

With respect to grandfather's whaling voyages I have included copies of several letters and extracts from an informal log he kept during the second one. These should give you a real feel for the arduous of the trips and the family interactions.

1st voyage- July 1866 aboard the Stella - Shipwrecked in Ochotsk Sea (Korea) and returned on the bark Jireh Perry to New Bedford the following summer. The Captain of the Stella and many of the crew were from Cataumet.

2nd voyage- July 1868 aboard the Morning Star into the South Pacific (See notes from log) Captain George Allen, Henry started as steersman for the first mate, Lewis. This voyage lasted four years and was moderately successful. Henry returned as third mate

3rd voyage- June 29, 1875 aboard Morning Star- Potter Captain, Lewis 1st Mate, Handy 2nd Mate. The Captain died before reaching Azores and Lewis and Handy moved up a notch. Returned summer of 1878 discouraged.

To understand the decision to abandon whaling we need to recognize that the industry was declining substantially and that there were pressing family concerns. I wish we had the letter uncle Clifton refers to in his note to Dad (attached), but can piece together some of the elements affecting the decision. Father, Joshua was seriously ill - incapable of physical activity (died 1887). Henry's only sibling, Jot was about to be married (He took a stab at homesteading in North Dakota, but died in 1884 leaving wife and 2 children). His father was significantly in debt. (His grandfather William had suffered reversals partly as a result of loss of ships during the War of 1812 and partly the result of legal squabbles over the schooner Elizabeth) He had also bought the homestead property from his older brother. Henry married Lydia Ellis Nov 28, 1872 and had two boys when he left on his 3rd voyage.

Note the position taken in Henry's letter to grandmother dated 4 Mar. 1878 that his decision is between coming home and going west - another voyage was not acceptable!