

SEAFARING WOMEN:
An Investigation of Material Culture for Potential Archaeological Diagnostics
of Women on Nineteenth-Century Sailing Ships

by

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April, 2014

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ABSTRACT

During the 19th century, women went to sea on sailing ships. Wives and family accompanied captains on their voyages from New England. They wrote journals and letters that detailed their life on board, adventures in foreign ports, and feelings of separation from family left behind. Although the women kept separate from the sailors as class and social status dictated, they contributed as nannies, nurses and navigators when required. Examination of the historical documents, ship cabin plans, and photos of those interiors, as well as looking at surviving ships, such as the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*, provided evidence of the objects women brought and used on board. The investigation from a gendered perspective of the extant material culture, and shipwreck site reports laid the groundwork for finding potential archaeological diagnostics of women living on board.

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of Women on Nineteenth-Century Sailing Ships

A Thesis/Dissertation

Presented To the Faculty of the Department of Department Name Here

East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

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April, 2014

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to my thesis director, Dr. Lynn Harris, for her support with this study. I am grateful to ECU faculty and staff of the History department, Dr. Brad Rodgers, Dr. Karen Zipf, Calvin Mires, and also Dr. Amy Mitchell-Cook of UWF for providing suggestions. I would especially like to thank the staffs of all the New England archives and museum libraries from Connecticut to Maine that I visited: Custom House Maritime Museum, Maine Historical Society, Massachusetts Historical Society, Rhode Island Historical Society, Lynne DeGiacomo of Cohasset Historical Society, Nathan Lipfert and Kelly Page of Maine Maritime Museum, Mark Procknik of New Bedford Whaling Museum, Cipperly Good and Kevin Johnson of Penobscot Marine Museum, Carolyn Marvin of Portsmouth Athenæum and Paul J. O'Pecko and Maribeth Bielinski of the G.W. Blunt White library at Mystic Seaport Museum, and shipwright Roger Hambidge at the shipyard for the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*. Also thanks to Laura Travis of Dittrick Medical History Center for photo permissions. Special thanks for the hospitality and encouragement from Emily Trower-Young and Lorraine Tamsky, and to the latter for telling me about the gimbaled bed. This research would not have been possible without my work with the NC Underwater Archaeology Branch, and the generosity of family and friends who continued to cheer me on during this endeavor.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CHS	Cohasset Historical Society, Cohasset, MA
CHMM	Custom House Maritime Museum, Newburyport, MA
MEHS	Maine Historical Society, Portland, ME
MMM	Maine Maritime Museum, Bath, ME
MAHS	Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA
MSM	Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Washington, DC
NBWM	New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library New Bedford, MA
NC UAB	North Carolina Underwater Archaeology Branch, Kure Beach, NC
PPL	Providence Public Library, Providence, RI
PMM	Penobscot Maritime Museum, Searsport, ME
PANH	Portsmouth Athenæum, Portsmouth, NH
RIHS	Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, RI

PREFACE: A SEA CHANGE...

During the 19th century, women chose to go to sea in sailing ships. The wives of captains began to accompany their husbands on voyages, both in whaleships hunting on far flung whaling grounds and in merchant ships following the trade routes (FIGURE 1). Some captain's wives even professed to enjoy their time on ships, while others claimed their choices as duty according to Victorian ideals of romantic love. In 1856, Hannah Burgess wrote in her journal, "I know that I love the sea, but more I love my husband... I enjoy going to sea, because I am with my husband. With him any place is home" (Shockley 2010). Whether wives, sisters, daughters, nieces, or stewardess who assisted them, the number of women on ships increased through mid-century as they filled the roles not only of companion to the captain, but also of nannies, nurses and navigators. Their stories remain a side note to maritime history that warrants further study of this sea change as women took to seafaring.

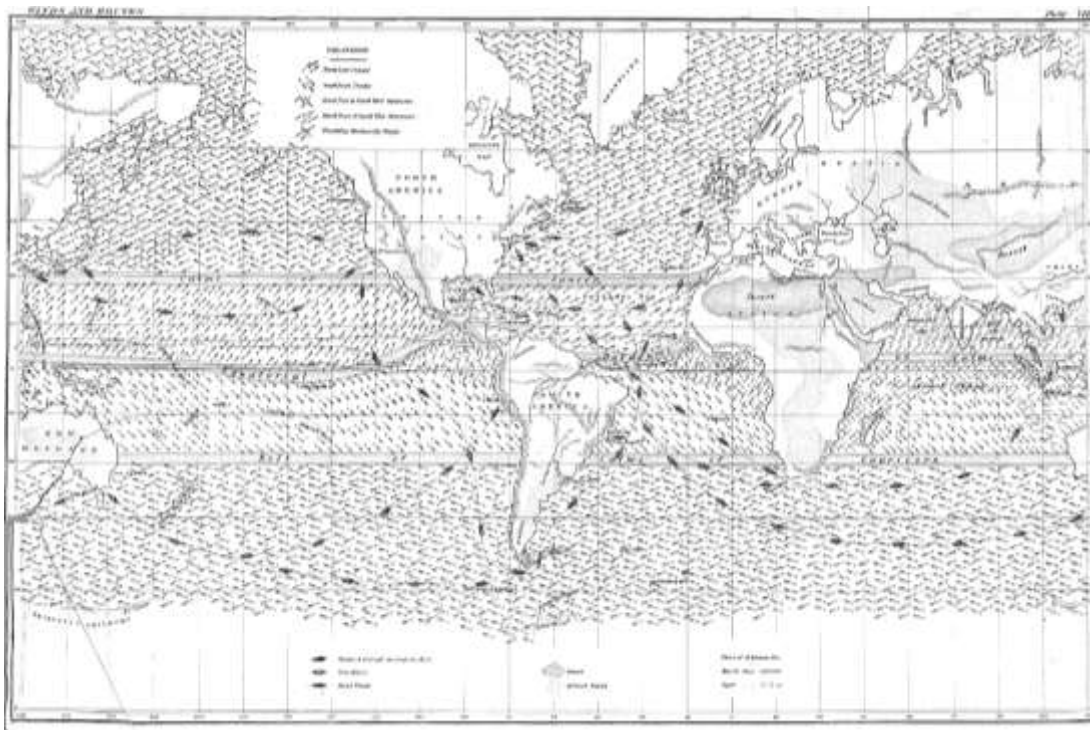


FIGURE 1. Maury's Wind and Routes in *Physical Geography of the Sea*, 1855.

Women on ships from New England followed the tradition of journaling, perhaps to help them recreate their domestic routine (Norling 2000:238). At that time, literate women commonly recorded their household accounts along with notes about family and events in a journal or daybook, such as that of midwife Martha Ballard (Ulrich 1990:8). The Church encouraged them in the practice as a method to record their prayers, while tracking their weekly accomplishments of duty, and devotion. When women moved on board, they wrote in detail of their life on ships, visits in foreign ports, and feelings of separation from family. Though personal, seafaring women often wrote for a specific audience, addressing a family member on shore or commenting to her husband who might reply with remarks in the margins (Fraser 1853; Druett 1998). Unlike the ship's log, their entries became sporadic at times due to seasickness or the birth of a child, but usually women wrote daily imitating the logbook style of entries.

Indeed only someone possessed of "those rare natures that are made up of pluck, endurance, devotion to duty for duty's sake and invincible determination, may hope to venture upon so tremendous an enterprise as the keeping of a journal..." (Twain 1869:40). Seafaring women diligently wrote their entries, started another book if they filled all the pages, and ended them on returning from the voyage. Many women only recorded their experiences while at sea, emphasizing the difference of life on board from that on shore. For example, Jane Girdler stayed at a French chateau while the ship loaded cargo at Bordeaux, she wrote nothing in her journal for that month on shore, starting again when they began to prepare for sea (Girdler 1857:Oct 3). Her first entry on her return to writing summarizes her shoreside experiences. Once taken up again, women usually kept up daily entries to the last day of the voyage. These journals became artifacts in themselves; weatherworn, sea sodden, moldy, dog-eared and yet treasured by their descendants through the years.

After the American Revolution, no records exist of women joining their husbands on board ship until after the War of 1812 and the anti-piracy campaigns that followed. In the relative peace that ensued, one of the first wives to join her husband was Lucy Cleveland on the *Zephyr* (Cleveland 1829; Morison 1921). By the 1840s, the trend of captain's wives going to sea escalated, despite a general sense of disapproval. When Sarah Gorham Sprague sailed in 1844 with her husband Captain Caleb to Bordeaux, France, they met five other captain's wives in the harbor (Sprague 1913). One of the first whaling wives, Mary Brewster, refused to stay behind when her husband took command of *Tiger* in 1845. Her family disowned her. In the same year, the family of another whaling wife, Mary-Ann Sherman, not only condemned her choice but erected a gravestone declaring her death on the date she sailed (Druett 2001a:26-29).

At mid-century, their increased in acceptance, and more women began to follow their husbands to sea. These wives set up a "home" on board ship, creating a domestic sanctity to nurture and support their husbands and tend to their religious and moral wellbeing (Norling 2000:170). Women even came along on voyages during the American Civil War. Mary Congdon who sailed with her parents on *Caroline Tucker* to Peru in 1861, compared a fomenting revolution to the situation at home, "Father says there are soldiers all over the streets and about 400 fellows walking the streets with stones. Hurraing and defying them. I would not like to live in such a country, though our own is not much better at present" (Congdon 1861:Oct 15). As shipping recovered during the Reconstruction, women like Lucy Howes who sailed with her husband to Hong Kong, noted the economic difficulties of transporting cargos in the 19th century (Howes 1866).

Then in the last decades of the century, the age of sail declined and fewer women chose to go to sea. When Hattie Atwood accompanied her father, her two sisters declined the offer, and

stayed ashore with their beaus, and her mother stayed home as well. Some sailing captains transferred to steamships, but their wives rarely accompanied them, unless they owned significant shares in the ship. Finally, families discouraged the younger generations from going to sea, sending young women like Joanna Colcord to school and insisting she make her way on shore. Fortunately, some like Joanna used their experiences at sea to write maritime histories, and she in particular became the preeminent scholar on sea shanties in the 1920s (Albee 1999).

Primary sources such as journals, ships' cabin plans, and photos of those interiors, as well as looking at surviving ships, mention or show the objects women brought or used on board to obtain a level of comfort, and to pursue entertainments, hobbies and "women's work" while at sea. The large and small objects she used, supported her wellbeing, and helped her overcome the difficulties of living on the ship with her husband or family. From needles and pins for sewing, to fancy hats for shore trips, to small deckhouse retreats, women on ships eased their emotional and physical distress by interacting with many of these "feminine" objects. To pass the time productively, a captain's wife might take up her tatting or sewing. Stitching up a new pair of pants for her husband, helped her feel like a productive part of the work on board. Although women filled their hours with middle-class pursuits or with work they performed within their social parameters, the actual crew work remained unaffected whether she joined the ship or not. Although irrelevant to the running of the ship, the study of women who went to sea reveals the power struggles between the sexes, and imposition of domestic ideals as a means of control (Norling 2000). Many of the women confessed to loneliness, discomfort and boredom during a voyage. Yet, they often chose to continue accompanying their husbands or family knowing the inherent dangers of disease, piracy and sinking. Still they went, and continue to go today on sailboats and tall ships in all capacities.

Admittedly my interest in women on ships is singular because of my upbringing. My family lived on sailboats during my childhood, so I knew of salt spray, heeling decks and being rocked to sleep at night on the waves. When I grew up, I worked as sailing instructor and crew on sailboats and tall ships, eventually logging enough time on several oceans to earn a US Coast Guard captains license. Though occasionally people register disbelief at my title, the number of women in some capacities as crew or skippers on sailboats has increased over the years.

As a woman in the maritime field, the lack of scholarship that incorporated a gender analysis continues to disappoint. With the availability of research done on women and gender relations in history, initiatives have managed to change the information in media, textbooks and school lesson plans to present strong female role models to girls and women (Nelson 2006). Yet, the history and archaeology of maritime women has continued to be neglected. Studies based on the traditional view that only men went to sea, support the current dominant discourse that ignores gender in the seafaring culture. Although statistically, the majority of sailors and people on ships have been men, the paucity of scholarship on the subject of women on board has meant it remains a little known culture. When deciding to study the topic of 19th-century seafaring women, people asked how there could possibly be enough information to research. That question inspired me to continue, for the study seemed all the more necessary to remedy the androcentrism of maritime history and archaeology that will only be corrected by further studies which address topics of women going to sea.

As the societal norms relating to women's work change, more women find employment in a variety of maritime fields. Many work on the tall ships that attend festivals and sail with tourists, and some women captain ships such as *Kalmar Nyckel* and *Unicorn*. The minimal amount of information about women on ships in the past remains a disservice to those who come

after and needs correction. The number of historical works on women who went to sea has been increasing, but the maritime archaeology lags behind. This thesis strives to add to that body of knowledge by creating a framework for archaeological investigations of seafaring women.

Thesis Outline

Although the core of this thesis on seafaring women emphasizes the objects they brought or used on ships, the intent is to keep their stories in focus. The personal narratives of seven women who lived on 19th-century ships guides the study and leads to the cataloging and interpreting of the artifacts that could indicate a woman's presence on board. Although, the thesis focuses on the women who went to sea, it also takes into account their interactions with men in a maritime setting.

Chapter 1 introduces the study of women on 19th-century sailing ships, defining the parameters of time and the region of study. The study focuses on the themes of choice and change as women redefined their lives in the Victorian era. Before the thesis was undertaken, the scholarly research and studies available on women in maritime history and archaeology was examined. The previous research shaped the approach and theoretical framework of the thesis and how women's journals were used. As the available resources limited the thesis, the research questions were scaled accordingly. In order to answer them, a historical approach utilizing archaeological reports formed the basis of the methodology. The research included here is intended to lay the ground work for an archaeological diagnostic that can be used to determine the presence of women on ships in the 19th century.

Chapter 2 examines each of seven key journals used in this study of seafaring women, and provide evidence of the artifacts that might be found during an archaeological investigation of a 19th-century shipwreck. These journals confirm presence of women on ships during major

events, on different trade routes and witness to several maritime industries, such as whaling, the China trade and the Civil War. The seven women whose journals are examined in depth for the objects they brought or used on board are as follows: Jane Girdler (1856-1858), writing implements and toys; Mary Congdon (1854-1865), sewing notions, and toys; Lucy Lord Howes (1860-1866), sewing notions and baby paraphernalia; Sarah Hix Todd (1857-58), baby paraphernalia and children's items; Eliza Williams (1858-1871), baby paraphernalia and clothing; Mary Stickney (1880-1881), toiletries including feminine hygiene and medical items; and Hattie Atwood (1883-1884), clothing and accessories. From their journals comes the lists of items associated with women on ships as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 3 explores the larger objects that women used while on board. Whether unique to ships or ubiquitous but indicative of social standing, the material culture might indicate the presence of a woman on the vessel. The five large objects they used as identified in their journals are as follows: bathtubs, gaming chairs, gimballed beds, parlor organs and small deckhouses. Each of these, due to their size, a woman could not bring in her luggage and so she asked or influenced the constructing or loading of the object. The case study included here focuses on the larger items used by captain's wives on the ship *Charles W. Morgan*. Built in 1841, the whaleship still floats at Mystic Seaport, and with a well-documented record of the five captain's wives, made for a significant ship to use in this study. Given the easy access to the physical ship at the museum and to the extensive documents online, an analysis could be made of the artifacts associated with women on the *Charles W. Morgan*. If found on a shipwreck during an archaeological study, these large artifacts could be diagnostics of a woman on board.

Chapter 4 looks at the small items that a woman brought with her in her trunk when she came on board. Much smaller than the large objects in Chapter 3, she chose to bring these items

in her luggage for personal use. Although another captain's wife might use her gaming chair, it was unlikely that she would lend her a dress. The categorizing of objects relies on function, instead of by the material of manufacture that conservators require in the lab. These groupings include the following: Clothing and accessories, personal adornment and toiletries, sewing notions, writing materials, and baby paraphernalia and children's toys. Many of these small finds would require micro-archaeological excavations on a wreck, but if found in the sluices and sieves, could be used as diagnostic materials indicative of women and their young children living on board.

Chapter 5 considers the application of gender analysis and use of the lists of objects to the site report of the shipwreck *Olive Thurlow* wrecked at Cape Lookout. The Surface Interval Diving Co. published a site report of their exploration and recovery in 1996 that included drawings of the artifact assemblage. An analysis of their report reveals a recovered item that may have an association with women on board, and shows how the inclusion of hypotheses that included gender might have encouraged a different research plan. The recommendations for further application of the research to shipwrecks with documentation of captain's wives on board include the following: *Richard H. Dixey*, *Snow Squall* and other Falkland Island clippers *Annabella*, and lumber schooner *Comet*. The artifacts associated with women from the cargo of *SS William Lawrence* could be used as a comparison to other objects used by women on ships.

Chapter 6 concludes this thesis, discussing and summarizing the findings on women's lives on board ships in the Victorian era. The research designs employed in maritime archaeology have yet to systematically include a component of gender analysis, but perhaps this study, along with the increase of women working as underwater archaeologists, will change that shortfall. Given the current focus on construction of ships over social significance, this thesis

recommends a shift such as has been seen in land-based archaeology to expand beyond purely masculine research problems by including subordinate and oppressed groups.

As outlined above, the research provides the groundwork for the possible formulation of an archaeological diagnostic which could be used to prove the presence of women on board ships in the 19th century. Through the examination of historic documents and records, such as journals and letters of New England women who went to sea, and utilization of site reports to examine artifact assemblages, the thesis investigates a little-known chapter of maritime history. By researching patterns within their writing, a catalog of physical objects made for and used by the captains' wives and families was generated to permit the investigation of past archaeological site reports for information they may contain on women on board ships. This thesis challenges the androcentricity of maritime history and archaeology by analyzing the culture on American ships and choices women made to live on board during the Victorian era.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As [the harbormaster] came down to his boat to board the vessel, the sailors were weighing anchor while I was at the wheel, dropping the vessel astern.... “What kind of a bloody vessel is this to come up into a strange port at night without a pilot and with a woman at the wheel?”

~Hattie Atwood 1883 (Freeman and Dahl 1999)

By the time Hattie sailed into Hobart with her father on the bark *Charles Stewart* in 1883, many women had gone to sea before her. They found differing levels of acceptance of their choice to sail depending on the era and their family, but no one accepted a woman who assumed the role of common sailor in the Victorian era. The harbormaster voiced astonishment when he noticed Hattie steering the ship, but for economic survival, the ship sailed shorthanded and whenever required, she took the helm or navigated (FIGURE 2).



FIGURE 2. Ruth Montgomery at helm 1898 (Courtesy PMM: LB1990.49.26).

Hattie came from a seafaring family (her two sisters were born on board ships). Rather than a sense of duty or family obligation, her choice to accompany her father seemed a desire for adventure, and the book she later published describing her voyage with “zest and detail” reflected that attitude. Her father, Captain Atwood complained of the lack of freights for their ship, and twice on the voyage around the world, they sailed “in ballast” without any cargo in the hold (Freeman and Dahl 1999). Managing a sailing cargo ship during the last decades of the 19th century, often required the master to cut the crew size in half to reduce costs, as steam ships took over the merchant trade. Hattie’s presence provided both company for her father, and an extra hand for the less rigorous tasks.

The women who went to sea brought the expectations of their society on board, along with their trunks, notably that all women might be judged by their “piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity,” the four virtues of “True Womanhood” (Welter 1966). Each week, a woman might spend time reflecting in her journal on whether she upheld these morals and ideals. Yet the expectations of society shifted considerably during the Victorian age as women created change within the movements of reform, abolition and women's suffrage, redefining both themselves and the attitudes of what it meant to be a woman (DuBois 2009). By the 1880s when Hattie sailed, some opinions shifted as to the attributes of femininity had shifted yet many remained.

In researching women at sea, their stories needed context to place them within the history of events and beliefs of the Victorian Age. Despite isolation from other women and long separations from community and country, such women remained part of their society, informed by newspapers, ladies’ magazines and letters from home received via other ships. The popular magazine, *Godey’s Lady’s Book* edited by Sarah Josepha Hale, prompted women to conform to prescribed gender roles usually described as “separate spheres” (Hale 1852; Norling 2000).

Women on ships joined their husbands and families on board within the constructs of these roles, but determined through their own agency how they might accomplish or ignore those prescribed limitations.

Many women explained in their journals the reasons they decided to go to sea. Wives usually chose to accompany their husbands for love but some may have been coerced to do their duty according to the conventions of Victorian domesticity. When young, the daughters (and sons) did not choose for they were born on board or brought along as toddlers, but as they grew up felt at home on their ship. Both Joanna Colcord and her brother, Lincoln, of Searsport, Maine, were fifth generation seafarers, born in the 1880s on *Charlotte A. Littlefield* (Albee 1999). Sisters went as companions for the wives, and at times, the mates' wives came in the same capacity, such as when Joanna Crapo joined her husband Thomas on the schooner *Annie Tibbits* and then *James M. Riley* (Crapo and Cowin 1893:67-70). Finally, nieces often came to sea, but for different reasons, such as for health and for work. Charlotte Page took a sea voyage as prescription to her illness, sailing on the ship *George Washington* with her uncle, Captain Josiah Cummings and Mary, her cousin who she taught piano lessons (Page and Alvin 1950). Jane Girdler joined her Aunt and Uncle on the *Robert H. Dixey* to be nanny to her young cousin, Fanny (Girdler 1997). Besides Jane, nannies and nursemaids usually kept no journals so they remain a side note in a mother's journal, such as Frances in Sarah Todd's journal of a voyage to Australia and Asia (Todd 1858). Women who lived on board ships did more than fulfill the role of wife or companion, but worked as nurses, nannies and navigators when required.

Since the late eighteenth century, American law required merchant and whaling ships to carry a medical chest that came with a book of instructions that the captain utilized as best he could (Druett 2000). The medical treatments of the era could be as dangerous as the illness.

Godey's Ladys Book promoted nursing as a natural part of women's sphere: "The study of medicine belongs to woman's department of knowledge; its practice is in harmony with the duties of mother and nurse, which she must fulfill" (Hale 1852). A captain's wife might act as nurse, such as Mary Stickney who served as "assistant surgeon" to her husband on the bark *Cicero*, bringing a package of plasters and bandages for use on the crew. As with most other wives, she left the mixing of medicines from the chest to her husband (Stickney 1881). On occasion, wives assisted as midwives to other captain's wives, but usually only the husband was present to attend a birth at sea.

Often wives brought their young children or gave birth to them at sea, and hired nannies and nursemaids to assist in their care. The sickly Sarah Hix Todd lamented her inability to feed her child on the voyage so her husband found a goat for milk in a Southeast Asian port (Todd 1858:Jan 24). Her nanny only managed to help when not seasick. Usually lower class, these women rarely left a record of being on the ship, but they took over tending to the child's needs whether breast or bottle-feeding. At times, ship captains hired a couple to perform the duties of steward and stewardess. Charlotte Page and her cousin, Mary received the attentive care of Ann Anderson and her husband Alexander, for the captain's wife stayed home with the rest of her small children (Page and Alvin 1950).

As navigator, a wife might be considered as working outside the norm for women of that era. In 1851, Eleanor Creesy navigated for the clipper ship *Flying Cloud*, and by studying Maury's *Wind and Current Charts* published that same year, she contributed to their record-breaking passage of eighty-nine days from New York to San Francisco (Shaw 2001). In some extreme cases, the captain's wife might be the only one who could navigate and so she took command of her husband's ship. Fortunately, Mary Anne Patten had learned to navigate on a

previous trip with her husband Captain Joshua. When he fell ill on the voyage to San Francisco, Mary Anne navigated the clipper *Neptune's Car* while the second mate gave sailing orders. Besides plotting their course after Cape Horn, Mary studied medical books and nursed her husband with mixtures from their medical chest (*New York Times* 1857). For the next fifty days, Mary did not even take the time to change her clothes. Because of her skills, the ship arrived in San Francisco in only 136 days within hours of the other ships that left New York when they did. The *New York Times* (Feb 1857) lauded her as the “Florence Nightingale of the Seas,” the insurance company praised her as heroic, and feminists held her up as example of the capabilities women possessed in the so-called “pursuits and avocations of man” (Clark 1910). Mary wrote that the endeavors she performed “seemed to me, under the circumstances, only the plain duty of a wife towards a good husband” (Patten 1857).

For each of these roles and for her own work or entertainment, a woman required objects to assist with tasks and needs, whether a thimble in its case or a deckhouse to improve the view and ventilation (Druett 2001a). For the personal items, a woman packed her trunk with all the things she wanted for the voyage from dresses and shoes to books and pens. The small items she owned and cherished, came in her luggage, but the larger ones needed to be hoisted on board or built for her. The whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*, built in 1841 carried five captain's wives to sea. In 1864, one of these wives, Lydia Landers procured a gimbaled bed, which dampened the swaying motions so she might sleep easier in rough seas (Leavitt 1998; Brewster and Druett 1992). When Clara Tinkham sailed she brought her parlor organ for music. The collections at Mystic Seaport and at New Bedford Whaling Museum include a gamming chair, used to lift a person, usually a woman, down into the side boat for transport to another ship. A “gam” refers to meeting another whaleship at sea and stopping to exchange news and mail when the weather

allowed. According to Jamie Earle, his mother refused to use the chair, because it often spun around, dunking the occupant (Druett 2001a). Honor Earle signed on as her husband's navigator and appreciated the bathtub in her cabin with hot gravity-fed water, though the latter represented class differences more than gender. Each of these large shipboard items might be associated with the women who lived on board.

The small deckhouse usually immediately forward of the mizzen mast would be her own space. These coveted quarters might cause contention on a ship. Sailors recorded their resentments of the perceived intrusion of captains' wives, such as Abram Briggs complaints about the carpenter enlarging a cabin on the *Eliza Adams* (Druett 2001a). In 1869 on the bark *Merlin*, Harriet Allen gave up her deckhouse for the ill cook, despite sweltering heat where they sailed off the coast of Africa (Allen 1872). Although these cabins might be used by a woman on one voyage, the next it might be converted to rope locker or vegetable storage. Any investigation of gendered spaces on board requires studying them as a dynamic process, defined and negotiated through use (Hendon 2006).

Though class and social status dictated the separation of captain's wives and daughters from the sailors, women usually shared space in the after cabin with the mates who slept in berths off the salon, and ate their meals along with them (Druett 1998). In performing the tasks of nurse or navigator, the women might have more interaction with the men, by tending to the ill below decks or standing on deck to take astronomical sights. Though atypical, a woman might assist in the ship's handling on a shorthanded vessel, but Hattie noted with derision the extreme when a captain's wife hauled lines with the sailors on a ship that anchored near them at the guano islands off Peru (Freeman and Dahl 1999:75).

Each of these women and the many others whose journals are kept in the archives and museums of New England provide insight into not only their own circumstances as seafaring women, but also the observations of a time and culture from a feminine point of view. The research required and methods to create some semblance of a study are detailed here with the intent of providing the groundwork for further studies in maritime history and archaeology of women at sea.

Previous Research

The study of women in maritime culture, especially those who went to sea, remains a limited area of research. For this thesis, the scholarship that currently existed needed to be examined both in the historical and archaeological fields to ascertain what had been already researched. Further publications located after the initial search, can be found in the references. Once secondary sources were located, then the extent of availability in primary documents to support further research needed to be determined. Though women sailed on ships, the official records seldom record their existence (Mitchell-Cook 2011) but primary documents do exist in the archives of New England that reveal the participation of women in shipboard life. As journals and letters of captains' wives and daughters continue to be discovered in attics and old collections, researchers present the materials as books and publish analyses of their findings.

These works take several forms, including edited journals, compilations of short narratives and scholarly works. The recently published *Annie Ricketson's Journal* (Ricketson and Doherty 2010) telling of her voyage on a whaling ship from 1871-1874, follows the convention of edited diaries that contain little evaluation or comparison, such as Petroski's *A Bride's Passage: Susan Hathorn's Year Under Sail* (1997) narrating her honeymoon voyage of 1855 on

the merchant ship *J.J. Hathorn*. Some published compilations only narrate anecdotes of women on board, such as Snow's *Women of the Sea* (1962) which includes stories of the whaler's wife, Azubah Handy; the daughter of a Searsport captain, Joanna Carver Colcord, who had been born at sea; and the author's own mother, Alice Rowe, who spent her first twenty years on her father's ships. Other compilations provide scholarly analysis, such as Norling's *Captain Ahab had a Wife* (2000:3) which investigates within the whaling communities the "conflicted development of liberal individualism for men... [and] the development of its female corollary, Victorian domesticity."

If insufficient primary evidence can be found on a particular woman, the researcher might choose to write a novel about her experiences on board. Kelley wrote *The Captain's Wife* (2001), telling the story of Mary Ann Patten who in 1856 navigated the clipper ship *Neptune's Car* around Cape Horn to San Francisco while nursing her ailing husband. The book includes references to the primary sources the author used, such as the contemporary *New York Times* articles calling her the "Florence Nightingale of the Sea" but when he found no sources he created the scenes he needed for drama and effect.

Besides these books and published journals, few theses or articles exist about captains' wives and families. Lapointe's dissertation, "A Cultural Geography of Souls" (2009), discusses the ways in which geographical place takes on meaning for the people of the New Bedford whaling community in defining their identity, and how that is revealed in their writings. Mitchell-Cook's article, "To Honor their Worth, Beauty and Accomplishments: Women in Early American-Anglo Shipwreck Accounts" (2011), outlines the cultural context of the Victorian era through the analysis of shipwreck narratives that reinforced societal norms for women. Her analysis provides a starting point for understanding how individual women may have interpreted

their place in the culture on board. Duneer's article, "Voyaging Captains' Wives" (2010) challenges the historical metaphor of "separate spheres" by analyzing the language used in the diaries of two captain's wives in which they alternately support and then undermine the domestic ideals of their time. Both women published their journals on returning home, using their writings as a call to action for reform, including more missions to the South Pacific islanders, and improved moral conditions for sailors.

