Travel Literature and History

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CONNEXIONS

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Table of Contents

1 Transported Labor, Indentured Servitude, and Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Approach ....................................................... 1
2 An "Atlantic Creole" Case Study: Olaudah Equiano ........................................ 5
3 Antebellum U.S. Migration and Communication ........................................ 11
4 Personal Narratives and Transatlantic Contexts during the U.S.-Mexican War ................................................................. 15
5 National and Imperial Power in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Fiction .................. 21
6 The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature ............ 25
7 Discovering U.S. Empire through the Archive ............................................. 29
8 A Global View of Disease: Yellow Fever and the Panama Canal .................... 33
9 Principal Parts and Sails of 19th-Century Sailing Ships ................................ 39
10 Sea Terms and Types of 19th-Century Sailing Vessels ................................. 47
Index ........................................................................................................... 59
Attributions .................................................................................................. 60
Chapter 1

Transported Labor, Indentured Servitude, and Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Approach

1.1 Transported Labor, Indentured Servitude, and Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Approach

While slave labor comprised the majority of the plantation workforce across the Americas, it was never the sole labor system in use. Historical records now show that slaves often worked alongside transported laborers and/or indentured servants. One document in the ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership (a digital archive collaboration on the hemispheric Americas), James Revel’s poem “The Poor Unhappy Transported Felon’s Sorrowful Account of His Fourteen Years Transportation, at Virginia, in America...” provides rare insight into life and labor in colonial America. As such, educators can use the document as a teaching tool within AP History or college introductory History courses.

Very little is known about Revel, but his account, composed at some point during the eighteenth century, traces his path from rebellious teen to Chesapeake tobacco laborer. In the document Revel states that he lived in England until he was caught stealing and was sentenced to transportation, which was, “A just reward for my vile actions base.” As one historian notes, transportation was Britain’s, “adoption of foreign exile as a punishment for serious crime” (Ekič, 1). During their period of exile, felons could experience a wide array of treatment at the hands of their employers as, “Parliament enacted laws to prevent their early return home but took no steps to regulate their treatment either at sea or in the colonies”(Ekič, 3). Revel’s exile began in Virginia where he worked for a farmer who was abusive and cruel. Upon his master’s death, Revel was sold to a “tenderly and kind” individual who eventually arranged for Revel to travel back to England as a free man. For a solid overview of transportation as a British punishment, see Frank McLynn’s Crime and Punishment in Eighteenth-Century England (2002).

1This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m32427/1.2/>.
2See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m32427/latest/http://oaap.rice.edu/>
CHAPTER 1. TRANSPORTED LABOR, INDENTURED SERVITUDE, AND SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAS: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

The Poor Unhappy Transported Felon’s Sorrowful Account

Figure 1.1: The title page from an early version of James Revel’s account.

To begin with, educators can incorporate Revel’s poem into the classroom within a discussion of transportation as one method of colonial labor supply. Whereas AP and introductory courses often cover indentured and slave labor, transported laborers remain unacknowledged and this misses an opportunity to display the interconnectedness of the Atlantic economy. Specifically, a lecture on transportation would fit well within a U.S. course section on the late colonial period. The height of transportation was from 1718 (the passage of the British Transportation Act) to the early 1770s (the build-up to the American Revolution). One possible classroom exercise would be to read Revel’s poem alongside another primary document set, such as the transported passenger lists printed within Peter Wilson Coldham’s Bonded Passengers to America (full biographical details follow the module). While the poem attaches a personal face to this labor phenomenon, the lists present the broader picture of where the convicts departed from, the dates they departed, the arrival locations, and, on occasion, the crimes supposedly committed.

Educators can choose to incorporate one lecture focusing specifically on transportation, or they can take a more integrated comparative approach and make the evolution of labor systems a theme within their courses, as the College Board suggests. This comparative approach can be accomplished through exercises analyzing the similarities and differences between transported labor, indentured labor, and slave labor. For example, in the lecture section focusing on colonial development, educators can ask students to compare the lives of the three ‘types’ of laborers in one location, such as Virginia. For this exercise the Revel poem serves as the source on the lives of a transported laborer, while primary documents from Warren Billings’s The Old Dominion provide personal accounts of indentured and slave life. Categories of comparison can include everything from daily diet to the nature of punishment. Revel facilitates this comparative approach by describing how, after his conviction, he was transported overseas “bound with an iron chain,” was sold in Virginia like a “horse,” and then worked with his “fellow slaves” among the “tobacco plants.”

