

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Two Books of the Sea**

"Whale Ships and Whaling," by Albert Cook Church, is a delightful book to read if one is interested in the history of whaling either on the west coast or around New Bedford on the east coast.

In the day when New Bedford led the world as the center of the whaling industry, the harbor was filled with whaling ships returned from the seven seas, and the wharves were alive with whalers. Albert Cook Church recalls those times. Seafaring folk were his forebears; the New Bedford waterfront was his boyhood playground; inevitably his first interest was whaling.

With a knack for photography and with extraordinary forethought he deliberately set out to assemble a pictorial record of everything to do with the whaling industry. He photographed all that caught his interest and even cameras and equipment went to sea with ships' officers when he was unable to go himself. Many pictures were lost, but many came back to become part of the most remarkable assemblage of whaling photographs ever brought together. It is from this unique collection of over 49,000 negatives and prints that this record is made.

Drawing upon this mass of authentic material, the author here presents his life work in this first complete photographic record of whaling ships and whaling — the building and fitting-out of a new vessel, assembling her crew, her life at sea on the whale grounds, and her return to home port with a cargo of oil. Much of America's great past that had been apparently lost is here brought back to life.

Long out of print and now reissued, this genuine piece of Americana records the hundred years before the disappearance of the last whaling ship and presents a wealth of authentic material notable for its variety and sheer beauty — so says the introduction on the dust cover.

"Whale Ships and Whaling" has been presented to the Monterey History and Art Association by Charles B. Richmond Sr. of Monterey, for use in the proposed Maritime Museum. This book is considered an outstanding source of information on its subject, writes Mr. Richmond.

"Around the Horn to California in 1848" is another very good and fascinating book concerning the sea, by Jacob D. B. Stillman, from his journal and letters, and published by Lewis Osborne, Palo Alto, in 1967.

About a month before his 30th birthday, Stillman embarked for San Francisco as one of 97 passengers aboard the sailing ship Pacific. It is noteworthy that of their number, only one was a woman (wife of the ship's owner), and the average age of these travelers was only a little over 26 years. It took 194 days for the journey of the Pacific from the east coast to San Francisco. On shipboard with Stillman were several men who were to leave their footprints in California: Mark Hopkins, John Ross Browne and A. S. Marvin. Marvin became associated with Marvin & Hitchcock, booksellers of San Francisco.

Hopkins was the Hopkins of the Big Four whose name is perpetuated by San Francisco's Mark Hopkins Hotel. J. Ross Browne had been secretary to the Secretary of the Treasury, Robert J. Walker, in Washington. In 1848 he enjoyed a fine success with his etchings of a whaling cruise, published by Harpers. Browne was appointed stenographic reporter for the California Constitutional Convention in Monterey in 1849, and this happily netted him \$10,000.