Although the focus remains with the women on board ship, they did not exist separate from their society for each gam with other ships, each familiar landfall, and each exotic port brought fashion, news and gossip with other captain's wives to remind them of social norms. The cultural changes instigated by women on board require grounding in the larger context of women's history in America as they struggled for reform, abolition and women's suffrage. Secondary sources provide that foundation, starting with Norton's *Separated by Their Sex* (2011) that examines the involvement of women in politics on both sides of the Atlantic during the Colonial period. This book leads up to Kerber's *Women of the Republic* (1980) that focuses on women's participation in the politics and conflicts of the Revolution. Cott follows with *The Bonds of Womanhood* (1977) emphasizing the separate work of women in which they held power and influence through to the early 19th century. In *Disorderly Conduct* (1985), Smith-Rosenberg disputes some of those claims, stressing the social, political and economic disadvantages of women. Finally, in *The Age of Homespun* (2001), Ulrich reveals the histories of household objects and shows how these reflect the values of both those who made and those who collected them. Although published investigations of women's history and archaeology increases, the studies of shipboard life that include the experiences of women and gender

analysis remain under represented. The topic of women at sea deserves further study to ensure the annals of maritime history contain their stories.

Theory & Research Questions

This thesis evolved during the study of writings by women in the 19th century who chose to live on sailing ships with their husbands and family, inspiring the search for material culture that might be used as archaeological diagnostics to determine the presence of those women on vessels. Using a theoretical construct of gender analysis to develop what sources would be researched, three main questions were formulated:

- 1) What cultural events led women to choose to live on ships in the 19th century and what did they experience?
- 2) Are there archaeological diagnostics for captain's wives and female family members living on the ship?
 - a) What artifacts on a shipwreck might be associated with women who lived on sailing ships during the 19th century?
- 3) Could evidence of these items be found in site reports and artifact assemblages?

During the previous two decades, the engendering of archaeological research has increased since the groundbreaking work of Gero and Conkey (1991). The shift of focus to a gendered analysis changed several biases that may have clouded the evaluations of sculptural art, tool use, and burial practices used to define social structure (Nelson 2001). Within the field of maritime archaeology, use of gendered theoretical approaches still remains marginal. Flatman (2003:146) sums it up that because “women and gender differentiation may not be distinctly visible within the archaeological record, this does not mean that women were not present or had no influence on board vessels.” The dominant narrative in the discipline assumes ships and maritime activities as the male domain without questioning how much the interpretation is

filtered through a modern, ideological construct. Ransley (2005) suggests that the assumptions made influence the methodology and so the focus continues to be on physical function and construction of ships “made by man” instead of on the wider social context.

The vocabulary herein follows the current norms defining sex, whether female, male or other, as a biological trait and gender as a prescribed social role for women, men or other sexual identity. Although the latter cannot be explored in the limited scope of this study, indications were found of two women couples. Norling (2000) noted the close bonds of Susan Norton to Sarah Linton from one letter she wrote. Harriet Allen noted in her journal her attachment to Satira Connor. In 1857, when Harriet sailed with her husband on the whaleship *Platina*, her friend wrote of the devastation of parting. Given that so many documents exposing “unnatural attachments” may have been destroyed after Comstock Law took effect, the lack of evidence of more such bonds between lonely Cape Horn widows may be explained.

By placing women’s narratives within a broader context of history, their experiences and point of view can give further information on the social constructs or norms of a region or defined group (Johnson 2010). For his study on 18th-century seamen, Rediker (1987) used the personal stories of sailors to tell the history of maritime community, discipline, work and wage labor in the Atlantic world. In studying women on 19th century ships through maritime history and archaeology, new views and subject matter could “force a critical reexamination of the premises and standards of existing scholarly work” (Scott 1986).

The value of archaeology in studying the past, even when documentary evidence exists, is that the archaeology can provide evidence of behaviors not found in an historical record which can be argued as inherently biased and incomplete (Gould 2000:8). Archaeology could assist in the search for captain’s wives and families on ships, because the crew lists, and often passenger

manifests if on immigrant ships, did not list the captain's family. The dominance of male-centered research especially in shipwreck archaeology might be thought reasonable as most shipboard crews were all-male. In interpretations made without presentation of the underlying assumptions, it might be construed that no women ever lived on sailing ships, distorting the picture of what occurred in the past. The suppression of marginal views may be subconscious, but it can be remedied with an inclusive archaeology that focuses on more than the activities of the cultural elites and major events, by studying the alternative views such as those of "women, various ethnic minorities, and other groups defined by religious beliefs, low economic or social status" (Gould 2000:8).

Research methodology

Though scarce, several investigations apply gendered analysis that identified women in the maritime archaeological record. Corbin's book, *The Material Culture of Steamboat Passengers* (2000), uses the items in passenger boxes from the Missouri River steamboat wrecks *Bertrand* (1865) and *Arabia* (1856) to conclude that emigrant women usually traveled in family groups, and the traditional assumption of a class division between cabin and deck passengers may be inaccurate. Nymoer's Whetstone Typology (2009) includes the side-story of the woman Turid Fiskarbekk whose boat loaded with whetstones sank, after which she made it ashore. In the article *Archaeology Unearthing the Invisible People* (Staniforth et al. 2001), the authors attempt to link the whaler's wife to a hearth in the archaeological record, but admits most evidence of her presence comes from historical documents. Harris' article, "South Carolina Shipyards" (2010), suggests only the find of glass beads might be associated with women, but her inclusion of historic records expands the understanding of how women invested financially and emotionally

in the ships built. In each study, the researchers asked if these women represented anomalies, or if the previous assumptions of a strictly male dominion in maritime settings obscured the knowledge of their existence. As future archaeological research continues to include gender theory, evidence of the contributions of women in shipboard culture will be further illuminated.

This thesis on women on board in the 19th century researched documents and images held in archives, along with investigating archaeological data and extant ships, such as *Charles W. Morgan*. By investigating primary sources from New England, such as ships' cabin plans, and photos of those interiors, as well as looking at surviving ships, the artifacts women chose to bring on board found and cataloged. In summer of 2012, the initial research started with a visit to the Penobscot Maritime Museum at Searsport, Maine. In the 19th century, ten percent of all merchant sea captains hailed from the small town of Penobscot, and the museum library contains journals, letters and papers from their wives and families, including those of Mattie Nichols, Sarah Anne Pendleton, and the photo collection of Ruth Montgomery. The Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston contains records and documents collected from around the state, including many 19th-century families connected with sailing ships. The collection includes the papers of Lucy Howe Hooper, Martha Green, and Margaret Perkins Forbes. The nearby Forbes House holds the personal effects and papers of her son, Captain Robert Bennett Forbes, which reveal family's ties to the China trade including opium dealing.

By setting parameters of time and region, the mass of available sources became limited to those women on ships between the 1840s and the turn of the century who left documentary evidence now held in New England archives. In November of that year, other archives provided further information for this thesis from their available collections. These included the shipyard of Mystic Seaport Museum, where *Charles W. Morgan* underwent a full documentation and

restoration. Besides the ship and records of the wives who accompanied their husbands, the museum library contains vast collections of documents on maritime activities. Mystic Seaport provided access to the journals and logbooks of Charlotte Church and Sarah Hix Todd, and to ships plans, photographs of interiors and the digitized archives that hold the letters of captain's wives, Mary Stark and Calista Stover. The New Bedford Whaling Museum holds further records of whaling wives and family, such as the journals of Lucy Ann Crapo, Adeline Heppingstone and Elizabeth Stetson. The museum also houses a half-size replica built in 1916 to represent the whaling ship *Lagoda*, a gift from Emily Bourne, the eldest daughter of prominent whaling merchant Jonathan Bourne and Emily Summers. The Maine Maritime Museum at Bath contains letters of several captains' wives, including Maria Murphy, Margaret Fraser and Mary Bartlett, and houses the bow section of the *Snow Squall*. The Newport Historical Society allows access to the journal of whaling wife Henrietta Deblois. The Rhode Island Historical Society holds the journals and letters of Mary Congdon along with documents from both her mother Cynthia and father Johnathan. Smaller archives and museums including Cohasset Historical Society, Deer Isle Historical Society, Maine Historical Society, Newburyport Custom House Maritime Museum, and Portsmouth Athenæum also allowed access to journals and letters of women on ships, which though studied provided less information to this thesis.

In all, about 70 journals provided the background studies for this thesis. The seven journals chosen to represent a wealth of anecdotal evidence, allow for a view of maritime history told in first-hand accounts by women living on ships. From these journals came the data on objects women used on board during the 19th century. These items were investigated, described, and cataloged as a guide to what might be used as archaeological diagnostics of women on sailing ships. This list of artifacts associated with women on ships in the 19th century, led to

suggestions for including a gender analysis in research design and an analysis of a previous excavations site report of the shipwreck *Olive Thurlow* at Cape Lookout. The research also led to other possible sites for further investigation into women on board ships. With an increase in available data, shipwrecks might be analyzed with a quantitative analysis similar to that used on the cargo boxes of the steamboat *Bertrand* (Corbin 2000). Although much in this thesis focuses on the concrete objects, the intent is to emphasize the stories of women at sea. Future projects that incorporate a gender analysis may be able to answer questions on the less-documented women on board who did not leave a journal, and if the objects they chose to take to sea differed from similar types used on land.

Conclusion

This chapter lays out the theme of the study on 19th-century women who lived on ships and focuses on the choices and changes for them during the period from the 1840s to the turn of the century. The previous research provided direction for the study of seafaring women, and the formulation of research questions. The research methodology focusing on a gender analysis provided the structure to the investigation of seafaring women. Examination of the more than 70 journals and letters from the archives in New England, allowed for a detailed review not only of the joys, sorrows and struggles of women on ships but also of the objects they brought or used for work or entertainment while at sea. Both the large objects and small items sustained her domestic routine and daily schedule, whether sewing up shirts for her husband, feeding her baby, or retreating to the little deckhouse she called her own. The journals women wrote on board contain the evidence that reveal the artifacts specific to their attempts to make a “home” on the ship with their children and husbands.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Despite the traditional superstition which labels women as bad luck on boats, hundreds of wives, sisters, daughters and nieces of captains lived on merchant and whaling ships in the 19th century. The journals of seafaring women examined for this study confirm their presence on ships during major events, plying different trade routes and witness to several maritime industries, such as whaling, the China trade and the Civil War. The journals not only prove their presence at sea, but also note what personal items they brought in their trunks, and what objects they used that were part of the ship fixtures and equipment. The focus for this study is the material culture of gender as it relates to the items women used while on board ships.

Although the superstitions of old salts existed, this did not dictate the beliefs or behaviors of everyone on ships during the 19th century. For example, the ship owners of the whaleship *Louisa* blamed Lucy Ann Hix Crapo for a run of bad luck when the crew found no whales in 1866. Luckily, another captain came to her defense, insisting that a woman on board could not be blamed for the scarcity of whales (Druett 2001a:31). Maritime records and documents in archives prove that over 400 whaling wives accompanied their husbands at sea. Many more Victorian women sailed on full-rigged merchant ships on long sea voyages, or on family coasting schooners closer to home. As one might expect, no statistical anomalies exist of more sinkings occurring, or less monetary return for whale oil and commercial cargos when women sailed on merchant or whaling ships during this era.

Although few documents recorded their presence, women worked or lived on ships at least as early as the 16th century and throughout early modern history according to their social standing. Lower-class women could work as sailors on board, but only in disguise. Those women who signed on board merchant and naval ship crews might live among the men for years without

being discovered, such as Mary Lacy and Hannah Snell who served on British ships in the 18th century (Dugaw 1996; Stark 1996; Druett 2000). Other cross-dressed women joined pirate ships, such as the infamous Anne Bonny and Mary Read in the early 1700s (Stanley 1995; Rediker 1996). Other women came on board while the ship anchored in port to work as prostitutes or get cash advances from their husbands (Stark 1996). Rarely did lower-class women voyage with the seamen without cross-dressing, but some documents reveal their presence, such as in the Spanish Armada of 1588, when the hulk *Santiago* carried the wives of the soldiers on board into the battle (Martin and Parker 1999). A few working women voyaged on 19th-century ships when they worked as stewardesses on board merchant vessels (Todd 1857; Howes 1866). Although lower-class women participated in shipboard culture across the centuries, their stories remain outside of the dominant narrative (Creighton and Norling 1996).

Upper and middle-class women usually only sailed as passengers, but two exceptions exist; widows and naval warrant officers' wives. Widows in early modern history might keep their husbands' position of power, such as Grace O'Malley, an Irish Chieftain, who after her husband's death commanded a fleet that harried British ships during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (Chambers 1998; Druett 2001b). The British Navy from the 17th to the 19th century, permitted warrant officers' wives to live on board. The official records omitted them, but they appear in crew journals, which revealed the wives contributed in battle as surgeon's assistants or "powder monkeys" running gunpowder to the cannon crews. At the Battle of the Nile in 1798, John Nichol praised the women who served with him on the HMS *Goliath*: "My station was in the powder magazine with the gunner... Any information we got was from the boys and women who carried the powder. The women behaved as well as the men and got a present for their bravery from the Grand Signior" (Stark 1996:71). In 1757, the *Regulations and Instructions*

relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea, which would have also applied to the American Colonies, clarified the rules, possibly because the officers constantly ignored them: "That no women be ever permitted to be on board such as are really the Wives of the Men they come to; and the ship not to be too much pestered even with them. But this Indulgence is only tolerated while the Ship is in Port, and not under Sailing Orders" (British Royal Navy 1757) Despite their assistance in battle, warrant officers' wives remained hidden in British Naval records, and with the increase of regulations during the early 19th century, they stopped going to sea (Stark 1996).

Research on maritime history and archaeology of the 19th century focuses on the technological transformation from sail to steam power. Merchants moved from reliance on wind power and wooden ships to that of iron vessels and steam. Several notable events, wars, and commercial trade routes influenced ships and shipping, all of which have been studied. Whaling prospered, spreading from the Atlantic grounds into the Indian, Pacific and Northern oceans, until the 1870s when the discovery and development of petroleum oil superseded the industry (Staniforth 2008; NOAA 2010). The California Gold Rush and the China Trade fueled the design of fast clippers, either for transportation of goods and people to San Francisco (Delgado 2009), or fresh teas and luxury goods to markets in America and Britain (Layton 1997). The Civil War interrupted commerce as privateers from both the North and South raided the opposite side, seizing or burning the merchant ships they caught (Bright 1977; Barto Arnold et al 2001; Delgado 2011). Although the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 marked the demise of sail as the predominant power at sea, sailing ships continued to be used for several more decades transporting immigrants and low-priority bulk goods such as grain, guano and lumber (Meverden et al 2006; Russell 2005). Despite the numerous studies, seafaring women have been ignored.

Throughout this era, they lived on ships and wrote in their journals about all these changes and events in the maritime realm.

During the 19th century, the ideas of public versus private life became embedded in the popular culture (Spencer-Wood 2013). Instead of the traditional forms of community and extended family working together within homes, or farmlands, the paradigm of society in America shifted to business and industrialization. The assumption became a prescriptive doctrine where active and independent men provided for their family by working in the public sphere, while passive and dependent women cared for them and their children in the home or private sphere. This dichotomy set up a binary gender system that came to be known as “separate spheres” (Kerber 1988; Wall 1994; Norling 2000). In the maritime communities where men worked on ships and women stayed at home, this dichotomy became entrenched in an elemental divide between land and sea (Norling 2000). As the Victorian ethos redefined marriage as a commitment based on love, and homes as exclusively that of a nuclear family, women living on shore with friends and family, and felt the lack of that romantic ideal. Women wanted to end the extended separations that produced intense loneliness and to create a private sphere that included their husbands, on whom they could lavish attention and care (Norling 2000:238).

Captain’s wives resolved this conundrum by joining their husbands at sea. When these women lived on the ship, they often brought their children and at times sisters, and nieces. On larger ships, stewardesses assisted the women and any passengers on board. The practice of captain’s bringing their wives and family became largely accepted but remained rarely documented, perpetuating the myth that women did not go to sea because so few records exist.

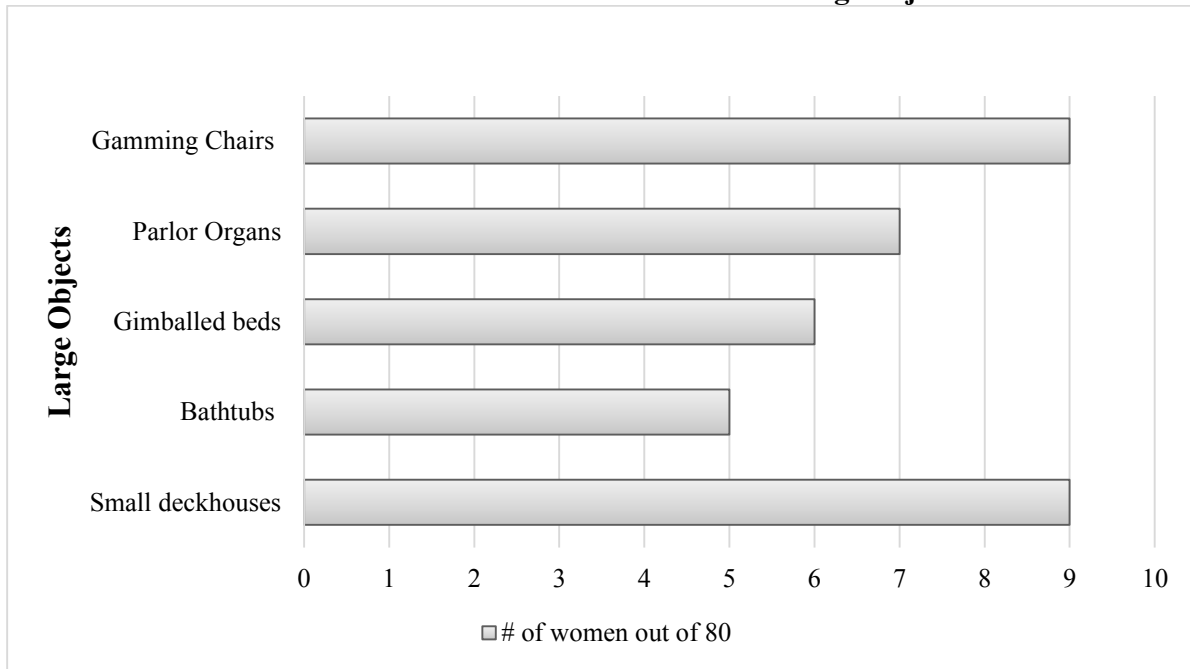
A century later, the Victorian concept of separate spheres continues to cloud the maritime history as related to gender. Books traditionally concentrate on the ships and sailors at sea,

ignoring the women who joined the captain in the aft cabins. Primary documents often list crew and paying passengers, omitting the “non-working” women who lived on ships, often for years at a time (Norling 2000). The perception of separation of genders that emphasized women’s place ashore waiting for the sailors return and the superstition of women as bad luck on ships is often cited as apparent proof that women never lived on ships. By accepting the constructed concept of the sea as masculine and land as feminine, the presence of seafaring women has been discounted as an area of study or deemed irrelevant to maritime history and archaeology.

As evidence of what artifacts might be found during an archaeological investigation of a 19th-century shipwreck, primary documents relating to women living on ships were examined for objects mentioned or implied by the activities the women described (Appendix B). From 80 primary sources found in New England archives, the items women brought with them or used on board have been compiled for the tables presented here. The large objects include gimballed beds, gaming chairs, parlor organs, small deckhouses and bathtubs (Table 1). The personal items that a woman brought on board in her trunk are grouped into use categories: baby paraphernalia & children’s toys, personal adornment and toiletries, clothing and accessories, sewing notions, and writing materials (Chapter 4).

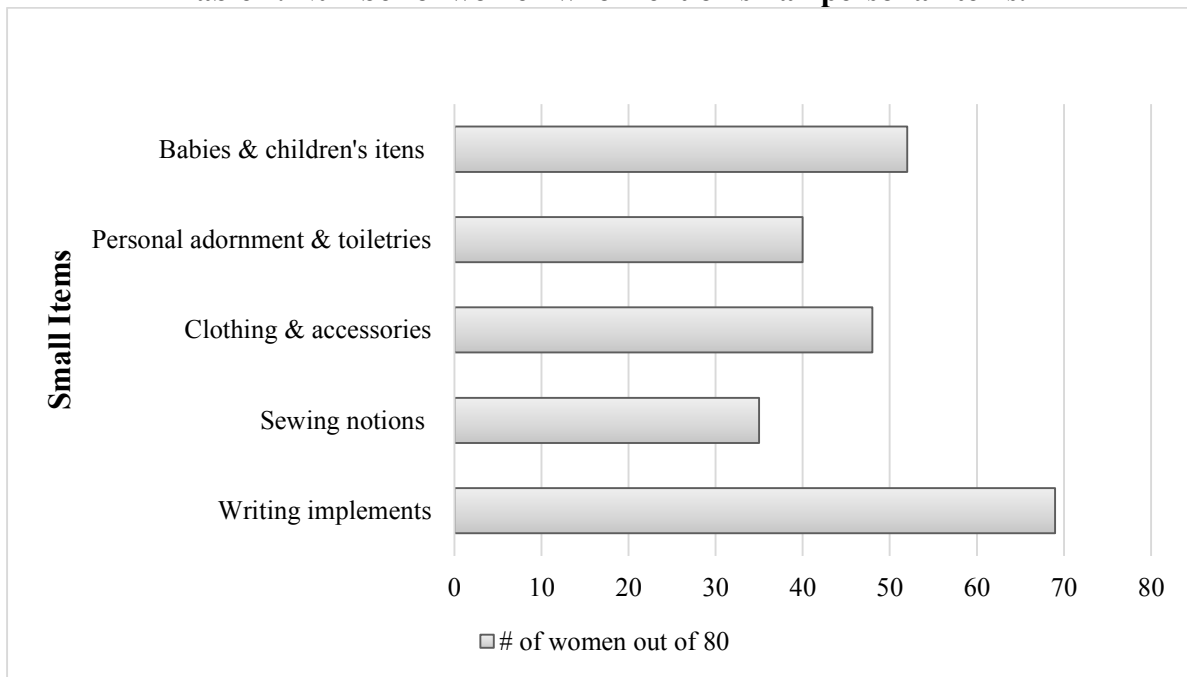
Although, navigation instruments will not be considered as possible diagnostics, women often wrote of learning to take sights to find the ship’s location at sea. As a measure of insurance against any accident, a captain taught his wife (and children) to navigate, so the instruments merit some discussion. Although many women in this study mentioned navigating, only Georgia G. Blanchard stated she owned her own sextant. At the turn of the century, she learned from her husband on the ship *Bangalore* and would have used sailing directions, charts, and dividers to help locate their position.

Table 1. Number of women who mention large objects.



Seafaring women seldom mentioned the large objects they used, perhaps because they did not identify them as personal possessions. Besides the captain's wives who used the gimballled bed, gamming chair, small deckhouses and bathtub while on the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan* (Chapter 3), several other women mentioned these same objects. Henrietta Deblois (1856) described the gimballled bed in her and her husband's cabin and noted the salt water baths she took each week on board *Merlin* (Druett 2001a). Eliza Williams (1857) on the first page of her journal, noted the gamming chair that lifted her on board the whaleship *Florida*. Mary Brewster (1847) praised the small deckhouse in which she could be apart from the officers on the whaleship *Tiger*. Besides Clara Tinkham who brought her parlor organ on *Charles W. Morgan* in 1875, all other mentions of piano-like instruments occurred in journals of younger women aged 14 to 17. Sarah Fanning (1846) and Charlotte Page (1852) practiced on pianos, Mary Morgan (1881) received a melodeon for her birthday, and Hattie Atwood (1883) played the organ while she sang with her father.

Table 2. Number of women who mention small personal items.



In seafaring women's journals, mention of smaller items and the activities in which they used them, appear more often than the large items (Table 2). The table organizes the items in descending order, from most to least apparent in association to women, and each category of items including navigation is discussed below (Chapter 4). In general, the journal entries or documents written by women referred directly to the items in the table. Although all women wore clothing while at sea, not all of them mentioned their attire. For the other categories, any mention of an activity that utilized the item meant inclusion in the tally. For example, the Babies' and Children's items were assumed from any mention of a child on board. The Personal adornment and toiletries category included medicines the women described using. Sewing notions often came from lists the women kept in the back of their journals. The writing implement were assumed if the women kept a journal or wrote letters even if the act of writing was unmentioned. This last category contains less than the total number of women because some documents included are the journals and letters of their husbands and the sailors on board that the

women did not write. Together these artifacts provide a foundation for gendered analysis of shipwreck sites in determining the presence of seafaring women and of how gender intersects with class, age and race on board both merchant and whaling ships.

The remainder of this chapter focuses on seven journals written in the 19th century. The women who wrote them were related to the captain and went to sea as a part of their lives, not to travel from one location to another, such as an immigrant moving to a new country. Several women came from families who went to sea, and so her mother or aunt sailed in the previous generation. These women were chosen to illustrate the range of ship types, industries, trade routes and maritime events they encountered while living on ships. Their journals reveal not only their experiences and roles they filled on board, but also fashions they wore, items used or tasks performed.

The first two journals were written by young women who cared for children, the next three were mothers who bore their babies at sea, and the finally two were women without children on the ship. Jane Girdler (1857) wrote of a single voyage to Europe as a nanny to her cousin. Mary Congdon (1854-1862) started on ships with her parents at the age of ten caring for her younger brother. Lucy Howes (1863-1866) bore children on two voyages, one before capture during the Civil War and the other before a pirate attack in the South China Sea. Sarah Hix Todd (1856-1858) bore her daughter while sailing to the Orient, before dying of consumption. Eliza Williams (1858-1874) bore two of her children on a whaleship, and sailed with her husband for over 12 years. Mary Stickney (1880-1881), who also lived on a whale ship, sewed continuously and often nursed the crew. Finally, Hattie Atwood (1883-1884) sailed with her father on a voyage around the world, and often mentioned clothing fashions (Freeman and Dahl 1999).

Table 3. Women whose Journals inform this Study

Name	Year	On Ship	Items brought & used
1) Girdler, Jane	1857	<i>Robert H. Dixey</i>	writing implements & toys
2) Congdon, Mary	1860–65	<i>Caroline Tucker</i>	sewing notions, & toys;
3) Howes, Lucy Lord	1862–67	<i>Southern Cross, Lubra</i>	sewing notions & baby items
4) Todd, Sarah Hix	1857–58	<i>Revely, Comet</i>	baby & children’s items
5) Williams, Eliza	1858–74	<i>Florida</i>	baby items & clothing
6) Stickney, Mary	1880–81	<i>Cicero</i>	toiletries & medical items
7) Atwood, Hattie	1883–84	<i>Charles Stewart</i>	clothing & accessories

Jane Girdler

She says almost anything now—is a regular little “chatter box”... Fannie can sing some of the sailors’ songs... The other morning, Aunt Becca found her sitting in bed, with her night cap on her foot, pulling the strings and singing, “Haul the bowline, oh” (Girdler 1857:May 24).

At the invitation of her Aunt Becca, Jane Girdler boarded the extreme clipper *Robert H. Dixey* to become nanny to her little cousin, Fannie. She brought along a writing box, and probably a “housewife” or sewing kit considering how many items she worked during their voyages. They travelled from Boston, Massachusetts, to Mobile, Alabama for a load of cotton, then on to Kronshtadt and Vyborg, in Russia and Bordeaux, France, and survived a knockdown in a storm before they returned to Mobile (Girdler 1857). Although she voyaged with them as family, she often appeared to function in a role of working class due to her position as nanny. When Jane’s father, another sea captain, died at sea, she was only 14 years of age. Left without financial support, she and her mother moved in with the grandparents in Marblehead, Massachusetts. While her mother ran a school, Jane worked making shoes (Girdler 1997:43). At the time she made shoes, women in Essex County earned about \$2-\$3 a week for sewing the

uppers of shoes (Blewett 1988). When her aunt offered her an escape from the tedious work, she immediately packed her trunk.

On the ship, she wrote her journal and letters home to her mother, probably in the large lounge of the aft deckhouse, which contained a parlor organ, and two library tables (Girdler 1997:53). Starting from her first days without equilibrium, her journal entries detailed the activities and objects she used on the ship. The first morning Jane managed to dress herself by sitting on her trunk, but to get to breakfast, she crawled on her hands and knees to the dining table. Once there, she could eat little as she struggled to hang on to her cup and plate (Girdler 1857:Jan 14). Luckily, she could clean up easily, as the amenities on the ship included a large copper tub, which could be filled with hot water from the stove and salt water tanks on the roof of the deckhouse provided a gravity flush for the heads or toilets. Jane bunked in a cabin with her charge, Cousin Fannie, who slept in the berth below hers. Their cabin was also in the aft deckhouse, which included rooms for the captain and his family, any passengers, the mates and steward (Girdler 1997:54).