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An Image of Transportation

Figure 1.2: Individuals sentenced to transportation heading to a ship that will carry them overseas.

In addition, from the mid-seventeenth-century until the late-twentieth-century, all three groups of laborers could be found throughout the hemispheric Americas. Revel’s travels from Britain to Virginia and back again can serve as an entry point into a discussion of the movement of bodies to satisfy the labor needs of colonial plantation economies. In the course section on colonial development educators can focus on comparing the experiences of laborers across the globe. A wide variety of academic works feature essays on particular, local labor situations during the colonial period. One essay collection edited by Kay Saunders contains chapters describing colonial indentured labor in locations such as Jamaica, British Guiana, Trinidad, Mauritius, Fiji, Malaya, and Queensland. Asking students to compare the lives of the laborers described within these essays to the lives of laborers in colonial North America, including Revel, partially satisfies the emphasis on globalization recommended by the College Board.

After introducing Revel’s account in the colonial section of the course, it could also be useful to revisit the poem during a discussion of emancipation in the U.S. Although it is an abstract concept the 1660s can be linked to the 1860s through the questioning of the historical nature of freedom. An educator can begin by discussing how transported laborers, indentured servants, and slaves all were granted freedom in right by the conclusion of the U.S. Civil War. Then, foreshadowing the upcoming discussions of sharecropping and African-American debt peonage, educators can explore how emancipation, across the globe, has not always led to what is commonly considered freedom. Historian Walton Look Lai finds that post Emancipation in the British West Indies meant that “the phenomenon of labor coercion, far from dying out, assumed new and diverse forms” (Look Lai, xi). In this same vein, educators can ask that students explore the continuation of indentured labor and the problems associated with it throughout the Caribbean during the twentieth century. Maharani’s Misery (2002), the story of a young female Indian indentured laborer killed in 1885 on her way to Guyana, is an apt and appropriate work to assign to students at the introductory college level and upwards. Maharani’s experiences are in many ways connected to Revel’s account and together they offer an avenue through which students can understand labor patterns across place and time.

Bibliography

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Chapter 2

An "Atlantic Creole" Case Study: Olaudah Equiano

2.1 An "Atlantic Creole" Case Study: Olaudah Equiano

Broadly construed, creolization refers to a mixing of cultures and beliefs. A creole society is one in which a variety of cultures and ideas coexist. Thus, historian Ira Berlin attempted to capture the impact of creolization on individuals in the late eighteenth-century Atlantic when he coined the term “Atlantic creole.” Berlin’s “Atlantic creoles” were economically active people who became “part of the three worlds” (Africa, Europe, and the Americas) “that came together in the Atlantic littoral” (Berlin, 17). For more information on Berlin’s work see Many Thousands Gone (1998). Olaudah Equiano, also known as Gustavas Vassa (see figure 1), has now become the person whom historians first refer to when asked to identify a representative “Atlantic creole.” Equiano is most recognized for his Interesting Narrative which is now available as part of the ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership2 (a digital collaboration on the hemispheric Americas). This module traces how educators can use Equiano’s life and The Interesting Narrative as an avenue through which to explore the nature of creolization, the activities of the Atlantic abolitionist and anti-slavery movements, and how historians approach and utilize primary source materials.

1This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m33641/1.1/>.
2See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m33641/latest/http://oaap.rice.edu/>
CHAPTER 2. AN "ATLANTIC CREOLE" CASE STUDY: OLAUDAH EQUIANO

Figure 2.1: A portrait of Olaudah Equiano, also known as Gustavus Vassa.

The Interesting Narrative conveys a version of Equiano’s life story and, according to the work, he was born in Africa in 1745, was captured by slavers as a young man, and was eventually purchased by a British Royal Navy officer, Michael Henry Pascal. Equiano traveled the world on various ships that Pascal served upon. After being denied his freedom by Pascal in 1762, Equiano ended up working on various sugar plantations prior to purchasing his own freedom in 1766. The 1770s found Equiano in London, but he still took sea voyages to exotic locales, such as the Arctic. Finally, in 1789 his autobiography was published, which provided a much-needed first-hand account of the horrors of the slave trade. As much of the action in Equiano’s tale takes place in the mid to late 1700s, a discussion of his life and works would best fit within a U.S. history or literature lecture on the Age of Revolutions or even the Early Republic. Educators could emphasize how he was representative of a large scale movement of ideas, often revolutionary in approach, and peoples during this period.
The Interesting Narrative

