night when we had done nothing in sight this day except dolphins 29th Monday fair weather and strong breeze carrying double reef topsail nothing in sight this day 30th Tuesday fair weather and strong breezes under reef of foretopsail and whole main topsail nothing in sight all hands at work stowing down oil 1st Wednesday fair weather and strong breezes raised at noon of sperm whales lower the boats but the maine boat was capsized with carrying her whole sail the other boat having reefed then the larboard boat went to her assistance and the starboard boat went after the whales and fastened to one but the iron drew out and they went to windward so fast that we could not overtake them there was one island in sight called "battles island" but we stood for it and was out of sight of it before night February 1st Thursday fair weather and fresh breeze land in sight off the weather beam nothing else in sight except porpoises 2d Friday fair weather and fresh breeze nothing in sight except porpoises 3d Saturday fair weather and light breezes nothing in sight except porpoises 4th Sunday fair weather and light breezes nothing in sight this day 5th Monday fair weather and light breezes saw something in the after noon breaking on the weather bow but not make out what it was supposed it was sperm whales but they were going to windward very fast