Looking after a toddler, Jane would have dressed Fannie and played with her. Although many small items such as clothes and toys would have been required for the child, Jane seldom mentions them directly. While transiting the English Channel, her Aunt Becca gave the pilot a “pretty little pair of shoes that Fannie had outgrown” (Girdler 1857:May 13). She often mentioned playing with the kittens they kept on the ship. While in Vyborg Russia, they had many local visitors, including a family with two little girls. When they came to visit, Jane toured them around the ship: “I showed them Fannie’s dolls, they had a fine time looking at them. I suppose they never say anything like them before” (Girdler 1857:July 5).

During the voyage, Jane often spent time sewing, both for herself, her charge Fannie and her Aunt Becca. By keeping herself busy, she fulfilled her role of accomplishing those duties deemed as gender appropriate. The proverb stating that the “Devil made work for idle hands” influenced the contemporary assumptions that a woman must have a task to do, even if it was only fancy needlepoint and frippery (Druett 1998). During the Victorian era, middle-class women who kept domestic servants managed their chores, and Aunt Becca probably spent time in directing the work of the steward and cook. With Jane being a family member, her aunt only seemed to encourage her sewing projects and did not demand a finished product. Jane made dresses for herself, including a “pretty flounced dress” from a pattern her aunt bought her. Cutting out material for a dress might take all day as the boat rocked. She also made a bonnet, and skirts for her little cousin. Even in port, she carried on with sewing, making clothing whenever she had time between the tours of museums, monuments and gardens (Girdler 1857). While in Mobile she attended a masquerade ball wearing a “white domino trimmed with red and blue, and a red masque” (Girdler 1857:Mar 3). Although she may have sewn her dress for the ball, she probably borrowed the “domino,” a long cloak with flowing sleeves and a hood was specifically worn at masquerades to hide the dress underneath until revealed inside the ballroom. Both her dress, and those she made for her cousin and family would be diagnostic not only of social class, but also of age, for her cousin was only a toddler. The quality of fabric, style of embellishments, and amount of trim could all be indications of class.

On the voyage back to the States from France, Jane’s half-brother Sam, signed on as cabin boy. Unlike other journals that exhibited a strong delineation between the captain’s family and crew, her journal showed her “working class” status as the nanny. She not only interacted with Sam, but she also knew the names of the sailors on board (Girdler 1997:199). Still, her aunt

and uncle indulged her. While in St. Petersburg, they took her and Fannie sightseeing to museums, churches and palaces (Girdler 1857:June 12) and while in Bordeaux they all stayed in a countryside chateau. Jane abandoned her journal that month for the delight of shopping in the town, rides in the country and socializing with her cousins (Girdler 1857:Oct 3).

When they returned to Mobile, Jane went home overland with her Aunt and cousin to Boston. Misfortune struck three years later in 1860 when a hurricane sank the *Robert H. Dixey* in Mobile Bay, and took the life of her uncle, Captain Richard, along with eighteen crew members. On September 19th, the *New Orleans Picayune* (1860) reported, “The saddest loss of the storm... is that of the loss of the ship Robert H. Dixey with her esteemed and popular captain...” Jane did not go to sea with them again before the tragic loss of her uncle, but she kept her adventurous spirit. In later years, she remarried to Americus Whedon and together they travelled the world. In 1905, she published her adventures, along with the account of her voyage on *Robert H. Dixey*, as the book *Aunt Jane’s Travels*.

Jane wrote daily of her time on board the ship and touring in distant ports, only stopping when she went ashore for the month in Bordeaux. She mentioned sewing many times in her narrative, perhaps as a way to prove her dedication to the work, along with caring for her cousin. Her relationship as niece of the captain and his wife allowed her far more leeway to enjoy herself on shore when they took tours with or without the toddler. Her aunt bought her gifts and took her sightseeing as a cherished family member, whom she did not treat as a lower-class nanny working for them. The items she used such as the writing implements and sewing tools would most likely be the same quality as her aunts. Any class differentiation as a poor relative, would be unlikely to be determined by the objects Jane owned.

Mary Congdon

There has been a great deal of excitement. A Man of War steamer came in this morning, a Secessionist or revolutionist. He threatened to fire on the town, but he saw two [armed] steamers coming so he ran to Pico [island] as fast as he could... (Congdon 1862:Jan 3).

During the Civil War, Mary Congdon saw brief glimpses of naval action while voyaging with her family on the *Caroline Tucker*. She also recorded an earlier voyage, while only 12 years old, on *Hannah Thornton* with her little brother. They often played games, such as bow and arrows or putting together puzzles, on their voyage from New York, to New Orleans and back with a cargo of sugar and molasses (Congdon 1854:Nov 24). In 1860, Mary took a steamer south to join her family on board *Caroline Tucker*, her father's new clipper ship. She often mentioned sewing, knitting or needlework while they sailed to Mobile, Alabama and on to Le Havre, France before sailing back to New York with passengers. After which, they sailed to San Francisco via the Chincha Islands for guano to take to Valencia, Spain before returning to New York (Congdon 1860).

In accordance with accepted roles for women, Mary acted as caretaker for her brother, George, on her first voyage. Her mother took only Mary's little brother on the previous voyage, but with her increased debility from severe headaches, Cynthia chose to bring Mary to help care for him. On board the *Hannah Thornton*, Mary looked out for George and "had to punish him to make him obey as he should" for he often went on the foredeck with the sailors (Congdon 1854:Nov 29). She kept a list of books she read (or hoped to) that besides *Robinson Crusoe*, which may have also been to read aloud to her brother, included *Examples of Goodness* and *I will be a Lady*. These titles of books suggest further molding of young girls to the socially

accepted norms of what tasks and work were appropriate for a Victorian woman, such as mending and taking care of children.

Mary mentioned the games played on board. When younger, toys, games and entertainments were meant to teach gender roles, such as the doll her father bought her in New Orleans, and for which she made dresses (Congdon 1855:Dec 30). Yet she still climbed the rigging like her brother might, noting I “went half way to the mizzen mast head with papa to see Cape Florida” (1855:Feb 5). She adored George and on the subsequent voyage, she still played games with him although she was 18 years old. Mary walked on a tightrope, pieced together puzzles and practiced shooting a target with bow and arrows that the boatswain made for her brother. “I beat him, but he shoots so much straighter than I...” (Congdon 1860:May 31). She took the helm, steering the ship with him. “I think it is pretty hard work, for my part” (1860:May 31). Although these activities and toys would not be considered feminine, they indicate children on board, and in all probability, the presence of a maternal figure to care for them as so rarely did a father have sole care for his young children.

Mary was an obedient child, but as she matured, her disregard of class boundaries often seemed a rebellion against her father’s strict rules. On her first voyage, as a child, she dutifully wrote of the weather, of caring for her brother and of diversions such as French and navigation lessons. On the second, as a flirtatious young woman, she focused on the men around her including the sailors. Her parents took her to sea to separate her from an inappropriate beau ashore, Gardiner Cottrell, who gave her a daguerreotype of his image (Congdon 1860:Dec 24). On the ship, Mary encouraged the affections of both the first mate, Mr. Crery, and a sailor named Billy, creating jealousies between them. Mr. Crery loaned her a book poems by Byron, but her mother would not allow her to read it (Congdon 1861:Jan 26). Billy often sat with her in the

galley, reminiscing of home. This relationship led to an argument with Mr. Crery of which she recorded, “He said he did not like me a bit. I told him I did not care...” (Congdon 1861:Mar 27). Several weeks later, they reconciled. Many pages have sentences scribbled out, erased, or even torn out completely, but whether from her immediate censure or later regret of a failed romance is difficult to determine.

Mary noted the needlework, knitting and sewing she did while on the ship. When the first mate made her a tatting shuttle, she immediately set to using it (Congdon 1860:May 1). She wrote of time spent on this work with her mother, “Mama has been ironing and I have been crocheting her a headdress” (Congdon 1860:May 24). At Le Havre she purchased more thread, ribbons and a new pair of scissors. In April the next year, she finished only half her counterpane or bedspread before she ran out of thread (Congdon 1861:Apr 4). Besides lists of materials used, tools bought and items made, she kept notes in the back of her journal to remind herself of knitting patterns. One is labeled Split Zephyr, another Operetta, and also an Edge for Baby’s Shirt: “slip first stitch always, knit one, put over thread, knit 2, put over thread, narrow—knit back plain...” (Congdon 1860).

Mary and several other women in this study, including Mary Stickney and Hattie Atwood, kept pet birds in gilded cages in the aft quarters. These little pets usually live in the salon. For their anniversary, Mary Stickney’s husband built a pigeon house for the pair of African pigeons he gave her (Stickney 1881:Apr 2). During the voyage, a small closet in Mary’s cabin caught fire while she was out of the room. The fire damaged books, papers and cloth and scorched the white paint, but far worse for Mary, it “suffocated our dear little bird, he was quite dead before we could get him out...Poor little Peter” (Congdon 1862:June 11). Elaborate bird

cages became popular in the 19th century and can be seen in contemporary images and museums. Mary did not describe the cage, but their basic shapes are distinctive.

After the voyage, Mary's father again attempted to control his daughter who continually ignored class boundaries. He scolded her and fired Mr. Crery's for the "affairs between himself & you." Captain John felt the Mate far beneath a respectable match for his daughter (Druett 1998:117). A few months later, Mary lost her father when he sailed without his family in a storm off Cape Horn and a wave swept him overboard. "Such a death, such a grave" Mary wrote with disbelief (Congdon 1863:Apr 20). Her mother, Cynthia never remarried, supporting herself as a seamstress the remainder of her life, but Mary chose to wed a German mariner with whom she had two daughters. Her father probably would have disapproved.

Mary as a second generation of women at sea, wrote with less detail or wonder about her journeys on her father's ships, often writing little in an entry. As a child, her toys such as the baby doll from her father seemed appropriate both for her gender and her social class. As she grew older, she focused her attentions on her little brother and the games they played, which were not always strictly separated by gender, such as bow and arrow practice. Similar to Jane Girdler and many wives on ships, she sewed to pass the time on board. Her lists in the back of her journal revealed objects she used, including scissors and knitting needles, all of which are consistently gender appropriate. Yet she also seemed to use the skills she possessed as a way to flirt. When the first mate, Mr. Crery made her a tatting shuttle, she immediately set to using it, but she did not reveal in her journal whether she used it to make items for him. Although Mary seemed to be conform to gender norms as she grew up, she often defied her parents as to class boundaries, especially when flirting with the sailors in any way she could.

Lucy Lord Howes

After the pirates left... We saw there was small chance of escape for the rest of us, as trains of powder had been laid and the ship was on fire.... Mr. Hall & Chace with the help of two succeeded in extinguishing the fire just in time, in five minutes more we should have blown to atoms (Howes 1866:Dec 16).

Lucy Lord Howes sailed with her husband, Captain Benjamin, and children on board ships in the China Trade. Her infants and toddler would have required many items from feeding bottles to baby clothes that she would have had to bring, or make on the voyage. On the first voyage in the *Southern Cross*, Captain Maffitt on the CSS *Florida* captured them. He allowed them to pack a valise and keep the body of her recently deceased baby, pickled in spirits for the journey home. All else, the privateers seized and after taking them on board their ship, burned the *Southern Cross*. Transferred to a passing French ship, Lucy, her husband and the officers made their way back to the States (Howes 1860). Despite this traumatic trip, Lucy returned to sea with her husband, but while on the ship *Lubra* in 1866, pirates attacked them in the South China Sea. Although she survived, along with her daughter Carrie, their time living on board ships ended.

A few days after the *Lubra* left San Francisco, Lucy gave birth to a second baby girl. Her husband took over some of the entries in her journal, and even described his delivery of a healthy babe. Although the *Guide to Health* of 1844 disparaged the male midwife, as “ignorant, untimely and rash in his interference,” the captain’s wife had little choice (Colby1844). The Howes brought a nursemaid, Lizzie, whom Benjamin felt “quite handy with the baby” while he treated Lucy keeping her in perspiration and “bathing her head and breasts” (Howes 1866:May 3). Although recovered from childbirth, Lucy often fell ill so she submitted herself to her husband’s ministrations including a dose of “Dovers powder,” a mixture with ipecac and opium. Lucy had

difficulties nursing her babe when ill, “My milk don’t seem to agree with her—besides it takes all my strength...Lizzie & Carrie being sick and the care of [the baby] is rather too much for me” (Howes 1866:Aug 22). Soon after she gave up nursing the babe. Given her decision, material culture might include baby bottles and India rubber or calfskin nipples. Other than sewing baby dresses, Lucy mentioned no other paraphernalia in her journals.

In the Victorian era, struggles by middle-class women with their hired help was a common complaint (DuBois 2009). During the voyage, Lucy’s stewardess constantly failed to do her duties due to illness, perhaps suffering from seasickness. Both Lizzie and the Steward became disagreeable to Lucy, and eventually the friction with her “help” became a rift. With Lizzie almost always sick, Lucy believed herself worse off than when she was alone (Howes 1866:Aug 18). The *Lubra* arrived in Hong Kong after a 60 day crossing of the Pacific, and soon after, Lizzie and the Steward applied to leave the ship. Lucy expressed no regret that they left. Benjamin hired Chinese people to fill the positions of cook, cabin boy, and *amah* or nursemaid, all for \$55 a month, but Lucy did not disclose whether they were a family (Howes 1866:Aug 31). The peace seemed to be restored on board. In the 19th century, the use of Chinese or colored workers in positions considered to be “feminine work” was common and reflected the devaluing of tasks women contributed to the household ,or in this case, ship (Bolster 1996).

Lucy consistently worked on sewing projects to keep herself busy. She wrote of sewing her own wrapper or work dress, altering a dress for her baby and cutting out stockings for Carrie (Howes 1866). She bought more fabrics and silks when they reached ports in the Orient and even hired two tailors (at about \$2 a week each) while they stopped at Hong Kong (Howes 1866:July 23). Lucy scolded her tailor for not working fast enough on her skirts, a waist (corset) and dresses. She felt her constant supervision over subordinates necessary, because “unless there is

someone here to direct and attend to affairs, the work would be a long time getting done—then not satisfactory” (Howes 1866:Sept 1). Given her attitude to hired workers, her issues with underlings might have been a result of her mistreatment of them.

Although she stated a belief in women’s rights, Lucy seemed to have no concept of oppression of lower classes. She did not agree with women having the vote or being in politics. In her opinion, the change would break up families, causing separation and enmity, if men had to “stop up at home, and take care of the babies while the mothers take care of the affairs of State” (Howes 1869:May 2). Lucy acknowledged that some women might not receive equal pay for doing the same work as a man. Yet she asserted that if women worked like slaves, it was their own fault because of avarice, and their desire to amass “worldly splendor, dress and household furniture” (Howes 1869:May 2). Despite that opinion against “worldly splendor,” as a middle-class woman of the Victorian era, Lucy amassed small items, dish wares and souvenirs, which she packed below or kept in her trunk on board.

Women knew the risks of going to sea with their husbands, but rarely did their experiences equal Lucy’s last moments with her husband. The harbor pilot had warned the Howes that “...an English brig was captured just outside last Monday. The China pirates are getting rather dangerous.” On the night of Sept 23, pirates attacked the *Lubra*, and held them hostage for hours. At first they threatened them with death if they did not relinquish their gold and opium, and eventually, the pirates killed her husband, Benjamin, when none could be found. Her quick thinking may have saved her life, for when she heard the pirates returning, she dropped against her husband’s shoulder to let the blood cover her, feigning death alongside him (Watters 2001:351). She survived, and along with the remainder of the crew took the ship back into port where her baby soon died, possibly of exposure the night of the attack. She buried both

her husband and baby in Hong Kong, before she sailed home with her toddler, Carrie (Watters 2001:352). Lucy's story gives substance to the risks taken for commercial gain by captains who sailed into danger, such as known pirate territory, even with their family on board.

In the 19th century, goods from China remained popular to those who could afford them. From fine ceramics to lacquered goods, and silks to tea, America shipped them by the boatload. The term "chinoiserie" refers to not only the consumer goods but also to a fascination with all things Oriental including style of dress, home décor and artwork (Layton 1997; Corbin 2000). At first, the Chinese government kept strict control of foreign interaction, restricting trade to the single port of Canton (now Ghenjouz), but by the time Lucy arrived, the treaties after the Opium Wars kept several ports open to foreigners (Headrick 1981; Janin 1999). The archaeological investigation of the wreck *Frolic*, north of San Francisco, gives insight into the cargos brought from China in 1850 (Layton 1997). Although the captain was single at the time of wrecking, items in the cargo could be associated with women, especially in her sphere of decorating a home. For example, along with the embroidered silk shawls, ivory fans and parasols, the cargo included Chinese paintings, furniture and lacquer wares. The goods on board represented the demand by both men and women for all things Oriental during the mid-19th century.

Lucy, unlike the first two young women, was married to the captain and embodied the class and prosperity of her husband through actions, manners and dress. Her children would also be held to those standards, to look stylish wherever they toured or visited in port. While in China, she purchased fabrics for clothing that exemplified middle class fashions, items for her children, and souvenirs which may have begun a collection of curios, then considered a popular way to display wealth and culture. Although the ideology of thrift and saving continued to be evident among New England women, the accelerating shift to industrialization at mid-century, promoted

consumption as a moral economic good (Beaujot 2012). Captain's wives did not receive a salary, such as lower-class women in the shoemaking industry where Jane Girdler had worked, but they spent most of the disposable income for the family, and much of it went to clothing and accessories befitting their status. The next two women, Sarah and Eliza, similarly spent money on items that portrayed their middle class and elevated status as the wives of captains.

Sarah Hix Todd

Since leaving Cape Horn, I have been sick much, my cough is very bad, my throat very sore indeed. I gargle it with alum water and have a blister on my chest. I have gained some strength the last few days. (Todd 1859:Mar 20)

Chronically ill and suffering from tuberculosis, Sarah Hix Todd joined her husband Captain Edward on board when her doctor recommended a sea voyage, a common prescription at that time (Hansen 1923). She lived long enough to take two voyages with her husband during the Gold Rush era. Once underway, Sarah wrote sporadically in her journal, revealing the many items she used on the ship when healthy enough to be out of her bunk. Most significantly, she wrote of the care of her child. In 1857, she sailed on *Revely* to Australia and Southeast Asia, and in 1858 left with him on the extreme clipper *Comet* to California and China. Her sister, Lucy Ann Hix Crapo, who married a whaling captain, came to help Sarah move on board the newly launched *Revely*, making her preserves, sewing her a dress, and hiring the stewardess, Fanny Johnston (Todd 1857:Feb 25). Sarah survived the first voyage, and insisted on accompanying her husband on the second. She endured the clipper race to California on their ship *Comet*, which had a reputation for speed, once making the trip in 76 days (Crothers 2000). In San Francisco, she visited a doctor about her hemorrhaging lungs, but as no cure existed, he recommended she continue the journey (Todd 1859:Apr 27).

While in New York before they sailed, Sarah met a captain's wife who represented the extreme of a woman crossing the boundary into the masculine sphere on the ship. Mary Anne Patten took command of a clipper ship when her husband, Captain Joshua fell ill. Yet Mary downplayed the remarkable endeavors she performed, stating that it "seemed to me, under the circumstances, only the plain duty of a wife towards a good husband" (Patten 1857). The *New York Times* (Feb 1857) lauded her as the "Florence Nightingale of the Seas," the insurance company praised her as heroic, and feminists held her up as example of the capabilities women possessed in the so-called "pursuits and avocations of man" (Clark 1910). Margaret Fuller (1845) had written of avocational equality for women: "But if you ask me what offices they may fill, I reply – any. I do not care what case you put; let them be sea-captains, if you will. I do not doubt there are women well fitted for such an office." Sarah mentioned none of these sentiments, but voiced her compassion as another soon-to-be mother in distress. She wrote, "Poor Mrs. Patten all alone in the world. How she must suffer. How can she bear up under the afflictions? Poor thing!" (Todd 1857:Feb 16). Although Mary Anne's husband lived until the birth of their son, he died soon after. Sarah would not have seen the obituary until she arrived in Australia that July.

At the port of Singapore, she announced the birth of a daughter, without a single mention of her pregnancy until the child appeared. "I was taken sick and our baby was born in the evening of the 21 of October. An interesting little babe weighing about 4 lbs" (Todd 1858:Nov 13). They named her Ida Revely, after the ship. Similar to Lucy Howes, Sarah felt distressed that she could not nurse her child sufficiently. She did have a small quantity of preserved milk, possibly made by her sister, which she would have fed Ida with a baby bottle. Her husband procured them a goat to bring on board, and Sarah noted feeding her child goat's milk with mashed arrowroot. "I think she suffers much in consequence of not having proper nourishment"

(Todd 1858:Jan 24). With the goat producing minimal milk, she struggled to feed the child. “I could not help crying to see my darling eating cold dry bread, and drinking cold water from a tumbler...” (Todd 1858:Jan 31). Despite the lack of food, the baby doubled in size in her first four months, though she always seemed to be sickly (Todd 1858:Mar 2). Sarah reported a few weeks later that her preserves needed to be thrown overboard and the nanny goat dried up, so her babe ate little besides biscuits and water until they reached port.

Other mothers, in better health than Sarah, managed to make items for their babies and toddlers, such as toys and even swinging cots for the child to sleep in on the ship. During the voyage, Sarah only once referred to sewing baby clothes for Ida. “I have been sewing a little, have finished two dresses...” (Todd 1858:Feb 8). Sarah wrote of sewing only a few other times, but she directed her stewardesses to do projects. Before they moved onto the clipper ship *Revely*, she noted: “Fanny has finished the sheets and pillows cases for use on board ship” (Todd 1857:Mar 6), thereby confirming her role as a middle-class woman in directing the work of her hired help.

The interactions between Sarah and the “help” emphasized the division of class on the ship, just as Lucy Howes had struggled with her stewardess. On the homeward voyage, Sarah relieved the stewardess of nanny duties, because Fanny dallied with a sailor. Given the impropriety of a romantic attachment to a crewman, though he probably was the same social class as the nanny, Sarah proclaimed Fanny “guilty of so many things that I dare not trust my little one with her” (Todd 1858:Mar 27). Despite her illness, Sarah refused help, but complained “I am quite unwell but cannot rest here as I now have the whole charge of my babe and yet I am not able to lift her” (Todd 1858:Mar 27). Until they offloaded the stewardess in New York, Sarah complained of the troubles she caused, “Fanny is quite as bad as ever, it is impossible to keep her

from Harry” (Todd 1858:Apr 4). On the second voyage, Sarah brought a new stewardess. The material culture on board should reflect this schism between the classes of women on board. Cheaper copies of the same artifact might indicate a lower class. For example, the luxury “vanity set” of mirror, brush and comb might be made of sterling silver or ivory, but a set made of vulcanite might be affordable to lower class nannies (Beaujot 2012).

In her role as nurturing caretaker of her daughter, Sarah appealed to her family’s aid. Knowing the voyage across the Pacific might be her last, Sarah sent a letter from San Francisco to her family, asking that after her death they care for Ida whenever her husband went to sea. She promised Edward would give them payments for the girl’s care and deeded her possessions to her daughter (Todd 1859:Apr 24). She stressed teaching Ida good manners so her father would not be embarrassed by his daughter’s behavior (Todd 1859:Apr 24). As they arrived in Hong Kong, Sarah died on board, but she had spent her final months in the company of her husband. Despite adoring care, Ida only lived to be 12 years old, and so her family had only the carefully preserved letter and a photo by which to remember her (Hansen 1923).

In 1863, the Bucklin & Crane Co. sold *Comet* to a British firm that renamed the ship *Fiery Star*. Two years later, it caught fire in transit from Australia to England. The passengers and crew who took to the life boats disappeared at sea, but the few remaining on board were rescued by the *Dauntless* and taken to New Zealand (Crothers 2000). Although the exact location remains unknown, recent increases in deep sea exploration may locate shipwrecks in that area. Historic documents such as Sarah Todd’s journal which relate possible items used in the care of her newborn, and first daughter Carrie, then 18 months old such as medicines and feeding the baby, might provide clues to identify and analyze artifacts from the wreck.

Eliza Williams

Now I am in the place that is to be my home, possibly for 3 or 4 years; but I can not make it appear to me so yet it all seems so strange, so many men and not one woman beside myself... I think it will not all be as pleasant as today; the motion of the ship I shall be a long time getting used to (Williams 1964:3-4).

In September of 1858, when Eliza Azelia Williams rode the gamming chair up the side of the whaleship *Florida* to join her husband, Captain Thomas she was uncertain what to expect of a life at sea. During the four year voyage, in which they followed the whale migrations in the Pacific, she bore two more children on the ship, so she would have had baby accoutrements packed in her trunk, or bought them in ports where they stopped. Despite her bouts of seasickness, loneliness, and sadness when she missed the two sons they left on shore, Eliza stayed for the length of the voyage. The *Florida* sailed the annual round transiting between New Zealand and the Arctic, stopping in Honolulu, Russell and other whaling ports (Williams 1964). On the whaling grounds, they frequently hunted in company with other whaleships that often carried wives on board. Eliza made friends and often gammed with the wives on other ships. She continued to go to sea with her husband until the 1870s.

After they passed Tasmania on January 4th, 1859, she left off writing in her journal for a month. When she started up again, she announced the birth of her son, William Fish, while at sea heading for New Zealand (1964:38). Such was Victorian propriety, that not one of her entries in the previous four months mentioned being pregnant or blamed her seasickness on that factor. Two years later in Banderas Bay, Mexico, she gave birth to her fourth child, Mary (Williams 1964:174). With no other woman to attend her birth, Eliza's husband was the midwife. The manuals written to accompany the medicine chests taken on ships, usually included a how-to on birthing. The *Ship Captains Medical Guide* of 1868 even printed a birth certificate form for a

child born at sea (Leach 1868), evidence that births were an expected and not uncommon event on ships.

Although not usually conceived on board, wives on ships often gave birth to babies at sea (Druett 1998). Many whaling wives shared in Eliza's experience, convinced by family or husbands they left toddlers on shore, only to then give birth at sea or in port (Norling 2000:255). Although wives considered their duty of nurturing and influencing their husbands of key importance, but this role diminished during their postpartum recovery. Often captains needed to assist their wives long after the birth for no whalers in this study documented hiring of a nursemaid or stewardess. Captain Williams helped Eliza make their son a "sailor's cot" to sleep in, which the motion of the ship kept swinging constantly, rocking the babe (Williams 1964:86). The cot may have been used again for their daughter, along with other small clothes her brother wore, but Eliza did not elaborate in her journal on whether she clothed her daughter with hand-me-downs, or had new clothes for the little girl.

Eliza rarely mentioned sewing notions, other than helping her husband sew sails for his whaleboat, and giving some needles to a Russian woman she met (Williams 1964:7,188). However, when she attempted to describe the first whale she saw, Eliza used what she knew for comparisons. She noted that the ears of the sperm whale were small holes as "big around as a knitting needle" (Williams 1964:10). Knitting needles and other sewing notions such as darning eggs, thimbles, tatting shuttles and crochet hooks were all common objects that sailors made from whalebone (MSM 2005). Perhaps she kept too busy looking after her small children, for Eliza mentioned none of these objects.

According to gender norms of the 19th century, men and women dressed differently. Lower classes or labor groups also wore clothing distinctive from the upper and middle-classes.

A list of “slops” or replacement stores for the *Florida* revealed what sailors wore in 1858: Heavy Bay State Jackets, Duck Trousers, Red Flannel shirts, Fancy Calico Shirts, Guernsey Frocks, Thick Boots, and Tarred Hats (Williams 1964). Unlike the characteristic costume of the sailor, maritime women did not look different from other middle-class women on shore (Norling 2000:71). Occasionally, whaling wives found themselves out of fashion on their return to port. In New Zealand, Eliza went shopping with another captain’s wife in the port of Russell which had several stores. “Mrs. Manchester and myself each bought a hat or flat as they call them, to be in fashion with the ladies there, as they all wear them. They are much cooler than bonnets” (Williams 1964:109). For once, the trend in 19th-century fashions moved to a more practical design for women.

Eliza paid close attention to clothing, both of her peers and what she saw foreigners wearing. At times she purchased or received clothing from foreign ports she visited. At the Cape Verde Islands, she noted the clothing of the natives:

I suppose we looked as strange to them as they do to us, dressed so different as we were. They had no bonnets on, but instead had handkerchiefs put on in the form of a turban... [The women] wear very little clothing, just a skirt and a long scarf thrown over their shoulders, pinned behind and hanging down. When they put up their arms you can plainly see their chemises, so they have no waist [corset] to their dresses (Williams 1964:14).

In September of 1859 while whaling in the Okhotsk Sea, the natives gave Eliza skin gloves, boots, and an embroidered fur coat for her son. They also presented her with a fawn skin dress trimmed in fur which was “embroidered with silks and worsted in colors... I think it a nice present and a curiosity” (Williams 1964:88). Her detailed descriptions might facilitate identification of the Native clothing and the pieces of garb whalers brought home as souvenirs. The popularity of collecting exotic curios during the Victorian era allowed women to share part

of their experiences when they returned to visit with families. Some collections later inspired or started the creation of museums such as the Peabody-Essex and Custom House Maritime Museum, both in Massachusetts.

As a dutiful wife, Eliza accompanied her husband on most of his voyages, other than during the Civil War when women and children were sequestered on shore, out of harm's way. In 1871, Eliza and their children voyaged with him to the Arctic grounds. That year the pack ice moved in early and the ship became trapped near Point Belcher in Alaska, along with about thirty other whale ships (Appendix C). The crews, totaling over 1200 people, abandoned their ships to seek rescue from seven whaleships beyond the icepack (Williams 1964:237). Eliza and her family travelled by small whale boat and spent one night on a beach behind the dunes. "The sailors dragged boats over the hills and by turning them bottom upward and covering them with sails, made quite comfortable habitations for the women and children" (US Fisheries 1878:108). They reached the waiting ships, and went on board *Progress* for the journey back to Honolulu. Her journals detailing these adventures might help in identifying the material culture found when the archaeological investigation continues at Point Belcher, Alaska. Archaeologists identified beached wrecks and shore side camps, but have yet to find the rest of the whaling fleet wrecks in deep water (Barr 2010; Rogers 2012).