In particular, educators could focus on Equiano’s lifestyle as a sailor, the epitome of an “Atlantic creole” activity. To begin with, to get students familiar with his movements, an activity could ask students to read *The Interesting Narrative* and then to trace Equiano’s movements on a map. The result will be multiple lines of travel crossing and converging in the Atlantic. For additional material on his movements as a sailor, see W. Jeffrey Bolster’s *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (1997). Bolster explores “the Age of Sail” and argues that, “Before 1865 seafaring had been crucial to blacks’ economic survival, liberation strategies, liberation strategies, and collective identity formation” (6). At this point educators can stress how black seamen were often seen by U.S. southerners as agents of radicalism. For example, South Carolina passed a law in the early 1800s requiring the imprisonment of any black seamen arriving at her ports. This begs the question, what elements of radicalism exist within *The Interesting Narrative*? When discussing Equiano’s radicalism, it is useful to reference the entire text, but the early pages are particularly interesting as he states, “Does not slavery itself depress the mind, and extinguish all its fire and every noble sentiment?”

Undoubtedly, Equiano associated with anti-slavery and abolitionist individuals in England and this influence appears within his writings. He even mentions that “numerous friends” have pressured him to write his life story, presumably a few of these persons were involved in reform movements. As such, an exercise could require students to read *The Interesting Narrative* searching, in particular, for ‘typical’ anti-slavery imagery? The ‘typical’ nature of such imagery could be demonstrated through a comparative reading of a few of the slave narratives that would appear in later years, such as the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1999 ed.). Also, please view the following modules: Gender and Anti-Slavery in the Atlantic World³ and Slavery, Resistance, and Rebellion Across the Americas⁴. This broader discussion of reform movements could extend the discussion of Equiano and his writings from the 1780s into the antebellum period or even the “Crisis of the Union” lectures of the 1850s/1860s. After an exploration of the term “creole” an educator could

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³See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m33641/latest/> ⁴See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m33641/latest/>
also ask their students to explain how *The Interesting Narrative* is a “creole” text.

**Early Map of West Africa**

*Figure 2.3:* An early map depicting West Africa, an area that plays a critical part within Equiano’s work.

Finally, historians have identified *The Interesting Narrative* as an important source of information on Atlantic and slave life in the late 1700s. However, scholars continue to evaluate the veracity of the claims that Equiano makes within the work. This debate offers a window into how historians wrestle with the constructed nature of autobiographical texts. In particular, Equiano’s birthplace has become a site of scholarly questioning. To introduce students to this debate it is suggested that they read excerpts from the work of Alexander X. Byrd, who makes an argument for the African origins of the *Narrative*, or Vincent Carretta, who contends that a South Carolina heritage might be closer to the mark. Both of these scholars have marshaled ample evidence in defense of their claims and students can be asked to make their own determination at the conclusion of the readings. In addition, one interesting collection, *Olaudah Equiano & the Igbo World* (2009) presents a series of essays evaluating the Igbo heritage thesis. This is also a general opportunity to describe how historians feel a need to approach every source from a critical perspective. The scholarly productions surrounding *The Interesting Narrative* are cutting-edge history in the truest sense and exposing students to these ideas can only enhance the classroom experience.

**Bibliography**


Available for free at Connexions <http://cnx.org/content/col11315/1.3>

Chapter 3

Antebellum U.S. Migration and Communication

3.1 Antebellum U.S. Migration and Communication

The nineteenth century in the United States was a period of movement. A wave of migration in the 1830s and 1840s witnessed easterners heading out from established states into unsettled territories and challenging new environments across the West and Southwest. These migratory adventures slowed significantly during the late 1850s, 1860s, and early 1870s, as individuals were drawn into the Civil War and its aftermath. However, by the 1880s, many people were on the move again, often trying to get to the west coast and finding themselves stranded in mid-America. Despite the military and social conflicts of the 1830s and 1840s, Texas, or the land that would become Texas, became a popular settlement point for migrants from a wide variety of backgrounds and with an equally diverse set of goals. Two letters and a travel diary, available online as part of the ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership (a digital collaboration on the hemispheric Americas) and physically housed in Rice University’s Woodson Research Center, can assist in teaching exercises focused upon the movement of peoples and ideas in the antebellum U.S.