Eliza voyaged with her husband and children for over a dozen years. For all those years, she lived on the ship with her husband as often as possible, and made the aft cabins their home and herself the family's moral and spiritual keeper. She mentioned items she needed to care for her children, and most particular to living on a ship, was the swinging cot she made for her son. Her son, William Fish, would have been about 10 years old when they lost their ship to the Arctic pack ice, so his clothing would have increased in size over the years, but still be smaller

than the adults. The detailed descriptions she wrote on clothes usually told of those worn by foreigners as compared to her own, and she noted the separate styles by gender within that other culture. The lists of sailors clothing in the slop chest also provided comparison for class and gender differences of style on board the whaleship *Florida*. Eliza as a long term resident on ships, probably knew well how to pack for her later trips, what items she would use more of, or what she would like to create more comfort for her family.

Mary Stickney

Saw whales at 7am. Lowered three boats at 8am. Almon gone in the Starboard Boat. Oh I do hope they will get some of them... Waist Boat struck a large whale at 12 & got boat stove, saved the whale, got it alongside at 7pm.

Some years after whaling wife Eliza Williams stopped going to sea, Mary Stickney joined her husband, Captain Almon, on the whaleship *Cicero* of New Bedford. She sewed avidly, so when she tired of waiting for him on shore, Mary would have packed her trunk with sewing notions, tools, fabrics and supplies enough for a two year voyage. She left home on the schooner *Lottie Beard* to meet him at St. Helena in January 1880. Together they cruised the whaling grounds of the North Atlantic, following the migrations of the whales and stopping for provisions and news in Fish Bay and other ports. Whaling continued to decline as the manufacture of petroleum oil usurped the profits of the industry during the last decades of the 19th century, but whalers continued to hunt the leviathans of the deep even as they noted their dwindling populations (William 1964; Nichols 2010).

Her succinct journal entries, unlike Eliza's detailed descriptions, stated few things repetitively: weather conditions, her husband's hours on lookout for whales, health issues of the crew, and her sewing projects. For example on February 17, 1881 Mary wrote: "Almon has been

to the mast head two hours. Mr. Gomez is sick so Almon has taken his masthead [watch] for him this afternoon. Worked on sofa pillow.” Few of her entries are more than a couple lines, but just as the midwife Martha Ballard recorded the mundane, Mary captured the daily experience of living on a whaleship (Ulrich 1990). Her meticulous records showed a dedication to the work or perhaps the projects kept her entertained. A wealth of information in her journal also comes through in the lists she made of using her kit of bandages to doctor the crew and of sewing project work (Stickney 1881).

Although most women on ships kept separate from the sailors, as class standing dictated, Mary knew the names of the crewmen on board. She noted them down whenever she attended to their wounds, and her list includes a dozen seamen. She treated Mr. Gomez twice for wounds, once when a cask rolled on his leg and then to poultice his foot. She also doctored Cornell who cut himself four times, including once with a gaff hook in the leg, the cabin boy, Alexander Gifford who cut a finger, and the cook, Haren, who burnt his arm (Stickney 1880; Druett 2000). Although she left out the causes on her main list, Mary elaborated in her journal entry on what happened to the men. On January 13th, “Phillip & Antone had a fight. Philip got his face scratched some” (Stickney 1881).

Her supplies consisted of a paper box of medicines which probably included “sticking plasters” and bandages to bind the wounds. She left the internal treatments to her husband, though she may have nursed them afterwards. He would have used a manual included in most medical chest, which American ships were legally required to carry. Almon could use the step by step instructions to diagnose and prescribe a mixture from the bottles it contained. Despite their care, some sailors did not recover easily. For example, Mr. Gomez remained ill, so they

discharged him from the ship, leaving him with tobacco, a hat, shoes, clothing, yards of fabric and a calico bedspread she made for him, all as severance wages (Stickney 1881:Mar 31).

In keeping with work appropriate to middle-class women, sewing continued to be the predominant activity of women on ships at the end of the century. Mary produced items for their use on the ship, such as pillow cases and sheets, and she made pieces of clothing for both herself such as dresses and petticoats, and her husband, such as shirts and pants. Besides sewing their clothes, she washed and ironed them (Stickney 1881). For all the items she sewed on the voyage, Mary made a master list including the date of each step, including when she cut it out, commenced and then finished the project. For example, she began a bedquilt for her friend, Annie, on January 6th and recorded how many squares she made each day (except on Sunday). The ship took a whale on January 16th, which interrupted her quilting on that day. She continued quilting daily until January 28th when she wrote, “Sewed Annie’s bedquilt strips together & finished it this afternoon” (Stickney 1881).

Her generosity extended to crew and especially the cabin boy, Alex. On Christmas Eve, she sent the Steward to get the boy’s stockings and filled them with “candy, peanuts, coconuts and a calico shirt” she sewed. During the voyage, she also made him denim pants and an alpaca cap. For Mr. Gomez, she made a belt to carry his money. He returned her kind attentions, giving her a coconut, bottles of port wine, and his parrot, when illness forced him to quit the ship (Stickney 1881). Of the women’s journals in this study that list sewing projects, she produced the most items within the 16 months she recorded on board.

Her journal contains the only direct reference found in this study to a feminine hygiene item. On June 11th, Mary commenced to work on a “napkin strap” and finished it on Monday. She included no explanation, or further references to the item. Other than resting on Sunday, no

pattern in her entries suggested she relaxed during her monthly cycle (Stickney 1881). Because Victorian women used euphemisms to describe feminine hygiene items, references to these items are obscure. Mary Congdon when she listed what she bought at Havre in 1860, included to a “Linen & belt” that may also be a feminine hygiene product (Congdon 1860), but the reference may be to fabric and a belt for her clothing. Feminine hygiene items have not been identified in a marine environment as yet. Perhaps a database of artifacts associated with women might allow easier identification of these objects in the field.

Mary only left a record of the one voyage. Her husband sailed the following year on the *Mattapoissett*, but no further record exists of his wife. Her activities on the ship, sewing and bandaging up the men, conformed to prescribed gender roles. As noted earlier, *Godey's Ladys Book* (Hale 1852), touted nursing as an instinctual characteristic of women, and Mary's care of lower-class sailors may have been thought of as charity work.

Her prodigious work sewing seems equivalent to what many mariners wives did ashore to support themselves when their husbands were at sea. For example, Eliza Stanton earned money sewing shirts for the ship outfitters Cook & Snow in New Bedford (Norling 2000:158). Despite sewing for herself, her husband and as gifts to their sailors, Mary still may have had enough clothing and items to sell when she returned to shore. Unlike merchant captains, whalers seemed to be relegated to a lower strata of maritime society, so perhaps Mary needed to continue her efforts even while at sea to supplement the income they made in the industry. She kept a conscientious record of all her sewing projects, including her feminine hygiene napkin which Victorian propriety may have otherwise omitted. Although, sailors mended their clothing and a few captains did needlework, only a woman would make this item.

Hattie Atwood

Father and the mate on the top gallant forecastle watching the shores and bends of the river. The second mate amidships sending orders along to the man at the wheel. I watch the chart for rocks and shoal that may be in the way... I am fascinated and excitement runs high (Freeman and Dahl 1999:47).

When *Charles Stewart* arrived at Hobart in 1883, Hattie Atwood helped out by navigating for her father, as Captain Horace risked entering the harbor at dark without a pilot. Although Hattie learned to navigate and would have known how to use the required tools, she wrote more about the clothing and accessories she took or purchased for herself or family as gifts on the voyage. Hattie often assisted the short-handed crew that consisted of only eight men, including Ah-Sam, their Chinese steward and cook. She took the wheel whenever the sailors needed an extra hand, such as anchoring, stowing for sea and sail rotations. Despite her boldness crossing the boundary into what was considered the masculine sphere, the separation of responsibilities by gender relegated middle-class women on ships to specific tasks, usually none that involved the same work as the sailors (Freeman and Dahl 1999:75).

When she came on board the ship, Hattie brought her clothing in a trunk that she stowed in her tiny stateroom (Freeman and Dahl 1999:31). She packed four dresses (all hand-me-downs from her sisters and mother), including her best dress of red, green, yellow, blue and black plaid, a brown-striped dress, a black, bunting dress, and a gray Japanese silk dress that once belonged to her mother, which she joked that despite the sash of blue might be “very suitable for a matron but hardly for a girl in her teens.” She included one plum-colored skirt but fails to mention any shirts to match it. Hattie brought three hats: a blue-velvet turban, a black chip hat and the beaver hat with plume and bird decoration that coordinated with her beaver coat. Besides her underwear, she filled the rest of the trunk with ribbons, and shoes before locking down the lid. (Freeman and

Dahl 1999:25). As a young woman with suitors calling on her at each port, she dressed up appropriately each morning. Perhaps in the warm climes of Australia and Peru, she used a fan to not only circulate the stifling air, but flirt to with these beaux (Beaujot 2012). All of these “feminine” items would be diagnostic of a young woman except maybe the matronly second-hand dress from her mother.

Hattie’s wardrobe reflected the fashions at the end of the century, as the huge hoop skirts and bustles of earlier decades gave way to a leaner shape. Despite the efforts of dress reform movements started in the 1850 by Amelia Bloomer and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the corset still featured in women’s fashions. Hattie’s trunk held “several odd waists” that she inherited from her sisters. Although her wardrobe may have started out as dated, she made purchases of fashionable new clothes at the ports where they stopped. In Brisbane, she went shopping with her friends, the Misses Woods, to buy a new hat. While in Barcelona, she had a dressmaker fashion her an olive green dress with satin trim and found a pair of French kid boots with blue laces that she declared “the best fitting shoes I ever had and kept their shape splendidly” (Freeman and Dahl 1999:100). Along with kid gloves and a silk umbrella, Hattie bought a souvenir bit of Gibraltar rock set in a silver broach.

The concept of separate spheres in history reinforces the perception that women stayed relegated to the private sphere, yet often on their voyage from New York to Australia, to the Peruvian guano islands and on to Sicily before returning home, Hattie often stepped outside the so-called women’s sphere. Transport of cargo on merchant sailing ships diminished further in the late 19th century, as more reliable and faster steamships left only low priority cargos to ships like theirs. Twice they sailed with only ballast when no cargo could be found, once across the Pacific and once across the Mediterranean. Hattie knew this economic reality and the details of their

finances, because her father's declining health and often failing vision meant she took over the accounting for the ship. From New York, they took a shipment of general merchandise on the first leg that included everything from shoe pegs to parlor organs, one of which they kept in the cabin to be played en route (Freeman and Dahl 1999:35). From Lobos de Afuerag, the Peruvian islands north of the Chinchas, they took a cargo hold of guano for Barcelona. Finally they loaded salt at Trapani for the fisheries in Maine. Stopping at Gibraltar, Hattie represented her father at the American consul and attended to their business, as both her father and the mate were too ill to go. (Freeman and Dahl 1999). These examples show her ability to perform roles usually assigned men, that because of her social status, she could accomplish the required task as a surrogate of the power invested in her father.

During a gale when they were pooped by a huge wave, Hattie assisted her father in a medical emergency. The helmsman, Tom, broke his leg and they needed to set it. She used her scissors to cut open the man's pants, and socks. (Freeman and Dahl 1999:45). When her father fell ill, she nursed him as well as she could and helping him with the chores that strained his fading vision. She attempted to cheer him up by mimicking him in command of *Charles Stewart* and got both him and the crew to laugh (Freeman and Dahl 1999:133). On shore she might be able to complete the captain's business with the port authorities, but the idea of a woman in power on the ship contrasted against the contemporary gender norms, and created only comedy.

In September of 1886, a subsequent captain of *Charles Stewart* failed in his navigation. He ran the ship onto Ragged Island near Matinicus while attempting to enter Penobscot Bay in the thick Maine fog. Salvagers made several attempts to save the vessel. First they freely gave the cargo of coal to the inhabitants of the island to lighten the ship, and then they brought in a

tugboat, but the ship remained stuck fast. The Belfast newspaper *Republic Journal* reported that an October storm finally broke the ship apart (Freeman and Dahl 1999:165-66).

Hattie, as a young woman with no children to care on board her father's ship, had no responsibilities until her father fell ill. Then she helped him with navigation, ship accounts, and even as his representative on shore at the American Consul. She wrote of her flirtations, all of the appropriate class or social standing unlike Mary Congdon, and of her new friends made ashore, with whom she often went shopping. Although Hattie often wrote of clothing and the accessories that went with them, she seldom mentioned sewing. By the 1880s, middle-class women may have been less likely to sew clothing for their family. With the increase in textile mills and sewing machines, more women of leisure may have bought their clothes (DuBois 2009). On the voyage, Hattie delighted in buying new clothes and shoes for herself, instead of receiving them second-hand from her older sisters.

Conclusion

When women went to sea, they brought not only their trunks but the expectations and concerns of their gender and status. The current belief that the Victorian concept of separate spheres can be universally applied to maritime history has obscured the experiences of women who chose to join their husbands on ships. The insistence that only men went to sea while women stayed on shore continues to distort the complex interactions in maritime communities. Changing ideals of marriages based on romantic love prompted many captain's wives to join them on both merchant and whaling ships where they made a "home" on board. As proof of the years spent on ships, New England archives hold the journals of women at sea who wrote of their daily lives, interactions with husband and children, romantic attachments, births and deaths on

board, and despite isolation or distance from home, demonstrated their awareness of historic movements, news and trends.

The daily entries in their journals give evidence of the objects and activities that they carried to sea, which could be used as diagnostics for archaeological investigations. The study of these items helps demonstrate how the interests of Victorian culture continued to be reflected in common objects even in the context of shipboard life. When studied in this context, women's belongings open up inquiry into how middle-class boundaries were established, how purchase of consumer goods supported expressions of class and femininity, and how these items reinforced the roles and work considered appropriate for women. Research that presumes separate spheres in all maritime activities, and accepts the superstition that "women were bad luck on ships" as apparent proof they never went to sea, diminishes the contributions of women to maritime history and deters further investigations into their presence on ships. In fact, the material culture record and future work in underwater archaeology on shipwrecks has the potential to rectify the dearth of information on this underrepresented chapter in maritime history.

CHAPTER 3: LARGE ARTIFACTS

The journals of seafaring women, such as those introduced in chapter 2, mention and describe five large objects, which can be indicative of their presence on ships: gimballed beds, gaming chairs, parlor organs, small deckhouses and bathtubs (Howes 1866; Williams 1964; Freeman & Dahl 1999). An examination of the function and history of these items reveals their usefulness as diagnostics during investigation of a shipwreck site. These five objects supported a woman in the choice to follow her husband to sea, as each eased her emotional and physical discomfort endured in the cramped accommodations. Space on board ship came at a premium; each square foot was designated with a specific use.

The main purpose of ships, to transport commercial cargo, meant that they were designed around the carrying capacity of the hold. Only the clipper ships built at mid-century sacrificed some of that hold space for speed (Crothers 2000). On a merchant ship, the hold was loaded in port with a cargo that could vary widely from tea to guano to manufactured goods. On a whaleship, the hold started empty, carrying only staves and metal hoops, and during the voyage, the cooper transformed the staves into barrels, which they filled with whale oil to be stored in the hold. In the remaining space, those on board lived in compact accommodations. The crew kept to close quarters in the bow, called the forecabin, and the officers had slightly more room within the aft cabins. The wife (and any children) of the captain joined him in the after cabins. Due to social class segregation norms, their living quarters were separate from regular sailors. “Forward is the Forecabin where the seamen live. I cannot take you there as I have not been there myself, but am told it is very nicely fitted up” (Deblois 1856).

On most whaleships, the captain’s wife lived in only four cabins between decks: stateroom, sitting, dining salon and pantry. With her husband, she shared a stateroom situated aft,

on the starboard side. In addition to the bed, their cabin contained small closets and drawers, with space for a trunk to be nailed to the floor. Their personal head (toilet) opened aft of the cabin door. A narrow sitting room along the transom provided a separate space for the captain and his wife to entertain visiting guests and served also as library, office, and parlor (Leavitt 1998). Forward of the sitting room, the dining salon was located under a skylight and a companionway provided access to the deck near the wheel. Dominating the room, a large table with rails designed to keep the dishes from sliding off, was bolted to the sole to ensure that it remained secure in heavy seas. The captain's wife also shared the dining room with the officers and steward, who slept in cabins along one side. On the forward bulkhead to starboard, a door led to the small pantry where she prepared food and mixtures such as bread dough for the cook to bake in the galley (Druett 1998:136). On deck, a captain's wife stayed aft out of the way of the crew work. She could also retreat to the top of the hurricane house, a roofed structure that wrapped around the stern on whaleships (Crapo 1866).

Large Objects

1) Gimbaled beds

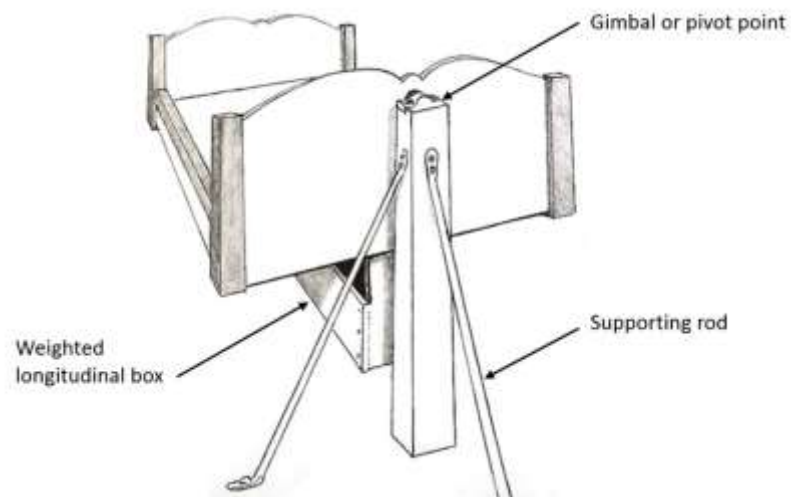


FIGURE 3. Gimbaled bed on *Charles W. Morgan* (Illustration by author, 2013).

Gimbals function to keep an item level to the horizon despite the heel of a ship. From the 16th century, the invention of gimbals in which two pivot points joined by rings kept the compasses flat in heavy seas. Archaeologists found one of the earliest examples of gimbaling systems while excavating *Mary Rose*, sunk in 1545 (Marsden 2003) and others examples have been found on sites up to modern day (Kreutz 1973; Martin 1999). Inventors have applied gimbals to other objects on ships such as lamps, stoves and even entire cabins in an attempt to alleviate seasickness (Bessemmer 1905). Gimballed beds function in the same way, but with a single axis aligned fore and aft on the ship.

Both hammocks and swinging cots, precursors to the gimballed bed, pivoted on the longitudinal axis. The canvas hammocks adopted by the Royal Navy of England in 1597 could be rolled up to clear space in the tween decks (Blomfield 1911). Captain James Cook on *Endeavour* (1769-1771) and Lord Horatio Nelson on HMS *Victory* (1803-1805) slept in swinging cots that could be stowed. A gimballed bed, made of wood and topped with a mattress, remained in place swinging between its two posts at the head and foot. Under the length of the bed, a trough-like structure allowed the addition of weights such as bricks or stones which reduced the swinging motion and made for a more comfortable bed (FIGURE 3).

2) Gimming chairs

Sailors referred to a meeting of whaleships at sea as a “gam” and unlike with merchant ships, whaling captains often stopped to exchange news and mail (Brewster and Druett 1992:282). If weather permitted, the officers and wives visited the other ship by small boat. To lift and lower a genteel lady over the side to her transport, sailors hauled the gimming chair with ropes slung by tackles from the yards or a boat davit (FIGURE 4). The chair allowed her to forego the challenge of climbing a ladder up the side of a ship (Williams 1964:3). On a



FIGURE 4. Half-barrel gamming chair, NBWM (Photo by author, 2013).

whaleship, the chair might be made by the cooper from a half-barrel and fitted with a seat (Deblois 1856). Both the New Bedford and the Nantucket Whaling Museums exhibit a half-barrel style gamming chair from their collections, and the Mystic Seaport Museum holds a wooden, armchair-style gamming chair in the collections from the ship *Charles W. Morgan*.

3) Parlor Organs

Parlor reed organs, a musical instrument that generates sound by the player pumping foot pedals while pressing the keys, became fashionable items in homes during the 1840s. Developed in the early 19th century, patents increased exponentially in the 1850s, and after the Civil War, the annual production of reached over fifteen thousand instruments (Ames 1992, Gellerman 1973). As production increased, cost decreased, which allowed the middle class an affordable alternative to the piano. (Ames 1980). In 1863, Mason & Hamlin Co. advertised organs for \$100 to \$600 less than half the price of an average piano (Mason & Hamlin 1886:71). Often an ornate hutch (upper section), built with wood inlays and scrollwork, topped the cabinet that enclosed the

practical function, with no embellishments. On merchant ships, the large deckhouses, trunk houses, and underneath the poop deck accommodated cabins for officers, provided storage and included galley spaces. The arrangement allowed for enlarged cargo space below decks, and improved cabin conditions with increased light and ventilation. Great cabins afforded room for furniture such as walnut tables, side boards, stuffed chairs, parlor organs, and even fireplaces. The massive SS *Great Britain* included a 100-foot long promenade below skylights for first-class passengers in between the first-class cabins under the poop deck. Clipper ships furnished lavish accommodations that flaunted elaborate finish work, for example the *Witch of the Wave* (1851) interiors consisted of “bird’s eye maple, with frames of satin wood, relieved with zebra, mahogany and rose wood, enameled cornices edged with gold, and dark pilasters, with curiously carved and gilded capitals, and dark imitation marble pedestals” (Crothers 2000:435). By comparison, wives on whaleships retreated to a small deckhouse, which at only 6ft long, easily sat between mizzen and hatch (FIGURE 6).



FIGURE 6. Reproduction of Clara’s deckhouse at MSM (Photo by author, 2012).

5) Bathtubs

Bathing as a regular practice became acceptable in the 19th century, but the methods and forms of baths depended on availability. Women and men took sponge baths in basins, stepped into foot tubs, sat in sitz baths, or submerged in larger plunge tubs. In 1829, the Tremont Hotel in Boston became the first American building to include modern indoor plumbing matched with their luxury accommodations so guests could easily bathe with running water (Berger 1998; Kaplan 2007). Until about 1860, only the extremely wealthy could afford water piped into their homes. Before that time, filling a portable tub required bucketing water heated on a stove. The bathtub could be placed on an oilcloth in the dressing room to protect the floor. The *Ladies' and Gentlemen's Etiquette Manual* recommended daily bathing and a second bath or sponge bath before retiring in summer. In addition, "Once a week a warm bath, at about 100, may be used, with plenty of soap, in order to thoroughly cleanse the pores of the skin" (Duffey 1877:230).

At sea, fresh water required strict rationing, so those on board generally washed bodies (and clothes) with salt water, if they bothered to at all. The captain's wives bathed when they could, though one wife mentioned her husband's strict orders for only one bath a week even in a rainstorm when fresh water was accessible (Druett 2001a:72). On board the massive SS *Great Britain*, space existed for passengers to bathe in an enameled, cast iron tub (FIGURE 7).Tubs made of tin or brass would be more likely used on smaller ships, as the thick ceramic or iron tubs were very heavy. Although Jamie Earle (1965) describes the system of filling the tub on the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*, he does not describe the tub itself beyond its location. He explained, "These [tanks] were filled with a hose and hand pump from the roof" (Earle 1965).



FIGURE 7. Bathtub on SS *Great Britain*, (Photo by author, 2013).

Case Study: Whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*

As whaling voyages from New England became longer in the 19th century, captains' wives refused to endure these separations, and began to join their husbands on board the ships. The change occurred as nearby whaling grounds in the Atlantic Ocean became fished out and whalers needed to hunt places further and further into the Indian and Pacific oceans taking four years or more to fill their holds with oil. The ship functioned as a processing plant, as the small boats chased the whales and dragged back their prizes. The slurry of blubber on deck, and the black smoke from the tryworks as they rendered it to oil, made for a messy business (FIGURE 8). Both day and night, the black plume or flames of a whaling vessel could be seen for 15 miles, and smelt for 5 miles if downwind (Druett 2001a:67). Despite this malodorous, rough, and dirty situation, women still chose to accompany their husbands on whaleships.

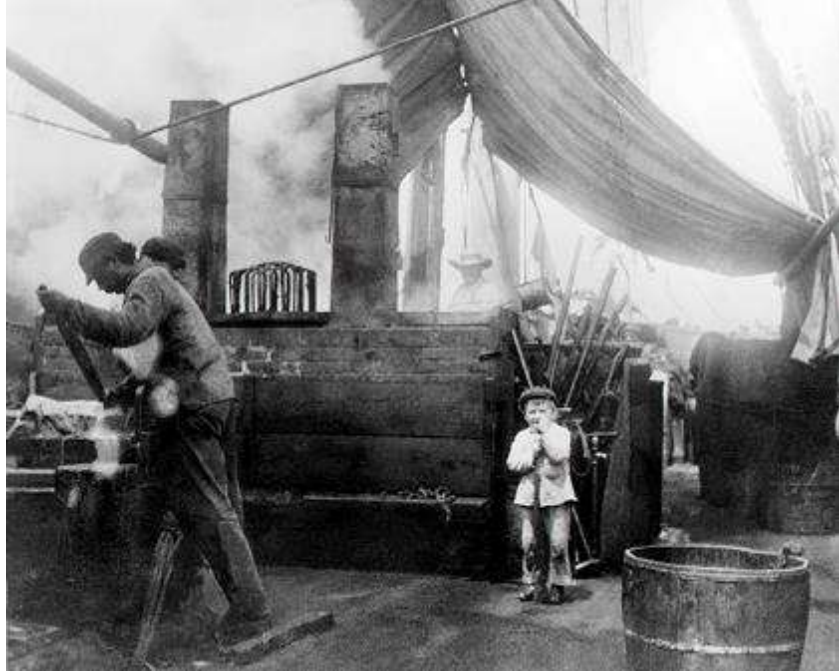


FIGURE 8. Norman Earle by the tryworks, photo by Honor Earle, 1903 (MSM).

The whaleship *Charles W. Morgan* made thirty-seven voyages in eighty years after its launching in 1841 from Hillman shipyard (Hillman and Hillman 1841). Though the whaling voyages ended in the 1920s, the ship still floats at Mystic Seaport (and hopefully will not be an archaeological site for many years to come). Charles W. Morgan, the owner of his namesake and investor in several other whaleships in the New Bedford fleet, including 3/16th of the whaler *Emily Morgan*, wrote in his journal:

We all took tea with Captain [Prince] Ewer and his wife. The Captain will probably go again in the *Emily Morgan* and Mrs. Ewer will accompany him. This custom is becoming quite common and no disadvantages have been noticed... There is more decency and order on board where there is a woman (Morgan 1849:July 25).

Morgan may have had some influence in policy concerning wives on board but despite his opinion, it would be after he sold the ship and another 14 years later before a wife sailed with a captain of *Charles W. Morgan* (Leavitt 1998).

Captain's Wives

In all, five captain's wives sailed on board *Charles W. Morgan*: Lydia Goodspeed Landers (1864-1867), Clara Tinkham (1875-1876), Lorna Keith (1883-1884), Honor Matthews Earle (1896-1904), and Charlotte Ott Church (1909-1913). Not much is known of Lorna Keith who brought their young son and joined her husband Capt. Charles on the 1881-1886 voyage. Most likely, she left with their son, taking a steamer for home before the voyage finished (Keith 1886). The other wives figure in the stories of the large artifacts that might be considered associated with women on the ship, except Charlotte "Lottie" Church. She came as navigator on the ship after the turn of the century, and her story is analyzed in Chapter 4 as related to small finds of navigation instruments.

Lydia Goodspeed Landers



FIGURE 9. Lydia Landers, 1863 (Leavitt 1998)

The first captain's wife on *Charles W. Morgan*, Lydia Goodspeed, married Captain Thomas Landers soon after the death of his first wife (FIGURE 9). In 1863, the *Charles W. Morgan* sailed out around the Horn without Lydia. She traveled cross-country to San Francisco to meet her husband, possibly because the ship's owners, the Wings Co., disagreed with the practice of taking wives to sea. (Chase 1867; Leavitt 1998). Her husband's concession to her comfort was a gimbaled bed, which can still be seen on board the ship. Years later Jamie Earle noted his mother's ability to free the bed when it stuck after a large motion caused by the waves by off from the wall with her foot (Druett 2001a:125).

Despite the added comfort, the trip seemed turbulent. Captain Landers' son from his first marriage came along as cabin boy, but fell overboard from the rigging into the sea and was lost. Soon after, Lydia went ashore at Guam for her confinement, bearing a son while the ship went on whaling. Her husband returned for her when the baby was only 3 weeks old and they named him Arthur after the son who had died. The mate, Mr. Chase, wrote in his journal of the captain's short temper, fights with officers and several incidents of discipline breaking down (Chase 1867). Lydia stayed on board for the remainder of the two year voyage, and when they returned to New Bedford her husband retired to settle with her ashore (Leavitt 1998:41).

Clara Tinkham

On a spring day in 1875, Clara Tinkham boarded *Charles W. Morgan* of New Bedford for a whaling voyage to the Pacific (Willis 1876). "The Ship looks large as we near it; we have reached her and the men have lifted me up the high side in an arm chair; quite a novel way it seemed to me" (Williams 1967). A gimming chair from *Charles W. Morgan* exists in the collections at Mystic Seaport, but no documentation exists as to the manufacture date of the



FIGURE 10. Gamming chair on *Charles W. Morgan*, 1921-41 (MSM).

chair. The artifact record notes: “used by Captain John Gonsalves on the *Morgan's* final whaling voyage in 1920-21” but more likely the chair lifted and lowered the wives of captains who visited him on board. Painted white with a canvas back, a photograph shows a toddler posed in it while the ship sat as a dockside museum at Col. Greene’s Estate. Note the glass display case of whaling artifacts in the picture situated on the former location of the small deckhouse (FIGURE 10). The collection record describes the gamming chair as about 3.5ft tall, having four shackles attached to the base by thimbles and two ropes spliced for suspension from an eye where the lifting tackle would be attached. The design of the chair kept Clara from the embarrassment of dishevelment in her fine visiting clothes, and safeguarded her modesty from any sailors that might see under her skirts as she descended from above them into the small boat. Unfortunately, the chair often spun around and dunked the occupant (Earle 1965) and the danger of falling in and drowning became a far greater concern under the weight of corsets and petticoats.



FIGURE 11. Aft sitting room on *Charles W. Morgan* (MSM).

Clara brought her parlor organ on the *Charles W. Morgan*, and probably located it where the desk can be seen in the photo of the sitting room (FIGURE 11), or perhaps against the aft bulkhead in the dining salon (Willis 1876; Leavitt 1998). With the popularization of these instruments by the middle class, they came to signify a Protestant middle-class home. Contemporary trade cards that advertised parlor organs portrayed these connections, showing women as the predominant players, images of wealth and therefore status of ownership, and ecclesiastical associations, such as the slogan “Church, Chapel & Parlor Organs” on the Mason & Hamlin card. By playing the parlor organ, a woman could demonstrate the moral and spiritual superiority attributed to the ideal Victorian lady (Ames 1992:164).

Journal entries on a ship often refer to singing shanties and playing small instruments such as concertinas and tin flutes, but bringing a parlor organ on board acknowledged something feminine in music. In Victorian times, only women played the parlor organ in the home. Girls and young women took lessons to cultivate their role as the “genteel female” and playing the instrument became an “attribute of ladydom” for the middle class (Ames 1980:625). Women took pride in their accomplishment of playing the organ and singing with family.

In the cargo was a consignment of organs to a Brisbane firm and only five could be placed in the hold of the vessel. Father said if we could have the use of it they could put [one] in the cabin. So it was put in. Now I had taken some quarters of lessons on a piano, and so of course I felt perfectly competent to play most anything. So on this day father and I had a sing..." (Atwood & Dahl 1999:35).

The purchase of an organ by a family required a certain level of wealth to be able to afford it. As an expensive item that took up space and time, it created possibilities of "respect and deference" from neighbors (Ames 1992:160). Advertising played on the themes of fashion, culture, and upward mobility through social interactions. The family made space for it in the parlor, and gathered around it with kinfolk and friends. Between the decorations and mirrors, elaborate hutches included shelves on which the family displayed treasured objects and photographs as if on an altar (Ames 1980:623).

The sound of the parlor organ closely resembled a church pipe organ, hence the ecclesiastical associations of the artifact (Ames 1992:157). In religious observances at home in the 19th century, the wife performed the clerical duties including reading from the bible and playing hymns on the organ (Douglas 1977). Her role as mother and homemaker, included instilling "Christian virtues and values in the family" which established "a parallel between the formal, institutionalized worship within a church, presided over by a male, and the informal socialization within the home, presided over by a woman" (Ames 1980:626-28). On board ship, women played the organ even on a Sunday, but refrained from the usual tunes, playing only "sacred music" for the Sabbath (Page and Johnson 1950:27).

Photographs of frontier life that included a parlor organ emphasized the connection to the former home and culture (Ames 1980:635). In extending the frontier concept to sea voyages, bringing a parlor organ on a sailing voyage symbolized the connection to Civilization and a distant community (FIGURE 12). In a remote place, the music played reminded those listening



FIGURE 12. Mrs. Fickett at parlor organ on *Allanwilde*, 1899. (Courtesy PMM, LB1990.49.102).

of home, yet brought that feeling of home into the present, by singing songs they once sang together with their family far away. Based on this symbolism, the organ represents several attributes that could make a woman feel more at home on a ship.

On *Charles W. Morgan*, the small deck house built for Clara's comfort sat forward of the mizzen mast, under the spare boat skids (FIGURE 13**Error! Reference source not found.**). The location might mitigate her seasickness, by allowing her a view over the stern. The house measured 6 x 6ft, and about 6ft tall at the height of the arch in the roof and contained a fixed bunk on the starboard side. The confined space provided little room for more than a chair. The door built in the aft side, fit to open on the port side of the mast and slid on rails across to starboard. A latch held it in place both open and closed. Photos of the deckhouse show windows on each side, and no openings forward.

The little deckhouse became the private retreat for the captain's wife. Though she might have some say in the décor and furnishings of the sitting room below decks, her deckhouse was her own to decorate. Mary Brewster wrote of her deckhouse in October of 1847:

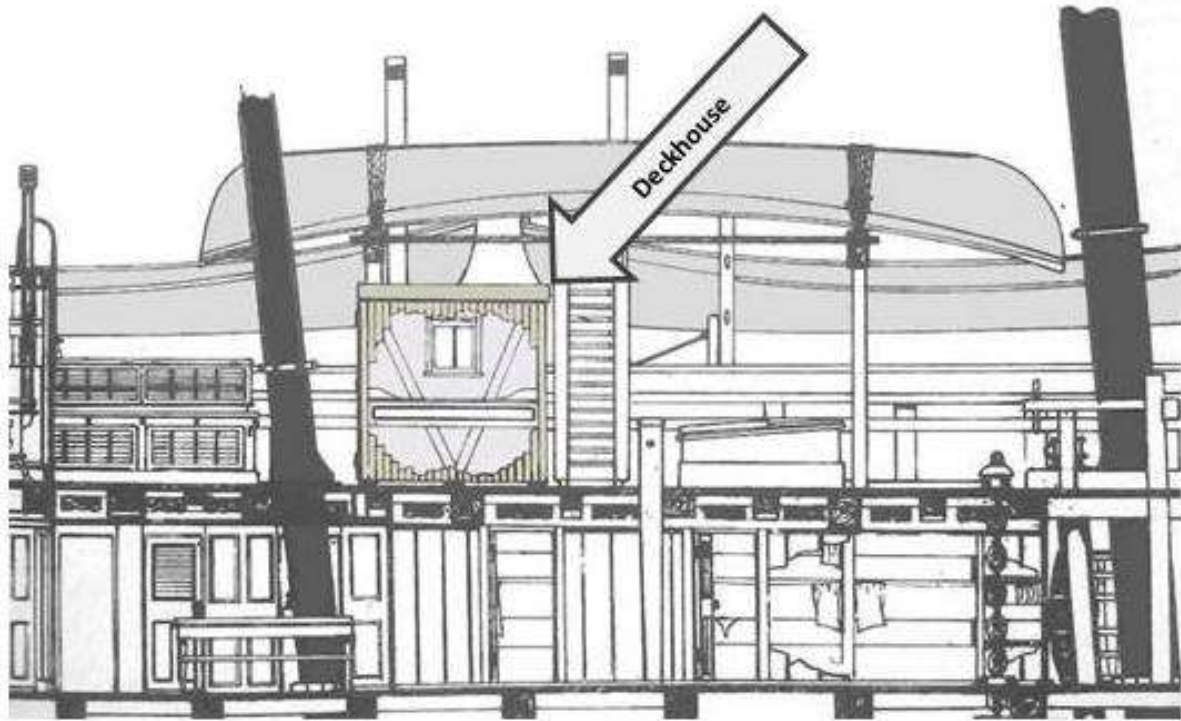


FIGURE 13 Deckhouse under boat skids on *Charles W. Morgan*, MSM.

I have commenced regulating my apartments, which I like very much. I have no occasion to go below and I am entirely separate from the officers... Mr. Brewster and I take our meals at our own table and when seated we imagine we are keeping house. Here I am with my husband alone, and we are both making great calculations upon our enjoyment... (Brewster and Druett 1992:289)

Captain's wives often generously gave up their space to the crew. Jamie Earle recounted that when a crewman fell from the rigging and broke a leg, his mother allowed the injured man to berth in her little deckhouse (Earle 1965). Though these cabins might be used by a woman on one voyage, on the next it might be converted to rope locker or vegetable storage, so any investigation of gendered spaces on board requires studying them as a dynamic process, defined and negotiated through use (Hendon 2006).

Unfortunately, the deckhouse did not improve her situation enough and Clara disembarked at St. Helena in 1876, taking a steamer home (Willis 1876). She explained:

I did not weather the whole voyage. Continued attacks of seasickness kept me confined for days, and when the weather favored and I could get on deck, the smell of blubber and hens running about, and having to eat food made of sour dough made life offensive indeed. (Druett 2001a)

Clara's deckhouse was probably removed after the voyage. Years later in about 1887, while based in San Francisco, the shipyard recorded adding another deckhouse in the same spot on deck (Leavitt 1998). The second deckhouse can be seen in later photos, such as one of Honor Earle's son Jamie standing at the door on deck (FIGURE 14). During the filming of "Down to the Sea in Ships" in 1922, the deckhouse (or a subsequent one) was removed, and "lost." Shipwright Roger Hambidge at Mystic Seaport, guesses the little house now functions as a shed in someone's backyard in New Bedford. Although it is no longer on the deck of the *Charles W. Morgan*, the wear pattern in the planks can still be seen. The holes where the house was bolted through the deck, have been patched and filled with tar. The wear from stepping through the door

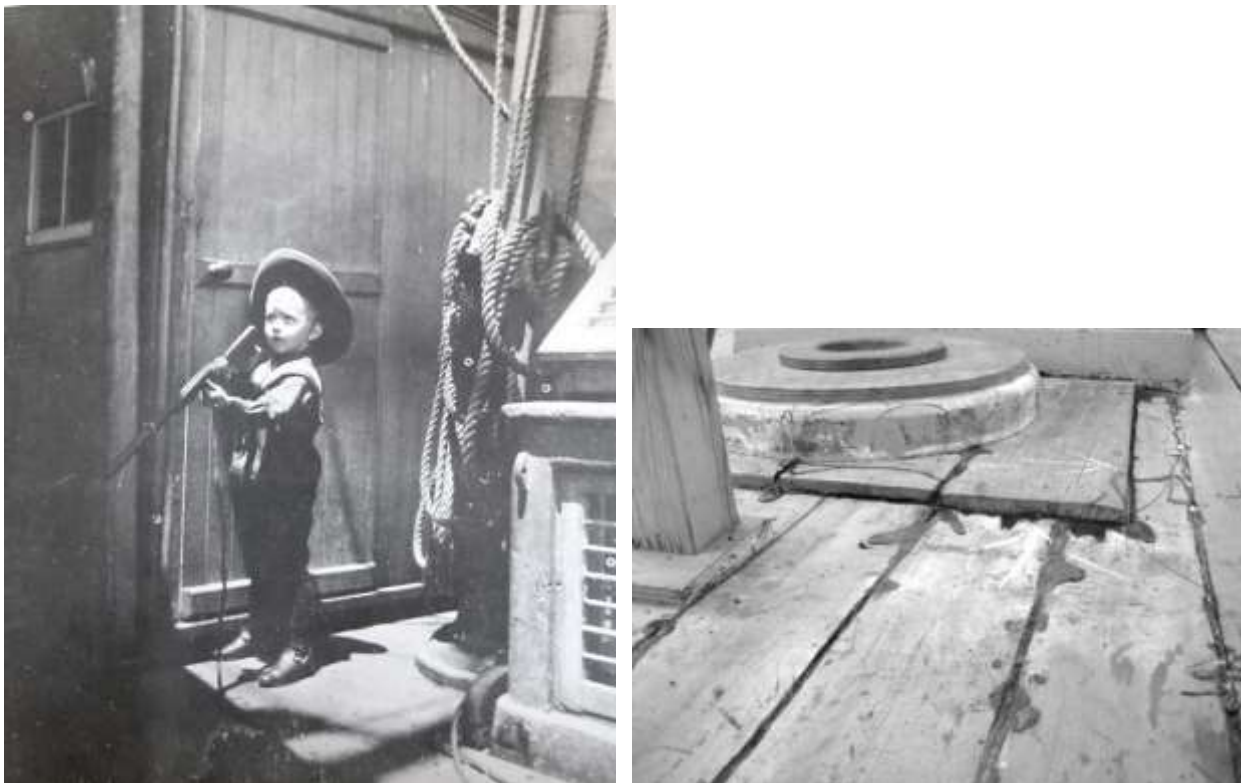


FIGURE 14. Jamie Earle, 1903 (MSM) and wear at door opening (Photo by author, 2013).

over the years created a low point in the deck planking. After the restoration of the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*, the shipwrights returned the replica deckhouse to the location forward of the mizzen on the ship.

Honor Matthews Earle

Honor Matthews met Captain James Earle in 1895 when he sailed into the Bay of Islands to Russell, New Zealand where she worked as a mathematics teacher. In Jan 1896, they married in Honolulu and she sailed with him (often as navigator) on several shorter voyages of 11 months (Nov to Oct) from San Francisco (Leavitt 1998). In an interview with *Boston Globe*, she explained her hesitation to go to sea, “A whaler, you know, is not the place to have the liveliest time in the world.” The newspaper article noted her rivalry with Marion Smith, another assistant navigator on her husband’s ship, *Josephine* (Druett 2001a:127).



FIGURE 15. Honor Earle with her husband, and son, Jamie, 1903 (MSM)

At the turn of the century, their two sons lived on board the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan* (FIGURE 15). The elder son, Jamie recalled a bathtub in the captain's cabin just forward of the head where there is now a wash basin. The water tanks to fill it usually held sea water. "There were two tanks in the space back of the galley, one connected to a coil in the stove for hot water.... I can remember one occasion when they were being filled with fresh water much to my mother's delight." Not just his mother used the tub, he continued, "I remember my father sitting in the tub with his head against the ceiling so it wasn't very long or very deep... I cannot remember having a bath myself, but I'm sure something was done about it" (Earle 1965).

Honor worked with her husband on several voyages, including the Arctic and into the Ochotsk Sea, but his health was deteriorating. Finally in 1907, after many issues with the crew, the couple decided to resign from the *Charles W. Morgan* before even finishing the voyage. In Durban, her husband wired the owners to send a new captain, and they took a steamer home (Leavitt 1998; Druett 2001a).

Conclusion

Even on identified shipwrecks with documented lists of crew on board, archaeology has the potential to find evidence of women not named on the records of the ship (Flatman 2003). If archaeologists discovered any of these large artifacts while investigating a 19th-century wreck, it might indicate a woman lived on board and tell something of her story in regards to social structure and class. The gamming chairs and gimballed beds, women used specifically in a maritime context, and the bathtubs and parlor organs, they cherished as items from shore life. Deckhouses created a separate space for her apart from the lower-class sailors. Even if no woman lived on board, the artifacts relate to class and hierarchy on the ship.

Several factors need to be examined as to how definitive the evidence might be: some artifacts may have been left behind when a woman departed the ship and possibly remained in use by the captain, and some artifacts may have been appropriated for other uses or not used by the woman on board. Finally, given the current lack of data or finds, have archaeologists been unable to identify these objects, or if the nature of the artifact and placement on the ship, create circumstances that render the artifacts unrecognizable or missing on most shipwrecks?

When women moved ashore, they left behind the heavy objects only useful on board and attached to the ship. Gimming chairs and gimballed beds had no use ashore. The chair might be kept on board for use by visiting captain's wives, despite no woman being in residence on the ship. The gimballed bed, bolted in place, remained in the captain's cabin and so provided comfort for him. The bathtub probably stayed in place as long as the captain considered cleanliness a priority. It is not entirely a feminine object, but more an object delineating class distinctions, though wives on board wrote of their joy to have one (Deblois 1856). Even if no woman sailed that voyage, the small deckhouse remained in location until removed by the ship's carpenter or in the shipyard, after which it might be reused as a garden shed. The parlor organ might be part of the ship's cargo placed in the cabin, as was the one Hattie Atwood played on *Charles Stewart* in 1883 (Atwood & Dahl 1999). A woman who brought her organ on a voyage may have abandoned it, as Clara Tinkham did in 1876 when she left the *Charles W. Morgan*, but when the ship returned to port, the owner reclaimed her instrument (Leavitt 1998). If the ship had sunk in any of these situations, the artifacts might indicate a woman had been on board though she no longer resided there when it sank.

The artifacts might be appropriated to another use. For example, deckhouses could be transformed when the need arose for medical emergencies, storage or even a galley. Jamie Earle

(1965) recalled the small house became a galley on the *Charles W. Morgan* until moved to the hurricane house. For a gam, Honor Earle rode the small boat down as it lowered on the davits, refusing to use a gambling chair so its presence on might be deemed insignificant (Druett 2001a:50). At any time, these objects may be removed, taken apart or used for other purposes, due to many factors of limited space on board and the desires of the wife living on the ship.

Depending on site formation processes, these objects might be recognized if intact, but if disintegrated, identification may be difficult. Publishing of data and illustrations of the objects distinguishing features may keep key pieces from being labelled 'miscellaneous' in site reports. The association of bed parts with a small pile of bricks may be unnoticed, but perhaps the additional support rods and pivot hinges would provide clues to identifying it as a gimbaled bed. If a barrel-style gambling chair survived the wrecking event, it could easily be mistaken for a broken barrel. Finding parts of the organ might verify the importance of music to those on board. The foot pedals and the bits of brass rods and arms, which allow the motions of bellows and keys, might last longer than the thin wood paneling of organ housing. The small deckhouse might be found if the deck remained intact, but more likely it would be missing along with the superstructure, such as that of the whaleship wrecks found off Hawaii in turbulent, tropical waters (NOAA 2010). As all of these wooden objects float and seem unlikely to be trapped under ballast, they may only be found underwater in perfect conditions, such as in a location like the Baltic with still, cold water and few shipworms (Muckelroy 1978; Bowens 2009). The bathtub, usually made of metal, may also disintegrate in an underwater environment, but possibilities exist in which it could survive, such as the tub on the shipwreck *Titanic* in the captain's bathroom (Johnston 2003). The possibility exists for any one of these large artifacts to be found and provide data for gendered analysis of shipboard life.

CHAPTER 4: SMALL FINDS

As the ship nears Gibraltar in January of 1884, Hattie Atwood described her preparations for returning to civilization. She did her crimps, curling her hair for the first time since that September and put on a hand-me-down dress from her older sister. She joked about dressing up slowly so that her best dress did not induce vanity. “I suppose I wanted to get used to myself, so as to know whom to introduce to the crowned heads of Europe” (Freeman and Dahl 1999:86).

She topped her outfit with a refashioned hat:

I took my black beaver hat, cut off some of the brim, bent it into a poke shape, put my bright bird across the front and some black satin ribbon across the back; I felt quite proud. I donned the hat and went on deck—for father had been anxious over what I was doing... Father ordered the hat overboard, however my humane heart would not allow me to drown the bird, so I removed it to a place of safety... (Freeman and Dahl 1999:86).

During the 19th century, middle-class women increased their consumption of products as industrialization fostered the democratization of luxury and advertising promoted those goods (Beaujot 2012:3). Depending on the fashions of the time, women of means such as captain’s wives chose to purchase personal items, and what they chose fluctuated due to several influences including traditional norms, prominent people and established power structures that each woman identified with in her society. “Through making, using, exchanging, consuming, interacting, and living with things people make themselves in the process. The object world is thus absolutely central to an understanding of the identities of individual persons and societies... Material culture is thus inseparable from culture and human society” (Tilley 2006:61). The personal objects women brought with them on ships represented their choices of what they thought they needed and wanted, and what power they might have in ownership whether inherited, made or

purchased for their life on the ship. These small finds that might later be excavated on shipwrecks could allow for analysis of age, status and race interaction on board.

The assumption of feminization in an object needs careful consideration. Depending on the era, country and class of wearer, styles changed from century to century. A high-heeled shoe with large bows might be identified as a feminine thing. This association assumes the wearer walks in those heels now, yet during the 18th century, King Louis of France set the upper-class fashion of men wearing high heels. The association of an object with a gender requires establishing a symbolic meaning, which is done by repetition of that item with a certain significance, such as lace with femininity in Western, 20th-century culture (Sørensen 2000:83).

Small finds include the clothes women wore and their toiletries, along with items used for women's work and entertainment of themselves and for any children. Along with their clothing, they brought accessories such as belts, corset stays, and shoes. These items may be more likely to endure in an underwater archaeological setting than fibers of dresses, although occasionally conditions underwater allow clothing to survive relatively intact, such as that of sailors on the bark *General Carleton* (Ossowski 2008) and in the passenger trunks of the river steamboat *Bertrand* (Corbin 2000).

Examples of small artifacts associated with women that might survive a wreck are sorted into five sections: 1) Clothing and Accessories, 2) Personal Adornment and Toiletries, 3) Sewing Notions, 4) Writing materials, 5) Baby Paraphernalia & Children's Toys. A sixth category is a discussion of navigation instruments, because many of the women learned the skill while on board and some even functioned as the navigator for the ship. The categories of objects focus on how women used the item, instead of separating them by the material of manufacture that conservators require in the lab. For the analysis of trunk contents from *Bertrand* and *Arabia*,

Corbin used a similar structured taxonomy for the quantitative analysis that included categories of utilization labeled personal, household, child and occupation (Corbin 2000:23). Because the focus of this thesis is on the items a woman might bring and use on ships, the categories of use needed further subsets to provide insight for any analysis.

Any and all of these articles, that a woman may have used, could be diagnostics in an archaeological context of a woman's life on board a ship. By close examination of writings, and contemporary photos, the types of feminine objects that could be found during excavation of a ship might be deduced. From the small finds illustrated here, perhaps some system such as the classifications utilized by Corbin (2000) might be developed to interpret the likelihood of women being present on the ship when it wrecked and their cultural impact as perceived through the objects they used during their voyage.

Packing her trunk...

Women travelled by ship with the required wardrobe and accoutrements in a large trunk or two. Wherever they voyaged, these large chests, often of wood, bound in leather and metal, held their personal possessions. Whether going by land or by sea, a woman packed clothing to serve the climates she might be in and accessories she would use, including her toiletries. Along with these, she took items for her entertainment: books, sewing, and toys to amuse her children. Everything she needed to keep occupied in the small space of a ship for the next months or even years was packed into her trunk. Her clothes and other items, including what she required to make repairs, needed to last the entire trip if the captain planned no ports of call, such as the run around Cape Horn to San Francisco. On voyages that stopped for trade in foreign or domestic ports, she might buy more raw materials or have items made, and collect souvenirs of her visit.

In 1889, American reporter Nellie Bly, circled the world with only the items in her handbag of 16 x 7 inches! She challenged, and eventually beat, the speed record made in the Jules Verne novel *Around the World in 80 Days*. At first, her editor rejected the idea, espousing the assumption of the era that a lady traveling required immense amounts of luggage to maintain her appearance as befitted her social class: "...even if it were possible for you to travel alone you would need to carry so much baggage that it would detain you in making rapid changes" (Bly 1890). A 1901 Louis Vuitton advertisement titled "Travelling requisites" showed a woman seated with her luggage (Orient-Pacific Line Guide 1901). She sits on a steamer trunk surrounded by three trunks, a rolled bundle strapped over poles alongside a carrycase, and two handbags. The advertisement indicated that the number of pieces was a minimum.

Nellie pared down her wardrobe to what she would wear: one travel dress, and a Scotch ulster overcoat. What she packed reveals what a woman in the 19th century deemed essential on a trip: "two traveling caps, three veils, a pair of slippers, a complete outfit of toilet articles, ink stand, pens, pencils, and copy paper, pins, needles and thread, a dressing gown, a tennis blazer, a small flask and a drinking cup, several complete changes of underwear, a liberal supply of handkerchiefs and fresh ruchings [material to re-trim her dress] and ... a jar of cold cream." She also took a summer's silk bodice, as the extra dress she had a tailor make did not fit in her handbag (Bly 1890). Although Nellie took the bare minimum including what she required for her profession as a reporter, her condensed travel kit can be seen as a compact version of what a woman might require on a longer voyage.

In the back of her journal of 1860, Mary Congdon listed the items in both her own and her mother, Cynthia's trunks on board the *Caroline Tucker*. The women packed 12 dresses, some woolen including one of a blue Delaine fabric, and some light weight silks for the changes in

climate. Along with these, they had several shirts and skirts and a calico apron. For accessories, they owned shawls, ribbons and even two parasols which they were unlikely to use on a windy deck. Besides five ruffled nightgowns, their underclothes included five ruffled chemises (long underslip), and five pairs of ruffled drawers, which must have been the current fashion. They brought four “waists” or corsets and a “busque,” a flexible stiffener for the front of the corset fitted into a centerline sewn pocket. Whalemens often carved and scrimshawed these items with romantic pictures and verses as gifts for sweethearts at home (Frank 2012). Mary and Cynthia not only packed their hose or stockings, socks, and slippers, but also a pair of rubber boots they might wear on a wet deck. Their supplies included fabrics and sewing items to repair their clothes or make new items, and the ship stopped in ports such as San Francisco along the way, allowing them to purchase other clothing (Congdon 1860)

Even after the initial packing at home, trunks might be used to store clothes needed for different climates during the voyage. On the leg to Saigon, Lucy Howes wrote of “packing over” her trunk kept in storage between decks: “I brought the contents into the cabin and stowed them away, and packed that chest full of bedding. I missed several things and fancy they have blown overboard some time when they were on deck airing” (Howes 1866:Aug 2).

Small Finds

1) Clothing and Accessories

Clothing, hats, gloves, fans, parasols, footwear, shawls, corsets stays, hoops, underwear, irons

Clothing can convey status and power within a society. Mark Twain summed this idea up in his quip: “Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence in society.” The dress of middle-class women in the 19th century both defined and restricted them. If they could afford to keep maids, often believed to be the indicator of their class, Victorian women kept up a

façade of “leisured household managers.” For visitors or visiting others, they could dress as ladies, but to get the housework done, they probably worked alongside their maids lighting the stoves, cooking food, hauling water and washing laundry (Beaujot 2012). While doing so they wore a “wrapper” or wash dress usually made of a dark material to prevent showing stains with none of the corsets, stays or hoops of more fashionable ladies’ wear. On the way to Hong Kong, Lucy Howes wrote, “I washed a little this morning. Then sewed on my wrapper” (Howes 1866). Given the motion of the ship on rough days, women often mention difficulties in getting dressed. Even without added accessories, it usually required sitting down (Girdler 1857).

When the women’s rights movement promoted dress reform, the ruffled pantaloons worn under a shorter skirt called bloomers received much derision. An article in *The Lily* responded to the mockery from cartoons that lampooned the practical style, and encouraged women to ignore the “remarks of rude men, boys, and unmannerly women” (Stanton 1851). Such a practical outfit that increased maneuverability might have made life on board far more comfortable for women, but no mention of the bloomer costume was found in the journals studied. Despite targeted efforts, most women continued to conform to tiny-waisted fashions. Dress reform activists spoke against the restrictive shapes and ideas of the fashion, pointing out that in European art “...nowhere is the ideal female form to be found in a huge whale-boned bodice and bedraggled skirt. If the graceful is what you aim at, study the old painters and sculptors, and not Godey's Book of Fashion” (Stanton 1851).

When she went ashore or visiting other ships, the Captain’s wife and family dressed in fashions as would be fitting their social standing. The shapes of fashionable dresses required undergarments and supports such as corsets, bustles and hoops, which women kept up with by reading magazines such as *Godey’s Ladys Book* (Hale 1852). Whalebone busks stiffened the

corset and one whaling wife even scrimshawed her own during the voyage home (Stark 1856). If found on a shipwreck, the assumption might be that a sailor made the carved item as a gift for sweetheart at home, but the possibility exists that a woman lived on the ship especially if the corset stays survived with it. Besides the clothes themselves, women needed items to care for the clothing she owned including soaps and tubs for washing, pins for drying them on the line and irons for pressing, such as seen in the 1898 photo taken by Ruth Montgomery of her mother hanging laundry on the *Carrie Winslow* (FIGURE 16).

For accessories, a woman might choose to wear hats, shawls, and gloves, and carry fans and parasols. The hand fan, especially useful in warm climes, became a way to flirt during Victorian times. (Beaujot 2012:63). The fan alluded to seduction when used by young woman, who as she fluttered it, became an active agent in romance on her search for a husband. A “language” of fans interpreted signals and sentiments a woman could express by how she held her fan. A married woman no longer needed a fan for flirtation. The fan might be considered an indicator of a youth. At the turn of the century, Ruth Montgomery sailed from Searsport, Maine,



FIGURE 16. Ma hanging laundry 1898 (Courtesy PMM, LB1990.49.37)

with her parents and she took photographs of life on board the ship *Carrie Winslow*. A photo of Ruth and her friend Katie Adams as teenagers shows them dressed up in Japanese style and hairdos holding fans (Montgomery 1898).

With the trend to collect all things Asian, wives who went to Orient with their husbands bought fans along with other souvenirs such as furniture, paintings, ceramics and fabrics (Beaujot 2012:90). The Forbes House near Boston displays the collection of a prosperous merchant in the China Trade. A well-established market existed for art from Far Eastern countries including China, Japan, India and even Egypt. Trade houses controlled exports to Europe and the US, and domestic companies manufactured copies of items called *chinoiserie*. If found on a wreck site, these might indicate the level of means for upper- middle class individuals on board (Corbin 2000:69). A wealthy captain's wife could afford to collect the originals while on location.