Question of War

![Figure 3.1: A selection from a letter that M. Mattock sent to Major McEwen on May 7, 1848. Mattock is in Mexico during the composition of the letter and considers the possibility of war.](http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/1911/9241)

1This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m34483/1.3/>.

2See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/http://oaap.rice.edu/>.

3See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/9241>
As it is critical to understand geography when discussing travel movements, to facilitate the lesson an educator could project onto a screen a map of the United States, so that students can visualize the actual movements of the individuals in question. The class can be organized around a series of questions: why did people migrate? how did they perform these migrations (logistics)? what challenges did they face during travel? how did all of these individuals keep in contact as the nation expanded? An educator can start the conversation by asking students why people migrate today, perhaps providing an overview of push/pull factors. For example, in his diary\(^4\), Colonel William Fairfax Gray describes how the financial panics of the 1830s resulted in many financially ‘broken’ people packing up and heading to Texas to start over financially. As Gray states, “Texas just then loomed up as a land of promise...” For a general overview of these movements, with a Texas focus, see Randolph Campbell’s *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (2003). It is also critical to stress that these choices to migrate were often laden with conflict, as certain family members would resist the move for a variety of reasons. To understand these disagreements it might be useful to assign segments of the diaries of women provided within Joan Cashin’s *A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier* (1991).

Map of Gray’s Journey

![Figure 3.2: A map tracing Colonel Gray’s 1836 trip to Texas. This map can be analyzed alongside Gray’s diary.](http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/27221)

The migration process itself was quite often difficult and dangerous in nature, regardless of prior preparations. At this point, ask students to go through Gray’s diary making a list of the challenges that he faced during his travel period. This exercise will result in a lively conversation as Gray recalls everything from intoxicated coach passengers to seductive widows. Sickness and injury resulted in a constant parade of interesting figures before Gray. On Oct. 11, 1835, he wrote, “here I am, at the end of my journey (that is, across Virginia), without one of the companions that I set out with! What a picture of the way-fare of human life!” Although Gray travelled on his own, his diary allows for an introduction into a current debate amongst historians. The debate focuses on the degree to which family and kin connections mattered with regards to migrations. Namely, is the solo adventurer model true or was it more common for extended family

\(^4\)See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/27221>

Available for free at Connexions <http://cnx.org/content/col11315/1.3>
lines to make the trek? For lecture material on this subject see Carolyn Earle Billingsley’s Communities of Kinship (2004), which makes an argument for kin-centered migration. Educators can also return to the map at this point and ask students to trace the movements of Gray by using the clues contained within his diary. This will impress upon students the fact that travel took much longer during this period then it does today.

Forrest Letter

![An excerpt from a letter from Moreau Forrest to his wife Mary in August 1837. He expresses impatience at the slow rate of the mail service.](http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/)

**Figure 3.3:** An excerpt from a letter from Moreau Forrest to his wife Mary in August 1837. He expresses impatience at the slow rate of the mail service.

It can also be stressed that communication happened at a slow pace, especially as compared to our modern computer age. In the antebellum period, letters were one of the principal methods of communication and, in fact, letter writing evolved into an art form. It might be revealing to ask students how many letters they have written in their lifetime. Then, ask them to look at two letters: one 1848 letter by M. Mattock from Molina Del Rey, Mexico, and another 1837 letter from Moreau Forrest in Houston, Texas. How is news conveyed within these letters? Mattock describes how the “war Question” is discussed daily at his location while Forrest (over ten years earlier) also mentions that an impending war with Mexico is a possibility. Forrest, in particular, laments the sluggish pace of the mail service and he writes a relative, “I have been anxiously looking out for letters from you and am under the belief that they must be in New Orleans. I got two from you while there but none since. You must have had several from me...” At this juncture you could request students to write a letter to a family member describing their day, using similar language and formatting as these early letters. Or, you could have them model a letter off of a diary entry/day in the life of William Gray. These exercises will help students to grasp the history of the period while also comprehending what it felt like to be an antebellum traveler.