2) Personal Adornment and Toiletries

Jewelry, hair combs, combs, brushes, curling irons & spirit lamps, mirrors, soap or powder dishes, perfumes bottles, female hygiene items

It is unlikely that a woman dressed with as much care on the ship as when ashore. She often spent the first week incapacitated with seasickness in her cabin. If she felt fine and continued with her usual tasks and entertainments, her husband might deem the lack of sickness “unfeminine” and dose her with Ipecac to induce vomiting (Druett 2001a:70). The rocking motion below and the blustery winds on deck both might contribute to a hurried toilet. She might seldom have occasion to wear anything besides her wrapper or wash dress. Yet, her fancy clothes and accoutrements came packed in her trunk for occasions such as gamming with other captain's wives and when back in port visiting with friends or dignitaries.

Magazines and manuals, such as the *Ladies' And Gentlemen's Etiquette: A Complete Manual of the Manners and Dress of American Society* defined the ideals of feminine beauty, stressing a healthy complexion and attractive appearance could only be obtained by cultivating “pleasing character traits” (Duffey 1877). Yet the pages within manuals informed women of what products to purchase to whiten skin, which perfumes to wear, and how to match colors of bonnets and parasols interspersed with advertisements for consumer goods. The method to develop that good moral character to achieve beauty received little mention (Beaujot 2012).

The “vanity set” symbolized the transition from innocent girl to womanhood, and usually the bride received it as a wedding gift. (Beaujot 2012:139) The set consisted of mirror, brush and comb. In her youth, a woman left her hair loose, but once married her hair only came down in the bedroom. Duffey’s *Etiquette Manual* recommended the hair be brushed carefully for “at least twenty minutes in the morning, for ten minutes when it’s dressed in the middle of the day, and for a like period at night” and then a fine comb would be unnecessary (Duffey 1877:240). During the day, a woman wore her hair up in elaborate coiffures to signify her status and class. She pinned these upswept hairdos in place with combs, which might be made of wood, ivory, horn, bone, tortoise shell, lead/pewter, and later (c. 1860), vulcanite (Noël Hume 1972:174-75). The *Godey’s Lady’s Book* published the latest fashions for hairdos and how to create them. “...Above this fall of hair, the back hair is combed upwards and arranged in a butterfly bow, fastened with an ornamental comb” (Hale 1879). Women on ships may have used significantly more combs and hairpins with a bonnet tied over all in an attempt to hold these hairdos in place while on the deck in the wind.

Many of these small items do survive on shipwrecks, depending on the wrecking event and further conditions of site formation. Scuba divers salvaging from the steam ship *Hibiscus*

wrecked in 1873 off New Jersey found and photographed both a ladies' hair comb and the spines of a fan along with other delicate objects, including small bottles shaped like shoes to hold perfumes (Nagiewicz 2004). As their collection of artifacts came from non-archaeological retrieval without reference to provenience or site formation, further analysis of the women voyaging on that steamship is difficult; however, the presence of these items on *Hibiscus* implies that such artifacts do persist in an underwater environment. Other perfume bottles have been found in an archaeological contexts including those of the Campbell sisters on the steamboat *Bertrand* (Corbin 2000).

Despite the current perception that the Victorian age exemplified extreme prudish behavior, the circulation of information on birth control and sexuality did occur. Not until near the end of the century did federal laws define and prosecute obscene libel. The Comstock Law passed in 1873 targeted more than the secret publications of erotic items sent through the U.S. Post, as it expressly defined birth control information, contraceptive devices, and abortion advertisements as obscenity (Horowitz 2002). The destruction of materials providing information on medical physiology and philosophy on sexuality in the 19th century suppressed sources that historians might have accessed to create a balanced understanding of the sexual culture in America (Horowitz 2002:439).

Beginning in the 1830s with the publication of the first book on birth control in the US, *Moral Physiology* by Robert Dale Owen, information on contraception became more available to help limit the number of children in a family (Horowitz 2002:75). Women could learn of their choices, from the materials then available. Debates occurred publicly throughout the century, but with the censure in the 1870s less information can now be found (DuBois 2009:348). With no vote nor voice in legislature, it seemed women could not keep the laws from being enforced

(Horowitz 2002:442). The removal of information from the public domain meant knowledge of birth control became distorted, especially for the working class.

Objects associated with birth control have been found in archaeological contexts both in Boston and New York. As archaeologists learn to identify women's items from on shore, such as the studies at the Endicott Street brothel site of Boston and at New York City Hall, a database of feminine hygiene objects could be created for use in comparison to those found on shipwrecks. At the Endicott site, items were associated directly with women from documents that listed the house as a brothel. At the second site, no such association existed. The City Hall dig recovered a cylindrical object made of mammal bone that they could not identify. "At first we thought it was maybe a spice-grinder or needle case," said Alyssa Loorya, president of Chrysalis Archaeology. Further research by Lisa Geiger, matched it with glass and brass vaginal syringes displayed at a museum in Philadelphia (Plagianos 2014). The inability to identify a feminine object emphasizes the need for the addition of women's artifacts to material culture classes for archaeologists.

Women living in the 19th century used these douches regardless of economic and social status to maintain health, treat venereal disease and prevent pregnancy. Documentation exists that in New York women gave them to each other as wedding presents (Chrysalis 2014). The excavation at the Endicott Street brothel also uncovered vaginal syringes made of glass and a small vial that contained copaiba oil, an abortifacient and remedy for venereal diseases. Despite the contemporary reformers who denounced brothels as dens of iniquity and disease, archaeologist Mary Beaudry noted the finds show a high concern for health and hygiene for which they self-medicated (Laskowski 2011). Although these finds came from a brothel site, they could and have been found on shipwreck sites indicating a woman most likely was on board.



FIGURE 17. Women's douches (19th century), Courtesy Dittricks Museum.

The increase in medical knowledge and advances in technology such as the vulcanization of rubber, created new forms of these devices for birth control. One of these, salvaged from the *SS Republic* looks almost identical to one exhibited at the Dittricks Museum (FIGURE 17). A stamp visible on the salvaged douche identifies Goodyear's 1851 patent for hard vulcanite. Many items were made with vulcanite such as hair combs, brushes and other toiletry items, before cheaper plastics replaced the substance. Unfortunately, lack of provenience means little else will be deduced from the douche found on the ship.

Items associated with women's menstruation, to this day often a taboo subject of conversation, would also be indicative of women living on the ship. In the 19th century, women may have used small sea sponges encased in a silken net with a tassel, used like a tampon (Druett 1998:95). Few women ever mentioned such things directly, but Mary Stickney on the whaler *Cicero* in 1881 mentioned "grandy rags" or napkins. A contemporary German ladies' magazine published sewing patterns for "underwear for special times" showing how to make these underthings from soft scraps of cloth (Hering and Maierhof 1991). When washed, women hung them to dry inside something like a pillow case to spare any embarrassment, especially when on board a ship. In the late 1880s, commercial disposable napkins became available for use, such as

Hartmann's Hygienic Wood Wool Diapers at 1¢ each which were to be burned after use (Hartmann 1887). Again fabrics and sponges might be found on a shipwreck site given certain anaerobic conditions. None have been identified in a marine environment as yet, and perhaps a database of artifacts associated with women might allow easier identification of these objects in the field.

3) Sewing Notions

Thimbles & cases, pins, needles & holders, scissors knitting needles, crochet hooks, tatting shuttle, darning eggs, bobbins, thread spools, buttons

In the 19th century, the act of sewing became more intrinsically intertwined with femininity. An early guide to needlework by Lydia Maria Child (1834) states, "There is no accomplishment of any kind more desirable for a woman, than neatness and skill in the use of a needle." With the increase in industrial-made cloths in the 1830s, women spun and wove less but still made up clothing and household textiles for their family (Newell 2009). They took these skills with them to sea, and continued to create both decorative and practical items. Although sewing and needlework were considered the women's work, captains Andrew Pendleton and James Cawse made net lace, and cross-stitch respectively.

The sewing notions that women took on a voyage were probably kept together in a sewing box with small trays for sorting and a clasp to hold it closed against spillage. An example of a sewing box, held by the collections at Mystic Seaport, belonged to Eliza H. Wing and was made at sea by her whaling captain husband. Unfortunately, no records exist as to whether she accompanied him on his voyages. Small sewing kits known as "housewives" also held sewing items together including pins, needles, scissors, threads, thimbles and spare buttons all packaged in a small leather or fabric packet (Corbin 2000, Ulrich 2001). In a photo of Jane Girdler taken when she was 10 years old standing beside her mother, she holds what looks like a sewing basket

with a fancy lid to hold the contents inside (Girdler 1997). She may have taken this basket with her when she worked as nanny on the *Robert H. Dixey*.

Archaeologists on several shipwreck projects record finding small artifacts grouped as sewing notions such as pins, needles, and scissors. Depending on provenience and quantity, they may have been trade goods or personal items used by those on board. On the wreck of French frigate *Machaut*, used to supply the colonists in the New World and sunk in 1760, Parks Canada archaeologists found several items used for sewing including thimbles and a wooden needlecase (Sullivan 1986). For making repairs on thick canvas sails, the crew used a sailmaker's palm made of a leather strap worn around the hand that holds a dimpled coin used to push the needles.

Both the open-at-the-top and undecorated thimbles found on the shipwreck *Machault* may have been personal belongings used by the sailors to mend their clothing. Neither thimble bore any feminine embellishments such as borders of flowers or hearts, and scrolled initials or women's names, as often seen in images on collector websites, which can be found on later styles of thimbles used by women (Beaudry 2006:97). Archaeologists excavating the Roosevelt Inlet wreck (1763) found thimbles including child sizes and cases packed together, suggesting they were cargo items that would be sold in the Colonies (Krivor et al 2006:92). Unfortunately, these thimbles represent a previous time period but they show the demand for goods women used by the Colonists and could provide a comparison to thimbles found on future sites.

Because 19th-century manufacturers made thimbles specifically sized for women and children, finding a small thimble on a shipwreck might indicate a woman or child's presence either during a voyage or on a previous one when she lost the small object. Some thimbles in collections bear engravings of names or images and depending on material of manufacture, such as ceramic or silver may not have been designed for use, but as delicate souvenirs (Beaudry

2006:106). The thimble cases, designed to keep the personal object close to hand, also show variety in materials such as ivory, pewter, and wood, shaped to portray acorns, beehives, shoes and even sailing ships, within which the thimble nestled (Beaudry 2006:111). By examining thimbles found in an archaeological context, possibly the age, sex and status of the owner could be determined from the artifact. Small thimbles most commonly with a closed top would indicate women or children and fancy ceramic or silver ones would signify luxury goods owned by a higher class (Beaudry 2006; Beaujot 2012).

Pins and needles found on a site might be traditionally equated with sewing and therefore used by women, but these small objects require close scrutiny. Pins came in different sizes and metals, each meant for a specific use, some of them not sewing related. Dress pins or “minnikins,” each one less than half an inch long, held fine fabric pieces such as veils or ruffs in place to a woman’s clothing. Hattie Atwood observed the clothing of her friend, Miss Wood, while they took tea. She wore a black skirt and long polonaise (a fitted overdress) with garnet sashes all pinned, but many of her pins slipped to the floor. Hattie noted her father’s concern, “I was afraid her clothes would drop off before she got home” (Freeman and Dahl 1999:63).

For comparison, a common sewing pin, known as a short white, tended to be just over one inch long (Beaudry 2006:25). Other pins included longer and thicker blanket pins for fastening heavy fabrics, lace pins of fine wire, mourning pins and even shroud pins found on burial sites. Small finds including pins may be discovered on a shipwreck site by setting up sluice boxes and sifting dredge spoils, such as the NC Underwater Archaeology Branch currently does on the wreck site *Queen Anne’s Revenge*. The sieves caught small pins, including one with a head fashioned by coiling wire of the same diameter around the shank and soldering it in place, a technique used through the 18th-century (Beaudry 2006:20).

The finding of needles occurs far less frequently and usually they are found broken on archaeological sites. Like pins, needles might be fashioned for different types of sewing. Needles, however are rarely used for any other purpose and so are the most diagnostic evidence of sewing. On a ship, needles designed specifically for piercing the heavy canvas of sails have points with triangular cross-sections, and are therefore easily differentiated from ordinary needles. Sewing needles could be light or heavy, the weight of the fabric or other material such as leather or skins determined what the seamstress required. Also known as sharps, these basic needles could be used for darning and embroidery. With heavier cloth, tapestry needles with long open eyes were used (Stephens 1854). Straight needles could be kept in cases, and several examples made of whalebone with scrimshaw are seen at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. Sailors also mended their clothes and it would be difficult to differentiate his sewing notions except maybe from context or location.

In order to cut threads or fabrics, women required pairs of scissors. Greek mythology may have caused associations of scissors with old women, as the crone Atropos, one of the Three Fates, cut the thread that represented human life. Yet both men and women used scissors for work considered appropriate for their gender in the 19th century (Wiss 1848). On board ship, sailors used scissors to cut canvas for the sails they mended, so perhaps larger sizes or shears could indicate the use by a sailmaker. Smaller scissors and those with particular form, such as lace scissors that have a lump on one blade point would be more likely used by women. Carrickmacross lace required cutting the top layer to form the design and the “pattern is achieved by cutting with great delicacy and precision” (Beaudry 2006:128). The tiny stork scissors with the blades forming their beaks and the handles their feet remained popular with women in the Victorian era (Campbell 2006). Expensive scissors might be kept on a chain like a pocket watch

as a treasured personal item; part of a woman's presentation of self. They could convey to others her image of "domesticity and femininity" as a woman who sews and similarly denote class, gender identity and selfhood (Beaudry 2006:133). Few pairs survive in an archaeological setting, and often they are broken and poorly preserved so little can be deduced of their use. Perhaps those found on shipwreck sites can provide more information of tasks associated with sewing.

Other small items women used for needlework included crochet hooks, darning eggs, bobbins, thread spools, buttons, knitting needles and tating shuttles, such as the one Mary Congdon received from the mate on the *Caroline Tucker* (Congdon 1865). Many materials could be used in the manufacture of these items such as metals, wood, mother-of-pearl, whalebone and ivory. Only one wife, Martha Ann Nichols, wrote of taking on board a much larger item, her sewing machine (Nichols 1886). While she worked at her sewing, her husband Captain Edward produced a newsletter for friends called the *Ocean Chronicle* on a small press, and published a woodcut of the two of them working on the ship *Frank Pendleton* (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Again



FIGURE 18. Mattie Nichols at her sewing machine (1886)

depending on the site formation processes, some of these objects for sewing might survive and context would give clues as to the gender and status of the owner.

4) **Writing Implements**

Writing box/desk, Journal, Paper, Pen, Nibs, Pencil, Ink/inkwell, Sander/blotter, Slate/chalk

Unlike 19th-century curling irons and corsets, writing implements and materials were not specifically feminine items; however, middle-class women used these items constantly for writing letters and recording in their journals. Whether home or on ships, writing meant sitting at some hard surface and putting ink or pencil to paper. On shore, a woman might pen letters daily, sending them immediately by post to convey news, do business or organize visits. Anything from a scrawled note to a nearby farmer for certain amounts of produce, to a lengthy letter to family out of town, she wrote out on a single sheet of paper, then folded it so the outside remained blank other than the address, and sealed it to itself with wax or an adhesive wafer (Benjamin 2003:2) In the early 1800s, using only a single sheet kept the cost of delivery lower for each extra sheet meant increased cost. At mid-century, changes to postal charges and the invention of envelope-making machinery popularized the use of envelopes so regardless of number of pages the post charged 5 cents per half ounce within 300 miles (U.S. Congress 1845).

At sea, the acts of letter and journal writing became sources of entertainment to pass the hours. They might write each day but it could be months before they could send them to friends and family on shore. When writing, the motion of the ship often dictated the ability of the writer to put pen to paper, as huge waves tossed the ship and nothing stayed still. Brief journal entries in which the writing on page is scribbled and illegible tell more of the sea state than the words written, though occasionally the author explained the situation or stated that she could write no more. Elizabeth Bray described her efforts on a rough day on board *National Eagle*, “Writing is

difficult today. I have to grasp my paper with one hand, my pen with the other, and brace my knees against the table lest we all part company” (Bray 1860:Jan 3). Journals addressed to an audience back home often contained neater handwriting, but private journals such as those of Mary Congdon (1860) seemed less than tidy and often included erasures and scribbles. Given the lack of ready supplies, letters have very small handwriting and even lines written crossways over the same page (Bolles 1851). If found on a shipwreck sufficiently preserved to be legible, the journals and letters by women would be proof of their presence on board.

Writing boxes, portable desks that included storage, became popular in the 18th century. Jane Girdler used a small one when she sailed on board the *Robert H. Dixey*. She inherited it from her father who purchased it in the Orient in the 1830s. The rosewood fold-out box made to be set atop a table kept all her writing supplies in order (FIGURE 19). The stowage files for paper came lined with flowered silk and the writing surfaces were covered with velvet (Girdler 1997). Inside she might keep spare pencils, dip pens and new nibs, in case they wore out or broke. Other writing accessories she might have used included blotter pads or sand sprinklers to absorb any blotches and to keep the ink from smudging.



FIGURE 19. Jane Girdler’s writing desk used on the *Robert H. Dixey*

By the 1880s, self-contained fountain pens, marketed by companies such as Waterman, Scheaffer, and Parker became practical writing instruments, but dipping pens and inkwells remained in use (Lambrou 2000). For several journals studied, the woman wrote in pencil, perhaps to avoid the possibility of spilling ink in rough seas. The passenger boxes of the riverboat *Bertrand* sunk on the Missouri River in 1865, contained items related to writing. The lists of excavated cargo included inkwells, 11 larger bottles for ink, pen nibs and pencils (Corbin 2000:136). The archaeologists working on the early 19th-century wreck of *Mentor* found a fancy inkwell most likely belonging to an affluent passenger, so depending on make and materials, the small artifact provides clues to status or class of people travelling on the ship (Kourkoumelis 2012). Decorative inkwells associated with Victorian women exist in museums and shore side digs, but the ones salvaged from ships have been without feminine flourishes.

Finally, slate and chalk might be indicative of children on the ship doing their lessons. The educational materials in the Campbell box from the riverboat *Bertrand* include school supplies, but they were packed away in a trunk below decks unused by the girls during the voyage. The slate, with the name “Fanny” carved in the wooden frame, was made of lacquer-covered steel (Corbin 2000:67-68), but others found during excavations were made of slate stone. The supplies also included artist’s pastels of dark gray color which seem more likely to be used on paper than on a dark-colored slate.

None of these items for writing specifically denote a feminine presence for their use. The captain and mates wrote the logbook and kept accounts, and sailors might also keep journals and letters depending on their level of literacy. Slates worked well for navigation sums, as well as for children to practice sums. On a deep-water NOAA survey, archaeologists found a slate, which James Delgado noted in an interview may hold the ship’s last position written down on it in

pencil (Lee 2013). Writing artifacts found together with other objects of feminine associations could help answer research questions on the ways women wrote while on a ship.

5) **Baby Paraphernalia & Children's Toys**

Baby feeding bottles, nipple shields, toddler cots, baby clothes and shoes, toys

Women who joined their husbands frequently gave birth on the ship, unless purposely put ashore before their “confinement.” For example, Lydia Landers went ashore from the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan* and gave birth to her first child in Guam (Chase 1867; Leavitt 1998).

Although Victorian social norms meant few women wrote of their pregnancy in their journals, they did comment on the arrival of the child. Sarah Todd on their ship *Revely* out of New York mentioned nothing until she gave birth to her 4-pound baby girl, and due to the high infant mortality rate of the time, she waited weeks before naming her “Ida Revely” after their ship (Todd 1859). If the baby died, some women had the tiny body pickled the body to take ashore for a Christian burial. For example, Lucy Howes on *Southern Cross* mentioned concern for the preserved remains of her recently deceased baby when they were captured by the Confederates (Howes 1863:June 6). A container with pickled baby would be a morbid find during a shipwreck excavation, but indicative of the high probability of a woman on the ship.

Captain's wives wrote of nurse maids who came on the ship to help with breast feeding their new babies. Several objects assisted them or the nursemaid in feeding the infant depending on the method used to give them milk. If bottle feeding, the mother needed a source for milk such as a cow. Larger ships had room for livestock pens and the *Revely* carried a nanny goat for baby Ida (Todd 1859). The feeding bottles used changed shape during the era from a small glass opening tipped into the baby's mouth to those with nipple-ended hoses for baby to suck. Eventually the bottles became recognizable with modern forms and a wide opening for easy

cleaning. The bad taste of the new India rubber nipples slowed their immediate adoption over calfskin teat or cork until manufacturing methods improved the flavor (Stevens et al. 2009). On a shipwreck the shapes of these bottles would be recognizable especially if unbroken.

If breast feeding, a mother could wear nipple shields either without holes to cover sore nipples and keep her clothes from leakage, or with holes to protect herself while the infant was teething. These coverings could be made of glass, wood, leather, ivory, silver, or pewter. Dr. Wansbrough's Nipple Shields made of lead advertised that they were in "no way likely to be injurious to the infant" although fabricated from a known toxic metal. Eventually children's illness linked to the metal stopped their manufacture in lead (Rapoport and Kenney 1939). These shields if found while excavating might be mistaken for other items such as lids, but they would be definitive evidence of a nursing woman on the ship.

Many captain's wives wrote of using or making items for their babies comfort and protection. One mother wrote of wrapping her toddler in bedclothes on the cabin floor during rough weather, so the child could not fall out of her bunk (Howes 1863), but most tucked children into bunks with lee cloths. Some captain's wives made baby cots or cradles to rock their children to sleep. Eliza Williams on the whaleship *Florida* wrote, "We have been making a real Sailor's Cot for the baby to sleep in. The motion of the ship keeps it in motion all the time. The baby is delighted with it!" (Williams 1859:Aug 25). Other women made clothing, including sewing up baby dresses and knitting stockings for their girls. Miniaturized items whether beds, or clothing could indicate small children living on board found on a shipwreck site. The small clothes children wore and their little shoes would be diagnostic of family on the ship, and might give evidence of the age and sex of the child.

Girls on ships played less on deck than their brothers and began to learn skills considered gender appropriate at a young age. While learning to sew might be the chore, a girl could sew up clothes for her dolls such as Mary Congdon did while living on her father's ship *Hannah Thornton*. While in New Orleans, "Papa bought me a little crying baby and I have made a dress for it" (Congdon 1854:Dec 30). These small clothes might be mistaken for baby clothes, unless found with the doll. Dolls would also be considered gender appropriate for girls, teaching them to care for both younger siblings and their own babies when they grew up (Baxter 2005)

Many more types of toys created, or purchased for children could be present on a ship while they lived there, such as tin toys, games and puzzles. In 1898, Ruth Montgomery photographed a Captain Starett's son, Ralph, playing in the rigging of a toy sailboat about eight feet in length sat on the deck of their ship (Montgomery 1898). In the Atchison family cargo box from the steamboat wreck *Bertrand* (1865) several toys were found including a wooden whistle, a miniature tin pony and cart, and blocks that formed a school house (Corbin 2000:46-49). The analysis of toys becomes useful for further questions on the socialization of children and behaviors in that era as to how parents treated girls versus boys and what they allowed them to do on the ship (Baxter 2005). Artifacts for children found on a shipwreck further substantiate the likelihood of a woman on board.

Circumstances may exist of children being present without the mother on board, but these situations appeared only rarely in the journals. If the mother died while at sea, the prescribed nuclear family dissolved and the father sailed back to his homeport with his child in order to place the baby with caring relatives. When Sarah Hix Todd died of consumption at Hong Kong in 1858, her husband Captain Edward sailed home with their daughter to leave her with the grandparents in Rhode Island (Todd 1858). The possibility also exists that captain, crew or

passengers may have purchased the toy as a gift to bring back to a son or daughter at home. For example, in the carpenter's cargo box on the steamship *Arabia*, a small "Frozen Charlotte doll" was found carefully wrapped in a bottom corner (Corbin 2000:97). The doll may have been brought as a memento of children left behind at home or as a gift for family or friend's children at his destination.

6) Navigation Instruments

Sextant, octant, dividers, chronometer, spyglass, charts and books

Although not considered "feminine objects," many women wrote in their journals of learning to take a sight and find their position. As a measure of insurance against any accident, a captain often taught his wife (and children) to navigate, and women who learned navigation needed to know and use specific instruments to accomplish the task. Each of these objects are specialized for navigation and unlikely to be used in other circumstances, except maybe a spyglass to spot the incoming ships. Both an octant and sextant are used to take a sight, a method of accurately determining the distance between two objects on an arc, such as a star and the horizon (Weems 1942). Octants were usually made of wood, sometimes with ivory gradients, while more expensive sextants were made of all brass, and might be more likely to survive an underwater environment. A chronometer kept precise time on the ship and required protection from the elements to keep that accuracy. Each of these items might be used by the women who learned to navigate

Many instruments and tools were required to be able to navigate effectively on any ocean of the world. A Yankee captain captured during the Civil War made a list of goods seized from him by the crew of the CSS *Florida*. The catalog included 2 chronometers, a spyglass, an octant, and his sextant from Spencer, Browning & Co. valued at \$160. Along with these he carried

sailing directions, coast pilots, nautical almanacs, Brownlow's planisphere, Ward's star tables, and 20 charts of oceans and major straits such as Sunda and Tunis (Dean 2001:198). These books used for navigation are far rarer to find on a shipwreck. If able to abandon ship, navigation equipment would be among the first things packed for use in the lifeboat and if found on a wreck, archaeologists deduce the crew may not have survived the wrecking event. On a recent deep-water NOAA investigation (2013) in the Gulf of Mexico, books presumed to be for navigation were found on a 19th-century Monterrey shipwrecks (Lee 2013). The archaeologists noted a slate and other navigation instruments in proximity, but unless the pages can be examined its contents are speculative.

Few women who mastered navigation skills took the responsibility for finding the ship's position each day, and fewer still were recorded as navigators in official records. Eleanor Prentiss Creesy navigated one of the most famous American clippers, *Flying Cloud* (Shaw 2000). Given their extremely fast passage from New York to San Francisco in 1851, her route and methods became well-known to her contemporaries. Ellen learned celestial navigation from her father Captain John Prentiss. During the first ten years as wife to Captain Josiah Perkins Creesy, she spent more years at sea than on shore, navigating her husband's ships on the China Trade Routes. When she piloted the Cape Horn route to California on *Flying Cloud*, Ellen tested the routes recently published by Lt. Maury in *Explanations and Sailing Directions* (Maury 1854; Shaw 2000:102). She convinced her husband to break with tradition, and follow a route close to Cape São Paulo using the Brazil Current to avoid larger doldrums near Africa, and the Roaring Westerlies east of the Falkland Islands (Maury 1854). Their record-setting passage of 89 days to San Francisco proved her choices and abilities to navigate.

Hattie Atwood, one of the women who learned to navigate, could fix their latitude by shooting the North Star, and finding variations on the compass. Her father tested these skills, having her reckon what time they might see an upcoming island. When *Charles Stewart* arrived at midnight, she proudly noted her calculations were correct (Freeman and Dahl 1999:43). By the time they sailed across the Pacific, she could reckon latitude by the meridian and the moon (Freeman and Dahl 1999:67-68). As her father's health declined, affecting his eyesight on the homebound journey, she may have been relied on to find their position along with the first mate. As with most women in this study, she did not personally own a sextant, so Hattie used the navigation instruments that belonged to her father.

Although many women mentioned learning to navigate, only Georgia G. Blanchard stated she received her own sextant from her husband. At the turn of the century, he bought it for her when she arrived in Philadelphia to accompany him on the ship *Bangalore*. She wrote, Banning "decided to teach me navigation and about the stars. He bought me a sextant so that I could take the sights with him and a chart to plot our position each day" (Blanchard 1963). Georgia revealed the skills she gained during the voyage, noting that after rounding Cape Horn on a cloudy August day in 1907, she found the latitude from an observation of the star Antares that night (Blanchard 1963).

Navigation on board a whaleship, although no less important to keep the ship safe, required less urgency in execution than for a fast clipper. *Charles W. Morgan* needed to travel from port to the whaling grounds while avoiding rocks and shoals, but speed was far less important (Leavitt 1998; Druett 2001a). Many of the whaleships sailed for decades, built for strength and cargo space for oil barrels, they lasted far longer than the short reign of the clippers. Navigators of ships in the whaling industry seemed less likely to take risks such as cutting close

to dangerous headlands or going through hazardous channels for the sake of shorter passages, especially when their time at sea added up to years and not months on a voyage.

Charlotte Ott Church and Honor Earle navigated on *Charles W. Morgan* while they lived on board with their husbands and family. Charlotte learned to navigate from her father, a pilot in San Francisco, before meeting her husband Captain Charles (Leavitt 1998). Her name is one of the few women ever listed on a crew manifest, stating for the record her position as navigator. She may not have written a private journal, but on occasion she made comments in the ship's log, including the funeral of her cat (Church 1910). Honor, at first reluctant to follow her husband to sea, joined him when she found out she could sign on as navigator. She worked as a mathematics teacher in Russell, New Zealand, so she already had the background for the navigation calculations. In an interview with the *Boston Globe* she quipped, "Figures don't bother me in the least" (Druett 2001a).

Women learned to navigate on ships as a means to assist their husbands or fathers while passing the time on board. If circumstances such as widowhood required them to work, they might use their navigation skills to create a business. For example, two women in New York, Mrs. Brownlow and Mrs. Thorne opened a nautical school together. They taught about 2000 officers and prepared them to pass the strict naval examinations (Anthony et al 1886). A sextant that belonged to a woman would be indiscernible from that of her male counterpart as none were manufactured as a smaller size or with feminine designs. Only if her name was engraved in the brass of the sextant would the instrument be identified during an excavation as an object used by a woman. Yet, the fact that middle-class women learned to navigate on ships could lead to a shift in analysis of these items if found with feminine artifacts on a shipwreck site.

Conclusion

Examination and study of small finds during excavation of a 19th-century shipwreck could reveal that a woman lived on board for the voyage. Yet, the questions must go beyond merely finding indication of their presence to that of analyzing how women defined their femininity, respectability and status while on a ship. Besides the wives, sisters, daughters and nieces who came with the captains, the women may have been passengers, or servants on the ship. Some of these artifacts discussed in this chapter such as fans, hair combs and vanity sets might indicate difference in age or class of women who voyaged on the ships. A young woman such as Ruth Montgomery might be more likely to have fans, and a married woman such as Mattie Nichols would be more likely to have hair combs to put her hair up as a respectable Victorian woman must (Beaujot 2012). A nanny or stewardess would be unlikely to own these luxury items, or if of another ethnicity, such as an East Indian *amah* or nursemaid, she might own items indicating cultural differences. Using material culture as a focus allows for the “study through artifacts of the beliefs—values, ideas, attitudes and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time” (Prown 1982). Small finds from shipwreck could reveal invaluable information about the daily lives of women on board.

CHAPTER 5: APPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

Currently, research designs for maritime archaeology, especially shipwrecks, seem deficient in hypotheses that examine questions of gender. Site reports focus more on function, construction and performance, identifying the physical without interpreting the social (Ransley 2005:262). If in a research design, no parameters are included that consider the presence of artifacts associated with women, then perhaps these items would be unidentified on site, and possibly dismissed as unworthy of investigation or unimportant to the dominant discourse in maritime archaeology (Ransley 2005). Later investigations of those “unbiased” site reports that list artifacts may be nearly impossible to interpret with a gendered analysis. Therefore, it is recommended that shipwreck sites with previous surveys that show potential as sources of archaeological data on women on board need to be reexamined, and the future investigations of 19th-century merchant and whaling shipwrecks could begin with research designs that have facets based on gender analysis.

This chapter considers how the artifacts associated with women as discussed in previous chapters could be applied to shipwreck investigations. Archaeological investigations of shipwrecks can be an invaluable tool to find evidence of the existence of women on board, because most historical records for ships in the 19th century consisting of logs, crew manifests, insurance registers and newspaper clippings, rarely listed women, even when present (Flatman 2003; Gould 2008). Not only could a survey and excavation possibly find evidence of the women in the captain’s family, but also women of a lower class, who worked on board. Such women usually did not write a journal and so left no record.

An investigation of the journals and letters of women who lived on board 19th-century ships revealed several items used while on voyages. These objects could provide a basis for

predicting what might be found during an excavation (Appendix D). Although none of the items are themselves definitive archaeological diagnostics, the presence of these artifacts recorded in their archaeological context could be an indication that a woman may have lived on board. To summarize, these items include both the large artifacts: bathtubs, gaming chairs, gimballed beds, parlor organs, and small deckhouses; and the small finds, grouped as follows: clothing & accessories, personal adornment & toiletries, baby paraphernalia & children's toys, writing implements, and sewing notions (Chapter 3 & 4).

These lists, of items associated with women on ships, are intended to be of practical use to future analyses and to remedy the difficulties of identifying objects not commonly included in the guides to artifacts and material culture. For example, the vaginal syringes or nipple shields, although both can be dated to the Colonial period are not found in Noël Hume's *Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*. The information in these lists, combined with hypotheses that include gender, allow a more holistic analysis that could be applied to archaeological site reports and artifact assemblages. These reports may be found filed at State Archaeological offices or in online databases of shipwrecks (Appendix E). In future archaeological projects on shipwrecks, these lists of artifacts associated with women could help to incorporate a gendered approach in the development of research designs.

The general set of hypotheses below, created to assist in the application of gendered analysis, give a starting place as to what could be used by underwater archaeologists while studying a 19th-century shipwreck site. The hypotheses emerged from the journals in this study written by captain's wives and female family members who went to sea on American ships from New England. To reduce ruling theory, these predictions should be tested against the reality of a set of variables from the archaeological work on the site (Chamberlin 1890). Researchers would

structure their data collection and then interpret the data depending on what hypotheses they used. By posing several hypotheses to eliminate research bias, archaeologists allow for the refutation of some when compared with the data (Corbin 2000:25). In making assumptions of what artifacts might be found, further cross-referencing with such sources as historic photographs, catalogs, and contemporary archaeological sites on land might be used to formulate more than these four hypotheses (Corbin 2000:24-27).

The inclusion of the following hypotheses while preparing a research design might encourage investigation of gender on a 19th-century shipwreck site:

1. Women and their children lived with their husbands on ships, not just on family-owned coastal trading vessels but also on ships making long voyages.
2. Young children were more likely to be on board when the family group included a woman than would be found with men alone.
3. Women of lower economic class were more likely to be present on larger ships, where the captain's wife hired a stewardess, nursemaid and nanny to assist her.
4. Sailor's purchased gifts for women at home and these would be more likely to be associated with the crew's quarters in forward section of the ship.

Without the hypotheses on which to build a research plan that includes gender, any research of shipboard life in 19th-century society will remain inadequate. A research design that begins with the inclusion of gender during development is more likely to choose approaches and methods appropriate to test those assumptions. The primary investigator might brief the archaeological technicians on the recognition of diagnostic artifacts that signify women who lived on board. Considerations for the project might include methods to locate small artifacts such as pins, needles and thimbles by sifting sediment from test trench excavations (Green 2004; Bowens 2009). Sample objects should only be collected if reasonable confidence exists that further analysis will answer the questions in the research design, so the plan must include the

gendered questions or else the objects will not be deemed worthy of collection (Bowens 2009:137). The few pieces raised from a site must be identified by the technician or they may not be collected, such as metal rods of a parlor organ that might be linked to women on board

With these hypotheses, a research design based on an anthropological approach could be developed. The “anthropological perspective” encourages the development of hypotheses concerned primarily with the study of societies and the way they operate (Green 2004:348). Then by combining the archaeological and historical record a clearer picture could be produced. “For example, many items will not appear in the archaeological record of a shipwreck: perishable items may disappear, the origin, destination, and the reason for the voyage may not be known. Conversely the historical record may not record items [nor the women] onboard the ship...” (Green 2004:348-49). The final stage of investigation, studying patterns of materials in relation to other sites and finding relevance to broad historical interpretation, will require first a significant amount of data be collected about women on board sailing ships.

Although this thesis began with a search of historical documents, the realization of the dearth of data about women on ships in archaeological reports (if those reports can even be found in the piles of grey literature) soon became apparent. Given the amount of information being transferred to a digital format, the task of finding data in site reports should prove easier in the near future. Currently, a search of the available site reports has located few artifacts with clear associations to women. Besides the *Bertrand* box FPC-8 studied by Corbin (2000), only three reports used for this study included artifacts associated with women on board. One came from the coastal resource management firm SEARCH (2010), and the other two came from salvage diver reports. The archaeological report from SEARCH contained information on thimbles and their cases, but the time period is earlier than the parameters for this study of women in the 19th

century. The salvaged objects, a douche and hair combs, both fit the parameters of this study, but given how the divers obtained the artifacts and lack of provenience, they have little or no information that can assist in analysis.

With an increase of archaeological gender studies, more artifacts associated with women will be found on underwater sites, but as yet few archaeologists have noted them on shipwrecks, or their reports are not yet accessible. As an example of how information on artifacts associated with women might be applied, the site report for shipwreck *Olive Thurlow* (Smith & Wilderamsing 1996) was examined for its research design and for how a gendered analysis could be applied to the site at a future date:

Case Study: Olive Thurlow

In 1883, Hattie Atwood mentions visiting a ship in harbor at Valparaiso, Chile. “Later we go on board the bark *Olive Thurlow* of New York, Captain Corbett, who has his wife and three children with him” (Freeman & Dahl 1999:72). About 20 years after she visited on board, it sank at Cape Lookout Bight, NC. In the *Seventeenth Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States* (1885), the “name of managing or principal owner” of *Olive Thurlow* is listed as T.T. Corbett, possibly the captain himself, but in 1902, the Pendleton Bros. of New York owned the ship. Perhaps the later ship owners also made allowances for a captain to take his family with him, but the *New York Times* article (1902) reporting the loss of *Olive Thurlow* made no mention of a wife being on board. As noted above, the official documents and records often left out any reference to the captain's wife or family (Mitchell-Cook 2011:17) giving even more reason to investigate the archaeological record for physical evidence of women on ships.

On a December day in 1902, despite the warnings of Keeper William Gaskill of the Life-Saving Station, they anchored *Olive Thurlow*. Leaving the mate in charge, Captain Jerry O.

Hayes went ashore for medical attention in Beaufort. He broke his ankle and they took the ship to where they hoped was safe harbor (Smith & Wilde-Ramsing 1996; Stick 1952). When the weather turned and a gale pushed the ship ashore, lifesavers managed to rescue all but one crew member. In 1995, the Surface interval Diving Company (SIDC) with the aid of NC Underwater Archaeology Branch (NC UAB) received a permit for “Exploration and Recovery” of the wreck (Smith & Wilde-Ramsing 1996).

The SIDC site report on the shipwreck leaves the research questions unstated, other than their hopes to find conclusive evidence that the wreck is *Olive Thurlow*. The report includes the history of the ship, diving considerations, methods of research, drawings and measurements of site, underwater photographs, and artifact drawings. The conclusions focus on proofs of the decisions by the captain and mate leading up to the loss of the vessel (how much anchor chain they found laid out), how the ship broke apart (historic accounts included little mention), and the drinking habits of the sailors. “The crew of the *Thurlow* must have enjoyed a great array of alcoholic beverages. Some of these were not just whiskey, but an early civil-war era bottle possibly contained something as exotic as perhaps aged brandy...” (Smith & Wilde-Ramsing 1996:82).

One of the bottles clearly marked Clicquot Club in the drawings of artifacts is a non-alcoholic ginger ale (mixer). Looking at the contemporary advertising for the company that includes an Eskimo boy mascot, their marketing seems focused at women making the decisions to buy the soda for herself or her family. Pictures appeal specifically to mothers by showing happy children, such as a girl giving her dolls a tea party and boys playing pirates. Another ad



FIGURE 20. Clicquot ad from 1907.

shows a woman in a fancy bonnet wreathed with symbols of the theater such as masks and flutes (FIGURE 20), and copy stating, “It’s wholesome for children, being made of the purest water and ginger...” (Clicquot 1907). Perhaps the bottle could tell a different story if different research questions directed the investigation of the shipwreck of *Olive Thurlow*.

Given the disarticulation of the shipwreck *Olive Thurlow*, the location of artifacts may be far from where originally used. The further effects of site formation process pushed the wreck into separate parts. The site maps in the report give each section of the ship, such as bow, main hull, shrouds and boiler (Smith & Wilde-Ramsing 1996). The currents and low visibility might make searching for smaller objects difficult. The likely area for investigation would be at the stern where women usually lived on ships. Choosing an appropriate location to excavate a trench might also prove problematic, because site formation process continued to break apart the aft section of the wreck *Olive Thurlow* as the SIDC investigated over several years.

On a future archaeological project on the shipwreck *Olive Thurlow*, if a test trench could be dug, perhaps artifacts associated with women on board would be found to add to the Clicquot Club soda bottle. The dredge outflow would most likely need to be processed through a sluice box in order to find tiny items such as pins and needles (Green 2004). Given the ship was at least 20 years old, there may possibly be items stuck in the bilge from previous women who lived on board. With the hypotheses above as part of the research design, the approaches and methods of a future investigation on the wreck could increase the probability of finding these items and subsequent analysis of women's lives on ships.

Recommendations for Further Application

Hattie Atwood's journal linked *Olive Thurlow* to the presence of a captain's wife. With documentary evidence, the likelihood increases that artifacts associated with women may be found on the shipwreck at Cape Lookout. Several other shipwreck sites with promising links to journals in this thesis or other documents that mention women on board might, during a future excavation, reveal artifacts associated with wives and family on the ship. They are as follows: The cotton clipper *Robert H. Dixey* on which Jane Girdler sailed sank in Mobile Bay. The clipper *Snow Squall*, on which a captain's wife sailed on routes similar to that of Sarah Todd's *Comet*, had to be abandoned at the Falkland Islands. The thirty whaling ships on which possibly a dozen wives, along with their children lived, sank in the ice during the 1871 season off Alaska. The lumber schooner *Comet* (not the clipper) wrecked on San Miguel Island off California where the captain and his wife escaped to safety. The final ship, SS *William Lawrence* known to have artifacts associated with women in the cargo and can be used as a comparative analysis of feminine objects found on shipwrecks.

Robert H. Dixey

Three years after Jane Girdler worked as nanny on the *Robert H. Dixey*, a hurricane sank the ship at anchor in Mobile Bay. Captain Richard stayed with the ship and eighteen sailors perished along with him. His second mate along with four men made it to a sandbar, and were rescued by the ship *American Union*. In September of 1860, the *New Orleans Picayune* reported the loss of the ship, listing men on board, and calculating replacement cost of ship and cargo. The newspaper also noted that Mrs. Dixey was not on the ship. “His wife is at present on a visit to Boston, where the painful intelligence of her bereavement will quite too soon reach her” (Girdler 1997).

In 2006, as reported by NOAA, the remnants of the ship may have been found on the beach after a hurricane struck Dauphin Island. Marine archaeologist Glen Forest examined the hull fragment after the nearby residents excavated the wreck from the sand. The locals discussed the possibility of preservation, but the remnant remained under a vacation home where it had been swept in by the sea. Eventually with the lack of action, the home owner dragged the piece to the roadside and then the removed seven-ton chunk to a landfill (*Dauphin Island Times* 2006). It is unknown what artifacts may have been associated with the fragment or if more of the ship could be found in the sandy bottom off Dauphin Island.

Snow Squall

Annie Maria Dillingam accompanied her husband, Captain James, on the *Snow Squall*, an American clipper built in 1851. She voyaged with him to Australia in late 1862 (Dean 2001:166). The crew list included both her and Ellen Boyd, but no explanation as to whether the latter was a passenger, friend or stewardess for the ship. They reached Melbourne from New York City in only 76 days. On the return voyage, CSS *Tuscaloosa* came upon them off the coast

of Africa. Not wishing to lose his ship to the Confederates, the captain chose to run and sending Annie Maria below decks to safety soon outdistanced their cannon fire (Dean 2001:174). On the following voyage, *Snow Squall* grounded at the entrance to Le Maire Straits and he chose to return to the Falkland Islands for repair in February of 1864. The Port Stanley shipyard did not have a drydock or slipway large enough for the *Snow Squall*, and when the leak could not be found by divers or heaving down to peel away the metal sheathing, the ship was condemned (Dean 2001:191).

A project in the 1980s recorded the hull as part of larger survey of several clippers condemned at Port Stanley, and they freighted a portion of the bow structure to the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath (Switzer 2001). The remoteness of the location makes further investigation difficult. Throughout the years, the derelict hull remained accessible to salvage as part of a jetty made from several condemned ships, so neither it nor the other hulks may yield artifacts wedged in the bilges. The possibility exists that a local collector may still have possession of salvaged items from the ships, but again without provenience the objects would only prove the presence of women on the ship and little else.

Arctic Whaling Fleet Disaster 1871

Eliza Williams survived the destruction of the whaling fleet off Point Belcher, Alaska, in the late summer of 1871. The following summer when Captain Williams and his son Stancel returned to salvage the fleet, they found only two ships intact. Many natives looted what they could, and although the crews smashed the liquor bottles, they forgot those in the medical chests. When the bottles of medicine caused their sickness or even death, the natives burned some of the ships (Williams 1964:238). Some ships the ice crushed on to the shore and others sank at anchor.

The Williams salvaged as many of the barrels of oil they could, and managed to return the one ship, *Minerva*, to San Francisco (Williams 1964).

The only favorable result of the disaster lies in the possibility that the women and children's artifacts may remain to be studied during an archaeological project. In cooperation with NOAA, a recent survey of the area found some evidence of the wrecked whaling ships, but the remote location and distance from civilization requires generous funding with which to do more research (Barr 2010). Although the principal investigator, Randolph Beebe, has yet to publish his findings, a report submitted to BOEM quoted his manuscript (Rogers 2012). Beebe noted scattered beach remains found on their survey along the shore between Point Belcher and Point Franklin in 2007-08. The four-year investigation focused on documenting the extensive wreckage and artifacts that had washed up along thirty-two miles of beach. They located artifacts and ship hull fragments from six separate whaling vessels and smaller pieces of wreckage showed up distributed along the coast, suggesting the presence of submerged sites near shore. The lack of larger artifacts, such as anchors might indicate the other whaling ships remain on the sea bottom (Rogers 2012).

Lumber Schooner *Comet*

In 1886, Port Blakely shipyard on the West Coast in Washington State built the lumber schooner, *Comet*. The ship ran trips between the Pacific Northwest lumber mills and California ports (Russell 2005). An historic photo (1905) of the after cabin on *Comet* shows Captain Otto and Hulda Lembke, sitting in comfort with lacy cushions, flowered curtains and a phonograph in the foreground. They also brought their son Max on the ship (NPS 2011). The lumber schooners typically carried small crews, and many seemed to be family run, with captains bringing their wives and children along on voyages, similar to the coasting schooners out east.

When Captain Borgenson took over the *Comet*, he too brought his wife with him. In 1911 due to a faulty chronometer, they hit Wilson Rock in the fog, and the captain ran the ship ashore to save the cargo at Simonton Cove on San Miguel Island, CA. “He, his wife, several members of the crew, and the ship’s cat boarded a boat and set out for shore” (Russell 2005). Large breakers made it too dangerous to row ashore at the beach, so they headed to Santa Rosa Island to await rescue. The ship was a total loss as the heavy seas increased, and the owners soon sold *Comet* for salvage (Russell 2005). Again as a shore wreck there seems to be little left but the ship hardware such as the windlass. The *Comet* exemplifies the lumber ships that women lived on at the turn of the century.

SS William Lawrence

Sunk off the coast of Hilton Head in 1899, this steamship received a listing on the National Historic Register in 1998 after investigations by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA). Built at Atlantic Iron Works in 1869, the *William Lawrence* plied trade routes on the east coast transporting leather goods, and wrecked with a full cargo of merchandise. The ship carried “non-essentials, representing economic trends on the eastern sea board” in the late 19th century. The cargo included leather shoes; rolls of fabric; bottles of medicine, containers of pickles and preserves; toys and dolls; ornaments; artwork; and comic books (Harris 1998). The items might be used for comparative analysis of similar items found on other wrecks.

Conclusion

Future studies should add information to databases of material culture associated with women on ships. The databases could lead to the development of a basic taxonomy to assist archaeologists analyzing 19th-century shipwreck sites, whether studying previous site reports or while researching during a project. The potential sites listed above would benefit both from a gendered analysis, and from archaeologists placing the focus more on interpretation of the social constructs than the function and construction of the ships. A research design that encompassed gender analysis by including an expanded set of hypotheses would allow for more refined methods and techniques to find the artifacts associated with women. Given that the historical records for 19th-century ships rarely listed women, archaeological investigation of shipwrecks becomes an invaluable tool to find evidence of their existence on board.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

In the journals studied for this thesis, several women expressed feeling more at home on the ship than in their houses on shore. Sarah Todd (1856) wrote, “I am beginning a new life in a new home and I am as eager as Edward to be away.” This identification of the ship as a “home” allowed for a change in paradigm that increased the number of women joining their husbands and furthered the acceptance of their presence by ship owners. On merchant ships the elaborate aft cabins for the captain and officers included salons with fireplaces and dining spaces that rivalled hotels in their stylish interiors. On whale ships the smaller quarters might be deemed quaint and cozy, all still with room to bring luxuries from home such as parlor organs. With the ship’s quarters defined as homey, it then became necessary to have a wife to define that space as domestic and to act as hostess or helpmate within it. Wives came on board ready to make the ship home-like, by bringing materials to sew up table cloths, cushions for the seats, and frilly curtains for the windows along with their own cabin’s bed sheets and pillow slips. The Victorian ideals espoused in ladies’ magazines defined their roles as the moral and religious keepers of the family so women busied themselves in creating a domestic sanctuary on the ship in the image of the ideal Home to remedy all corruption of the masculine public sphere outside (Norling 2000). Even if that “outside” was just up the companionway.

This thesis began as an investigation of changes that may have occurred due to the presence of women on 19th-century sailing ships. Does the opinion of whaling merchant Charles W. Morgan (1849) hold true that there was more “decency and order” when a woman lived on a ship? He saw no disadvantages to whaling captains taking their wives. Rev. Samuel Damon openly encouraged whaling captain’s to take them. In 1850, he wrote, “We have heard of some close fisted and niggardly owners who object to this custom, but everybody knows that their

objections are founded upon the lowest principal of selfishness... The system however, works so well, that we predict it will become more and more fashionable” (Brewster and Druett 1992).

The whaleship owners who opposed the practice felt wives reduced the profits made on a voyage, because birth by or death of his wife meant a captain left the whaling grounds for port (Norling 2000:241). On clippers, hard-driving captains might mitigate their punishments when their wives were present to bear witness, but many captain didn't change their actions (Druett 1998).

The most notable paradigm shift that allowed women to choose to live on board, came about with the Victorian of romantic love and domestic fealty (Cott 1977). If women were to be the caretakers of hearth and home, they needed to be with their significant other wherever he went. Although many women gave birth at sea, and brought children along, they often chose their husbands over their offspring when first going to sea. Societal norms changed and affected the concept of family. Wives learned that love could mean sacrificing the comforts and community on shore for the unfamiliar hazards at sea to be with her husband. The changes that permitted women to go on board and sail to foreign lands across vast oceans, also produced an abundance of primary documents in the form of letters and journals that recorded women's experiences on ships. The items they used from the hair pins used on windy days to the gambling chairs to lower them off the ship, each might provide evidence as an archaeological diagnostic if found on an excavation.

As women continued to choose a life at sea, the days became routine and the hazards became familiar, whether a wave splashed on deck or the ship wrecked. Mattie A. Nichols (1887) spent over 14 years at sea travelling around the world four times with her husband, and viewed their ship *Frank Pendleton* as her home: “We arrived in New York all in good order

early Sunday morning and was soon on board of the *Frank* and I must confess that I felt more like having just arrived home than having just left home.” She chose to meet her husband, hurrying her children on train and steamer out of Maine:

I thought the matter over rather seriously before I decided to leave home, and came to the conclusion that to keep house and tend fires through a long cold winter was as hard a lot as one could voluntarily accept. My first attempt at the furnace—a failure—decided me to make a change in the programme... I immediately had a family consultation and in less than twelve hours trunks were packed, the house shut up, and we had started without having time to say goodbye... (Nichols 1887).

In examining the journals of the women who lived on ships, written evidence showed that minor changes occurred on a ship-by-ship basis due to the influence a woman exerted on her husband and from the minimal interactions with the crew. Although the tendency would be to utilize a few instances of change as universally applicable in concept, it seems unlikely that every woman affected a modification in shipboard life beyond their immediate presence. More likely a few sailors accepted alterations on board as beyond their control, other sailors tolerated the parameters, and a few even embraced the new situation to their benefit.

The interactions between crew and the captain’s female family members may have created a different environment on that particular ship compared to others. Wives wrote of affection for younger cabin boys, teaching them to read and looking out for them (Brewster and Druett 1992). When Honor Earle sailed on *Charles W. Morgan* at the turn of the century, she may have influenced the morale of one sailor, for she “mothered him a little bit and perhaps as a young fellow he appreciated it” (Earle 1965). Families interacted with their regular crew on special occasions, such as the feast after crossing the Equator or at Christmas when a mother and daughter gave token gifts to the sailors, such as in 1896, when Maria Murphy and young Jane gave candy and oranges to them for that holiday (Murphy 1896).

Sailors who made toys for children or flirted with daughters, such as Mary Congdon (1854), may have felt homesick so the interaction provided some level of comfort. A connection created a sense of home, similar to what might be found ashore where they left their own sweethearts, wives and families. Perhaps not all sailors pined for those left behind, but some of them did. The myth of the Jack Tar as bachelor suppressed the idea that sailors left families at home, and promoted that all sailors were impious, lascivious and lecherous with a mistress in every port (Burton 1991). Perhaps most were licentious, but not all. In the extreme, death at sea brought the crew together in ritual to commit the body to the Deep. Afterwards in a ceremony at the mainmast, the clothing and goods of the dead man were auctioned and the proceeds collected for his family. Seamen purchased the effects for far more than their worth in an effort to send some compensation to his dependents (Rediker 1987:197). Some companies especially in the whaling industry that sent ships on longer voyages, allowed allotments on their wages to be collected by designated representative at regular intervals “providing vital support for dependents” (Rediker 1987:41). In choosing a ship, the sailor who left a sweetheart or wife behind might have felt compelled to sign on board a “hen frigate” or ship that carried the captain’s wife in hopes of that connection to Home. Or sailors avoided those ships to escape from what they believed confining at home.

In the seven main journals used in this study, women interacted to varying degrees with the sailors. Eliza Williams knew the names of her crew and occasionally mentioned them, and wrote of worrying for their safety (Williams 1964). Jane Girdler listened to the music of the sailors and on the return trip her half-brother sailed with them as crew to Mobile, Alabama (Girdler 1857). Hattie Atwood helped set a broken bone of one of the sailors and often spent time with the mate (Freeman 1999:45). Mary Stickney constantly administered what aid she could

nursing the sailors (Stickney 1881). Finally, Mary Congdon received toys the boatswain made her as a child, and on her later trip, created attachments to the crew members Mate Ctery and Billy (Congdon 1863). The other women seemed less inclined to interact with the foredeck men. Lucy Howes only mentions by name the Mate and a deckhand who died falling from the rigging (1866). Sarah Hix Todd had no apparent interaction or interest in the crew (Todd 1858)

The changes in social norms allowed for different choices to be made, such as wives and families of captains going to sea. With that decision, women packed their trunks with all they thought was needed along with some spares. In their journals and letters, women referred to objects brought along or used on ships for their entertainment or work. The artifacts are analyzed as to how definitive they might be as a diagnostic of a woman being present on a 19th-century ship. Both the large and small artifacts from Chapter 3 & 4 are examined for their strengths of association to women on a scale of possibility. Starting with the large objects, and in descending order from strongest probability to least, these artifacts might be associated with a woman living on board: 1) Gammage chair, 2) Parlor organ, 3) Gimballed bed, 4) Bathtub and 5) Small deckhouse.

Given specific circumstances, each artifact may have more or less relation to a woman on board. At any time, these objects may have been appropriated for other uses, due to factors, such as limited space and the desires of the wife living on the ship. As noted above, when she departed from the ship, a woman often left behind the heavy objects that were only useful on board and built onto the ship. Gammage chairs and gimballed beds were maritime objects with no use ashore. The gammage chair is the most feminine maritime object of the large objects, and no sailor would use it unless perhaps deathly ill or with broken bones. Visiting male dignitaries from another culture would not perceive it as a “demasculinization.” when lifted in the chair onto

the ship. The parlor organ might be abandoned on board if the woman left before the ship returned to homeport. The instrument was considered strictly part of the feminine domain and not a maritime item, but perhaps visitors, captains' wives and families could play it when they came to gam or in port, such as the Customs official who Jane Girdler met in Kronshtadt (Girdler 1857) The gimballled bed, bolted in place, remained in the captain's cabin for his comfort, though it was originally built for the wife. The bathtub would probably stay on the ship for the captain and officers, if accessible. The tub and bathing delineated class distinctions, more than gender. Finally, even if no woman sailed that voyage, the small deckhouse possibly remained in location until removed by the ship's carpenter or in the shipyard. It would most likely be appropriated for another use, such as to serve for medical emergencies, storage or even as a galley (Earle 1965). If the ship sank, the artifacts might indicate a woman once lived on board though she no longer resided on the ship when it sank. The possible finds of galley stoves, or tar barrels in the small deckhouse might confuse the identification of it ever being associated with a woman on board. Yet the possibility exists for these large artifacts to be found on a shipwreck and provide data for a gendered analysis of shipboard culture.

The personal objects that women brought on ships represented their choices of what they wanted and what thought they needed. If found during the archaeological excavation of a shipwreck, these small finds might allow for analysis of age, status and race interaction on board. As with the large objects, the small finds are in descending order from strongest probability to least, these groupings of artifacts might be associated with a woman living on board: 1) Baby Paraphernalia & Children's Toys, 2) Personal Adornment and Toiletries, 3) Clothing and Accessories, 4) Sewing Notions, 5) Writing materials, and 6) Navigation Instruments.

Each of these grouping might have exceptions. The baby paraphernalia and toys might be on the ship without a mother on board. It is extremely unlikely that a baby would be there otherwise; however, the toys might be on the ship if one of the crew bought it as a gift for children at home. The feminine hygiene objects might be similar to some medical instruments men used, but otherwise, would be strictly for feminine use. Clothing and accessories if intact, usually follow clear lines of gender separation. Women could wear not wear pants, and men did not wear dresses in Western fashion of the 19th century. Sewing notions might also be just as easily male-identified items, as sailors needed to mend their clothes, but items such as thimbles or sewing baskets might have feminine decorations. Unless the item was monogrammed, the writing implements might be almost impossible to differentiate in gendered use, as both men and women of middle class wrote journals and letters. Finally the navigational items found on a shipwreck will be assumed to be male-identified as the safety of the ship required the practiced use of these objects. Yet, women often used them to assist their husbands or even to save the ship from disaster. Depending on site formation process, all these objects might be recognized if intact, but obscure and “taboo” objects remain outside what might be easily identified. Perhaps publishing of data and illustrations to inform and raise awareness among underwater archaeologists as to distinguishing features of these large artifacts may keep key pieces from being labelled ‘miscellaneous’ in site reports.

The site report maps of whaling ships from the archipelago northwest of Hawaii show a large scatter of debris due to turbulent, tropical waters. On the *Two Brothers* wreck site, the heavier objects remain. The solid trypots and bricks of the tryworks are evident, along with anchors, blubber hooks, harpoons, and rigging pieces (NOAA 2010). During a wrecking event most wooden objects, besides hull structure trapped under the ballast, floats away. The idea of

finding a small bit of parlor organ scattered amongst the coral heads seems improbable; however, the inclusion of gendered hypotheses into the research design might allow for methods to seek those bits out and to recognize them if found.

Questions of gender allowed land-based archaeologists to accumulate relevant data. By changing from masculine-biased research questions to those which included subordinate and oppressed groups, their research transformed to a model that revealed new information to be collected in the databases for further analysis (Wylie 2002). Yet in maritime archaeology, these preconceived and often subconscious prejudices that only men lived on ships perpetuates the trend to assess shipwreck sites with only the dominant discourse which maintains the current dogma that women did not go to sea (Ransley 2005).

The findings from maritime artifact assemblages has great potential for comparison to sites excavated on shore offering us a different source of data, and different artefact assemblages of shipwrecks to provide us a way to re-evaluate the assumed norms from land based sites. “Maritime archaeology offers us a dynamic relationship among people/land/sea” (Ransley 2005). The San Francisco Central Freeway Replacement Project done by URS looked at several households and found numerous artifacts related to sewing done by new immigrants to this port city. Such comparisons between shore side and afloat might answers *questions on the psychology of going to sea*. Did people ashore have more or less or similar items? Did people going to sea take less expensive items for they might be lost, broken, or damaged while on ship? Did they pack their “expensive” items separately for safety to remain un-used while living on ship for longer periods? Did women take more raw materials such as fabrics, yarns, and inks for there was nowhere to replace things while at sea?

Conclusion

With gender analysis incorporated into how underwater shipwreck sites are investigated, new information might be added to the knowledge of 19th-century maritime culture. As noted, “What you find, archaeologically, has everything to do with what you look for, with the questions you ask and the conceptual resources you bring to bear in attempting to answer them” (Wylie 2002). The working hypotheses on any investigation of a shipwreck site should include ones that ask about women’s lives on board and what influence they had on the culture of the ship. The information from this thesis will hopefully be of use on archaeological investigations of shipwrecks from the Victorian era and will promote inclusion of gender analysis.

In conclusion, using material culture on 19th-century shipwrecks as diagnostics to determine a feminine presence has not often been written into previous research designs. If archaeologists found one (or even all) of the large or small artifacts, it still would not be definitive that a woman lived on the ship, but the inclusion of gendered hypotheses in the research design to accommodate for such finds would allow for further study. As research advances create a larger data base, statistical modeling and structured taxonomies will permit a more specific analysis of how these objects could indicate gender in relation to class, race, and social structure in maritime archaeology. Although the focus here was on American ships of New England, similarities exist with sailing ships from other western countries, such as England.

My interest in this topic is driven from personal experience, but the study is meant to be relevant to others, both within and outside the field of maritime archaeology. This research and further studies of women on ships in history and archaeology continue to be important, because the paucity of investigations into this aspect of maritime culture needs to be rectified.

Archaeology has advanced in the study of gender analysis on terrestrial sites, but maritime

archaeology still seems to be lagging on the inclusion of gender in research designs. My thesis sets some groundwork for what could be found on underwater sites where a women might have been present when the ship sank. The inclusion of information on these seafaring women in maritime history could shift perceptions of ships at sea as an all-male realm, and more accurately reflect shipboard culture of the 19th century.

As a study that seeks to rectify imbalance, the focus in this thesis has been on the women who went to sea. With this research developed, it could then be extended into broader gender interactions and comparisons of ships social structures with and without women on board, and how that might be found in the archaeological record. A critical reexamination of canons in existing scholarly work, and inclusion of alternative views in history and archaeology, such as of women and minorities, will provide a more truthful interpretation of the past. This information on seafaring women should be incorporated into media, textbooks, and school lessons to present strong female role models to girls and women. By publishing this thesis along with articles in popular magazines and participating in public outreach, a wider audience will be reached to dispel the myth of ships as a strictly masculine domain.

What began as an interest in seafaring women, led to a lengthy search for these intrepid wives, daughters, sisters and nieces of captains, and an investigation into how these women experienced life on ships. As the 20th century began, the call of the sea continued to tempt women from shore, seduced by vast horizons and gentle breezes, and in 1910 Dorothea Balano fell under the spell:

The captain cornered me for sunset coffee and stayed on deck with me talking about his home [in] Maine. Was he trying to woo? I've nothing to say about what followed... Guess I'll spend these heavenly days on top of the after deckhouse where the view is mutually good: I can see the beautiful sea... (Balano 1979).

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APPENDIX A: PERMISSIONS

PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM PERMISSION

Request for photo use

Kevin Johnson <kjohnson@pmm-maine.org>
To: Laurel Seaborn <shesalt@gmail.com>

Wed, Dec 11, 2013 at 12:25 PM

Here are the photos you requested Laurel. Let me know that you have received them. Thanks and good luck with your thesis. Kevin

On Tue, Dec 10, 2013 at 9:35 AM, Kevin Johnson <kjohnson@pmm-maine.org> wrote:

Thanks Laurel. I will send them to you later today or tomorrow (depending on how my day plays out...) I think your thesis would be a nice addition to the museum's library if you don't mind sharing it with us once its done. Cheers, Kevin

On Mon, Dec 9, 2013 at 3:33 PM, Laurel Seaborn <shesalt@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you so much Kevin,
I sent the online request for photo permissions, with a few other possibilities added to illustrate my thesis.
Much appreciated.
Laurel

On Mon, Dec 9, 2013 at 1:44 PM, Kevin Johnson <kjohnson@pmm-maine.org> wrote:

Hi Laurel,
I received your request from Cipperly. Please take a moment and complete the permission for which you can find by following the link below. You do not need to complete the payment section. Once I get that back I will send you the image at the specification you requested.
Thanks! Kevin

<http://penobscotmarinemuseum.org/photo-permissions-licensing-copyright/>

On Fri, Dec 6, 2013 at 9:29 AM, Cipperly Good <cgood@pmm-maine.org> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Laurel Seaborn** <shesalt@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Dec 5, 2013 at 8:33 PM
Subject: Request for photo use
To: cgood@pmm-maine.org

Dear Cipperly Good,

It's been about a year since I was there in-person doing my thesis research in your archives. I'm hoping to reproduce an image of Mrs. Hinds on *Allanwilde*, taken by Ruth Montgomery. I don't need a hard copy print, just a digital copy without the words "Penobscot Marine" written through it. It will be sized about 1/6th of an 8X11 page so will need about 600x800 to reproduce well.

LB1990.49.102 (photo 002\LB199049B9J.JPG)

My master's thesis is on captain's wives and families living on ships in the 19th century and I'm looking specifically at objects on board that may indicate a woman's presence (and then show up in the archaeological record on a shipwreck excavation). The parlor reed organ such as in her photo of Mrs. Hinds is part of my proofs of women's presence.

It would be strictly for educational purposes with digital copies published on the university repository of theses, with no further publication without express permissions from your museum. The Penobscot Museum would be fully credited and you are already written into my acknowledgements for generous assistance while I visited the Phillips Library.

Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Laurel

Capt. Laurel Seaborn
Sailing Instructor and Maritime Archaeologist
East Carolina University, Greenville, NC
252-367-9440

Kevin Johnson
Photo Archivist
Penobscot Marine Museum
P.O. Box 498
Searsport, Maine 04974
(207) 548-2529 ext. 210
www.PenobscotMarineMuseum.org

Dear Kevin Johnson:

This letter will confirm our recent emails. I am completing a Master's Thesis at East Carolina University entitled "Seafaring Women." I would like your permission to reprint in my thesis photos from the Ruth Montgomery Collection:

The photos to be reproduced are as follows:

- LB 1990.49.26 Ruth at the Helm of *Carrie Winslow*
- LB 1990.49.27 Ruth Sewing on Deck
- LB 1990.49.37 Ma Hanging Laundry on Deck
- LB 1990.49.102 Mrs. Fickett at Organ on *Allanwilde*
- LB 1990.49.185 Pa, Ma, & Ruth (ship interior)

Because I intend to use images belonging to the Penobscot Marine Museum for other than personal use, I therefore understand and agree that:

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Thank you very much.

Laurel Seaborn

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

Kevin Johnson

Dec 11 2013

Date

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Address: 1100 Euclid St - E, Greenville, NC 27532
Phone: (216) 367-7446

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 (Laura Travis) 3/20/2014
Signature of Staff Member of the Dittrick Medical History Center Date

APPENDIX B: WOMEN ON SHIPS (by Name& Date)

By Name: List of women documented as living on board 19th-century ships from New England.

1.	Allen, Harriet	<i>Merlin</i> , journal	1868-72
2.	Allen, Helen (dau.)	<i>Merlin</i> , journal	1871-72
3.	Almy, Almira	<i>Cape Horn Pigeon</i> (whaler)	1855
4.	Atwood, Hattie	<i>Charles Stewart</i> , book	1883-84
5.	Bagley, Laura	<i>Levi C. Wade</i> , journal	1880-81
6.	Balano Dorothea	<i>R.W. Hopkins</i> , book	1910-13
7.	Bartlett, Mary Ellen	<i>American Union</i> , journal	1860-62
8.	Blanchard, Georgia G.	<i>Bangalore</i> book	1906
9.	Bolles, Nancy	<i>Alert</i> , letters	1851
10.	Bray, Mary Matthews	<i>National Eagle</i>	1860?
11.	Brewster, Mary	<i>Tiger</i> (whaler), journal	1845-49
12.	Brock, Susan Emma	<i>Lexington</i>	1853-56
13.	Brown, Anne Augusta F.	<i>Agate</i> , journal	1870
14.	Burgess, Hannah Rebecca	<i>Challenger</i> (clipper), book	1856
15.	Chapman, Angie H.	<i>Leading Wind</i> , book	1879-85
16.	Church, Charlotte	<i>Andrew Hicks (C.W. Morgan)</i> , logs	1908-13
17.	Cleveland, Lucy Heller	<i>Zephyr</i> , journal	1829-30
18.	Cole, Sarah Stall	<i>Vigilant</i> , journal	1859-62
19.	Colcord, Joanna	<i>Clara McGilvery, Harvard</i> , book	1882-1901
20.	Congdon, Cynthia	<i>Hannah Thorton, C. Tucker</i> , journal	1852-54
21.	Congdon, Mary	<i>Hannah Thorton, C. Tucker</i> , journal	1854, 1860-65
22.	Crapo, Lucy Ann	<i>Louisa + Linda Stewart</i> (whaler), journal	1866
23.	Davis, Carrie	<i>Jacob S. Ellis</i> , book	1870-79
24.	Deblois, Henrietta	<i>Merlin</i> , journal	1856
25.	Dehart, Charlotte	<i>Roman</i> (whaler), journal	1857-61
26.	Dow, Annie Black	<i>Clarissa B. Carver</i> , letters	1858 -79
27.	Drinkwater, Alice Gray	<i>Grace Deering</i> , book	1897-1901
28.	Earle, Honor Matthews	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>	1896-1904
29.	Edwards, Eliza	<i>Black Eagle</i> (whaler), journal	1857-60
30.	Everett, Sarah L.	<i>Kineo</i> (clipper), letters	1860-62
31.	Fanning, Sarah	<i>Houqua</i> , journal	1846
32.	Follansbee, Mrs. Alonzo	<i>Logan</i> , journal	1837-39
33.	Fraser, Margaret	<i>Sea Witch</i> (clipper), journal	1852-53
34.	Girdler, Sarah Jane	<i>Robert H. Dixey</i> (clipper), journal	1857-58
35.	Graves, Mary S. (dau.)	<i>Tennyson</i> , journal	1858
36.	Graves, Mrs. Edward	<i>Josiah L. Hale</i> , journal	1862-64
37.	Gray, Emma Hotchkiss	<i>Harvard</i> , journal	1856, 1868-69
38.	Hamblin, Emily	<i>Eliza Adams</i>	1874
39.	Hathorn, Susan	<i>J.J. Hathorn</i>	1855
40.	Hendee, Augusta	<i>Sabine</i> , journal	1859-60
41.	Heppingstone, Adaline (dau.)	<i>Fleetwing</i> , journal	1882
42.	Heyer, Myra Weeks	<i>Wanderer</i> (whaler), journal	1879

43.	Howes, Lucy Lord (Hooper)	<i>Southern Cross, Lubra</i> , journal	1862-67
44.	Jernegen, Helen	<i>Oriole & Roman</i>	1866-71
45.	Keith, Lorna	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>	1883-84
46.	Landers, Lydia	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>	1864-67
47.	Lawrence, Mary Chipman	<i>Addison</i> , book	1856-60
48.	Marble, Eliz	<i>Kathleen</i> , journal	1857-60
49.	McKenzie, Susan	<i>Hercules, Europa</i> (whalers)	1869-72
50.	Morgan, Mary (dau.)	<i>Bridgeport</i> , journal	1881
51.	Morgan, Sarah A.	<i>Bridgeport</i> , journal	1870-80
52.	Morrell, Abby Jane.	<i>Antarctica</i> , book	1837
53.	Murphy, Maria	<i>W.F. Babcock</i> , Journal & letters	1883-86
54.	Nichols, Martha Ann	<i>Fred Pendleton</i> , newsletter	1878-87
55.	Page, Charlotte	<i>George Washington</i> , book	1852
56.	Peabody, Cornelia Marshall	<i>Neptune</i> , journal	1855
57.	Peirce, Harriet (dau.)	<i>Emerald</i> (whaler)	1857
58.	Pendleton, Florence	<i>David Brown</i> , journal	1880
59.	Pendleton, Marietta	<i>Emma T. Crowell</i> , Oral history transcript	1890s
60.	Pendleton, Sarah Anne	Unknown ship, letters	1850-51
61.	Percival, Drusilla Snow	<i>Vesta</i> , journal	1857-58
62.	Rairden, Mary Tarbox	<i>Henry Warren</i> , journal	1851-52
63.	Ricketson, Annie	<i>A.R. Tucker</i> , book	1871-74
64.	Rowland, Mary Satterly	<i>Thomas W. Rowland</i> , journals	1855-1860s
65.	Sears, Bethia	<i>Wild Ranger</i> , letters	1855-56
66.	Slocum, Sarah Jane	<i>Mary & Martha</i> (whaler), logbook	1851-52
67.	Smith, Marian	<i>Californian, Norwhal</i> (whalers), letters	1895-99
68.	Smith, Sallie	<i>Ohio</i> , journal	1875-78
69.	Stark, Mary Rathbun	<i>B.F. Hoxie</i> , letters	1855-56
70.	Stetson, Elizabeth	<i>Elizabeth Corning</i> (whaler), journal	1860-65
71.	Stoddard, Carolyn A.	<i>Kathay</i> , journal	1856
72.	Stover, Calista M.,	<i>Daniel Barnes</i> (whaler), journal	1859-1881
73.	Swain, Harriet	<i>Catawba</i> , journal	1852-55
74.	Thomas, Emma	<i>Merlin</i> , letters	1872
75.	Tinkham, Clara	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>	1875-76
76.	Todd, Sarah Hix	<i>Revely, Comet</i> (clipper), journal	1857-58
77.	Veeder, Susan	<i>Nauticon</i> (whaler), journal	1848-53
78.	Wheldon, Clara Kingman	<i>John Howland</i> (whaler), letters	1864
79.	Williams, Eliza	<i>Florida</i> , book	1858-61
80.	Wood, Isabel	<i>Sagamore, Sovereign of the Seas</i>	1873-95

By Date: List of women documented as living on board 19th-century ships from New England.

1829	Cleveland, Lucy Heller	<i>Zephyr</i> , journal
1837	Follansbee, Mrs. Alonzo	<i>Logan</i> , journal
1837	Morrell, Abby Jane	<i>Antarctica</i> , book
1840s		
1845	Brewster, Mary	<i>Tiger</i> (whaler), journal
1846	Fanning, Sarah	<i>Houqua</i> , journal

1848	Veeder, Susan	<i>Nauticon</i> (whaler), journal
1850s		
1850	Pendleton, Sarah Anne	Unknown ship, letters
1851	Bolles, Nancy	<i>Alert</i> , letters
1851	Rairden, Mary Tarbox	<i>Henry Warren</i> , journal
1851	Slocum, Sarah Jane	<i>Mary & Martha</i> (whaler), logbook
1852	Congdon, Cynthia	<i>Hannah Thorton, C. Tucker</i> , journal
1852	Fraser, Margaret	<i>Sea Witch</i> (clipper), journal
1852	Page, Charlotte	<i>George Washington</i> , book
1852	Swain, Harriet	<i>Catawba</i> , journal
1853	Brock, Susan Emma	<i>Lexington</i>
1854	Congdon, Mary	<i>Hannah Thorton, C. Tucker</i> , journal
1855	Almy, Almira	<i>Cape Horn Pigeon</i> (whaler)
1855	Hathorn, Susan	<i>J.J. Hathorn</i>
1855	Peabody, Cornelia Marshall	<i>Neptune</i> , journal
1855	Rowland, Mary Satterly	<i>Thomas W. Rowland</i> , journals
1855	Sears, Bethia	<i>Wild Ranger</i> , letters
1855	Stark, Mary Rathbun	<i>B.F. Hoxie</i> , letters
1856	Burgess, Hannah Rebecca	<i>Challenger</i> (clipper), book
1856	Deblois, Henrietta	<i>Merlin</i> , journal
1856	Gray, Emma Hotchkiss	<i>Harvard</i> , journal
1856	Lawrence, Mary Chipman	<i>Addison</i> , book
1856	Stoddard, Carolyn A.	<i>Kathay</i> , journal
1857	Dehart, Charlotte	<i>Roman</i> (whaler), journal
1857	Edwards, Eliza	<i>Black Eagle</i> (whaler), journal
1857	Girdler, Sarah Jane	<i>Robert H. Dixey</i> (clipper), journal
1857	Marble, Eliz	<i>Kathleen</i> , journal
1857	Peirce, Harriet (dau.)	<i>Emerald</i> (whaler)
1857	Percival, Drusilla Snow	<i>Vesta</i> , journal
1857	Todd, Sarah Hix	<i>Revely, Comet</i> (clipper), journal
1858	Dow, Annie Black	<i>Clarissa B. Carver</i> , letters
1858	Graves, Mary S. (dau.)	<i>Tennyson</i> , journal
1858	Williams, Eliza	<i>Florida</i> , book
1859	Cole, Sarah Stall	<i>Vigilant</i> , journal
1859	Hendee, Augusta	<i>Sabine</i> , journal
1859	Stover, Calista M.,	<i>Daniel Barnes</i> (whaler), journal
1860s		
1860	Bartlett, Mary Ellen	<i>American Union</i> , journal
1860?	Bray, Mary Matthews	<i>National Eagle</i>
1860	Everett, Sarah L.	<i>Kineo</i> (clipper), letters
1860	Stetson, Elizabeth	<i>Elizabeth Corning</i> (whaler), journal
1862	Graves, Mrs. Edward	<i>Josiah L. Hale</i> , journal
1862	Howes, Lucy Lord (Hooper)	<i>Southern Cross, Lubra</i> , journal
1864	Landers, Lydia	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>

1864	Wheldon, Clara Kingman	<i>John Howland</i> (whaler), letters
1866	Crapo, Lucy Ann	<i>Louisa + Linda Stewart</i> (whaler), journal
1866	Jernegen, Helen	<i>Oriole & Roman</i>
1868	Allen, Harriet	<i>Merlin</i> , journal
1869	McKenzie, Susan	<i>Hercules, Europa</i> (whalers)
1870s		
1870	Brown, Anne Augusta F.	<i>Agate</i> , journal
1870	Davis, Carrie	<i>Jacob S. Ellis</i> , book
1870	Morgan, Sarah A.	<i>Bridgeport</i> , journal
1871	Allen, Helen (dau.)	<i>Merlin</i> , journal
1871	Ricketson, Annie	<i>A.R. Tucker</i> , book
1872	Thomas, Emma	<i>Merlin</i> , letters
1873	Wood, Isabel	<i>Sagamore, Sovereign of the Seas</i>
1874	Hamblin, Emily	<i>Eliza Adams</i>
1875	Smith, Sallie	<i>Ohio</i> , journal
1875	Tinkham, Clara	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>
1878	Nichols, Martha Ann	<i>Fred Pendleton</i> , newsletter
1879	Chapman, Angie H.	<i>Leading Wind</i> , book
1879	Heyer, Myra Weeks	<i>Wanderer</i> (whaler), journal
1880s		
1880	Bagley, Laura	<i>Levi C. Wade</i> , journal
1880	Pendleton, Florence	<i>David Brown</i> , journal
1881	Morgan, Mary (dau.)	<i>Bridgeport</i> , journal
1882	Colcord, Joanna	<i>Clara McGilvery, Harvard</i> , book
1882	Hepplingstone, Adaline (dau.)	<i>Fleetwing</i> , journal
1883	Atwood, Hattie	<i>Charles Stewart</i> , book
1883	Keith, Lorna	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>
1883	Murphy, Maria	<i>W.F. Babcock</i> , Journal & letters
1890s		
1890s	Pendleton, Marietta	<i>Emma T. Crowell</i> , Oral history transcript
1895	Smith, Marian	<i>Californian, Norwhal</i> (whalers), letters
1896	Earle, Honor Matthews	<i>Charles W. Morgan</i>
1897	Drinkwater, Alice Gray	<i>Grace Deering</i> , book
1900s		
1906	Blanchard, Georgia G.	<i>Bangalore</i> , book
1908	Church, Charlotte	<i>Andrew Hicks (C.W. Morgan)</i> , logs
1910	Balano Dorothea	<i>R.W. Hopkins</i> , book

APPENDIX C: ARCTIC WHALING FLEET DISASTER 1871

The 33 ships caught in the ice in Alaska are listed below (only the *Minerva* was salvaged intact the following season by Eliza's husband, Captain Wm. Williams). These shipwrecks could yield archaeological information on the lives of whaling families (including wives and young children) that stayed on board in the Arctic season.

Ships caught in ice:

Captain	Ship	Had Wives On board/ Wrecks Found
Allen, Charles E.	<i>J.D. Thompson</i>	No/Not found
Almy, Alexander	<i>Kohola</i>	No/Wreck later found ashore
Bauldry, George F.	<i>Navy</i>	No/Not found
Bliven, George W.	<i>Elizabeth Swift</i>	Possibly along, journal for 1868/Not found
Dean, Aaron	<i>John Wells</i>	Mrs. Fisher lived on board in 1861-1865/No
Dexter, Benjamin	<i>Emily Morgan</i>	Wife: Almira/Wreck later found ashore.
Fisher, James H.	<i>Oliver Crocker</i>	No/Not found
Frazer, D. R.	<i>Florida</i>	Previously Williams family ship/Wreck burned
Heppingstone, John	<i>Julian</i>	Wife: Adaline/Not found
Hoxie, Henry	<i>Minerva</i>	No/Discovered intact, sailed south 1872
Jernegan, Jared	<i>Roman</i>	No (Helen on previous trip)/Not found
Jones, Robert	<i>Concordia</i>	Wife & child/Wreck burned by local Inuit.
Kelley, Edmund	<i>Seneca</i>	Wife & child/Found 1872 & lost in tow
Kelley, William H.	<i>Gay Head</i>	Wife/Wreck burned by local Inuit
Knowles, James H.	<i>George Howland</i>	Possibly, also Mrs. Jones in 1862-64/No
Lewis, Valentine	<i>Thomas Dickason</i>	No (Ethelinda ashore)/Wreck found, 1872
Loveland, B. F.	<i>Reindeer</i>	No/Sunken wreck found, 1872
Mitchell, West	<i>Massachusetts</i>	No/One sailor remained through winter.
Newbury, H.M.	<i>Paiea</i>	No/Not found
Norton, Ariel	<i>Awashonks</i>	Elizabeth Marble lived on board on 1860-62/No
Nye, Daniel B.	<i>Eugenia</i>	Eliza Wood lived and died on board in 1851/No
Osborn, Abraham	<i>George</i>	No/Not found
Owen, Leander C.	<i>Contest</i>	Wife: Jane Luce & son, William/ Not found
Packard, Timothy C.	<i>Henry Taber</i>	No/Not found
Pease, Henry	<i>Champion</i>	No/Wreck later found ashore.
Redfield, R.S.	<i>Victoria</i>	No/Not found
Smith, E. Everett	<i>Carlotta</i>	No/Not found
Smith, George A	<i>Mary</i>	No/Not found
Sylvia, Joseph D.	<i>Comet</i>	No/Not found
Whitney, Benjamin D.	<i>William Rotch</i>	No/Not found
Williams, Lewis W.	<i>Fanny</i>	Possibly along/ Not found
Williams, Thomas W.	<i>Monticello</i>	Wife: Eliza Azelia, dau.& son/Not found

The following ships, also in the Arctic whaling fleet that year, remained outside the ice pack and provided rescue for the officers and crew of the above ships. As soon as the approximately 1200 people made their way in small boats to the waiting ships, they transported them to Hawaii.

Rescue Ships

Captains	Ships	Refugee Count
Mellen, Capt.	<i>Europa</i>	280
	<i>Arctic</i>	250
Dowden, Capt.	<i>Progress</i>	221 incl. 3 wives, 4 children
	<i>Lagoda</i>	195
	<i>Daniel Webster</i>	113
	<i>Midas</i>	100
	<i>Chance</i>	60

The names of ships and captains are cross-referenced with the list of whaling wives in Joan Druett's book, *She was a Sister Sailor*, the account of the incident by William Fish Williams, the Report of the Fisheries Commissioner in 1878, Martha's Vineyard Museum publications online, the National Maritime Digital Library, Bockstoce article on northern shipping losses (2006) and NOAA NMS information.

APPENDIX D: ARTIFACTS ASSOCIATED with WOMEN

Items associated with Women

These artifacts if found could be archaeological diagnostics for women on board when investigating a shipwreck.

Large Objects

- 1) Gammings chairs
- 2) Parlor organs
- 3) Gimballed beds
- 4) Bathtubs
- 5) Small deckhouses

Small Finds

1) Children's Paraphernalia & Toys

Baby feeding bottles
Nipple shields
Toddler cots
Baby clothes and shoes
Toys

2) Personal adornment & toiletries

Jewelry
Hair combs/pins
Combs and brushes
Curling irons & spirit lamps
Soap/powder dishes
Perfume bottles
Female hygiene items

3) Clothing & Accessories

Dresses, skirts, shirts
Coats and hats
Shawls, gloves, mittens
Footwear
Corsets stays, hoops, bustles
Underwear
Clothing iron

4) Sewing Notions

Thimbles and cases
Needles and holders
Pins
Scissors
Thread spools, Bobbins
Knitting needles
Crochet hooks
Tatting shuttle
Darning eggs
Buttons

5) Writing implements

Writing box/desk
Pencil
Pen, Nibs
Ink/inkwell
Sander/blotter
Slate/chalk (children)

APPENDIX E: SHIPWRECK DATABASES

Online databases which were investigated for information on possible shipwrecks for application of data from women's journals to find indications of presence on ships.

World

MACHU http://www.machuproject.eu/machu_WIS_00.htm
Wreck Site www.wrecksite.eu

North American

NPS- Submerged www.nps.gov/submerged/PDF/pdf.html
NOAA http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/maritime/expeditions/mh_expeditions.html
North Carolina www.archaeology.ncdcr.gov/ncarch/UAB/UnderwaterArchReports.html
South Carolina <http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/sciaa/mrd/shipprojs.html>
Georgia <http://georgiashpo.org/archaeology/underwater>
Florida www.flheritage.com/archaeology/underwater/sites/sites1.cfm
Lake Champlain (VT) www.lcmm.org/shipwrecks_history/uhp/uhp.htm
Wisconsin www.wisconsinshipwrecks.org/index.cfm
California—Channel Is. <http://channelislands.noaa.gov/shipwreck/shiphome.html>
Alaska <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/whalingfleet/involvement.html>
Canada www.pc.gc.ca/eng/progs/arch/mar-sea.aspx

Oceania

Australian Nat'l www.environment.gov.au/topics/heritage/historic-shipwrecks
West Australian <http://museum.wa.gov.au/maritime-archaeology-db/wrecks>
Tasmania www.parks.tas.gov.au/index.aspx?base=1729

Europe

French www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/archeosm/fr/index.html
Sweden www.sjohistoriska.se/en/Cultural-heritage/Marine-archaeology
Denmark www.strandingsmuseum.dk/uk-version/marin-arch-uk

South America

Brazil www.brasilmergulho.com.br/port/naufragios

Asia

Sri Lanka www.mausrilanka.lk/shipwreck%20sites/shipwerk%20sites.html
Japan www.ariau.org/english/projects_en/