Bibliography


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5See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m34483/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/27243>
Chapter 4

Personal Narratives and Transatlantic Contexts during the U.S.-Mexican War

“I LEFT home for the United States in the summer of 1845, for the same reason that yearly sends so many thousands there, want of employment,” writes Scottish immigrant and English soldier George Ballentine. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the U.S. received into its midst waves of immigrants from across the globe. Immigrant experiences like Ballentine’s were often related and recorded through the form of personal narrative and autobiography. Within these narratives, many immigrants continue to reference conditions in their homeland, creating a comparative structure that relates to transatlantic, trans-pacific, and hemispheric histories of circulation and migration. Ballentine’s immigrant experience was a specifically transatlantic experience which adopted hemispheric implications as a result of his travels throughout the U.S. Mexican borderlands. His Autobiography of an English Soldier offers a key way through which to highlight his history of immigration and introduce students to an important literary form: the personal narrative.

1This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m39380/1.3/>.
2See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m39380/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/26929>
Teachers can begin by introducing Ballentine’s narrative as an example of a multilayered personal narrative that represents genres of autobiography and immigration. Personal narrative, as Jonathan Arac argues in *The Emergence of American Literary Narrative, 1820-1860*, is founded upon displacement—Pacific voyages, overland journeys to the frontier, slaves’ escapes, or immigrant Atlantic journeys like Ballentine’s (76); however, this displacement is not only physical. It also occurs in the relationship between author and reader. Readers are urged to know the narrator, while realizing that there is a difference between the world in which they live and the world in which the narrator lived historically. More specifically, this difference pertains to how the narrative functions as a representation of historical experience and how the reader experiences that narrative as they read it (Arac 76). This distinction provides a key moment for teachers to help students learn about the internal world of a text. What do certain words, phrases, and experiences mean within Ballentine’s narrative? What do they mean in terms of the historical context, and what do they mean to us today? By showing students this process of translation, they can learn the complex layers through which literary narratives convey meaning.
Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

As a part of the early American literary tradition, Ballentine’s narrative joins a long line of 19th century autobiographical and first-person narratives, such as the *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (1771-1790), Richard Henry Dana’s *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845), and Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden* (1854). Personal narratives typically have the “circular shape of descent and return,” meaning characters often fall by way of some experience and return to a state of ordinary, civilized life (Ara 77). These narratives function as a way to see another form of life and travel into the past. In addition, Ballentine’s narrative can be located within studies of first-person immigrant texts, such as John Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) (an electronic version linked in the OAAP via the Early Americas Digital Archive⁴), Mary Antin’s *The Promised Land* (1912), and many more. Frequently, personal narratives are appropriated into national narratives; they are used to understand the nation within a certain space and time (77). Teachers might consider pairing Ballentine’s autobiography with one of these canonical American literary narratives, helping students to see the similarities and differences within the genre of personal narrative. For instance, teachers might have students read the first five pages of Ballentine’s narrative and the first five pages of Benjamin Franklin’s narrative to show the different ways in which authors introduce themselves and their writing. What are the first pieces of information that these authors reveal about themselves? What reasons do they provide for writing their narratives? Such questions can help students understand the formula of personal narratives and how various authors deviate from it.

*Autobiography of an English Soldier* begins with a classic immigrant arrival story into the harsh streets of New York, where Ballentine quickly realizes that he is “scarcely prepared to find the scramble for the

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³See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m33358/latest/http://www.mith2.umd.edu/ead/>.
⁴See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m33358/latest/http://www.mith2.umd.edu/ead/>.
means of living so fierce and incessant, as I found it in New York" (9). Although he attempts to first find employment as a weaver or a whaler, he eventually decides to continue his occupation as a soldier and enlist in the American army. Traveling from Fort Adams, Rhode Island to Pensacola, Florida to Tampico, Mexico, Ballentine eventually participates and observes the siege of Veracruz, which led to the inland march toward Jalapa during the U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848). Ballentine’s personal narrative situates his experience in the U.S.-Mexican War as part of his immigration experience, and provides a geographic outline of the U.S. during the war as well as a sense of U.S. politics. Furthermore it calls us to understand his first person narrative as one told and interpreted by a witness. By highlighting that his narrative is both a primary historical source and a literary form using conventions and narrative structures, teachers can help students to understand both the historical and literary nature of the personal narrative. What type of language does Ballentine use? How does he describe the battles? What features of his descriptions point to a first person experience?

Siege of Veracruz

Figure 4.3: Siege of Veracruz originally from *The War Between the United States and Mexico, Illustrated*, 1851

For a more specific example, teachers might draw students’ attention to the historical details surrounding Ballentine’s retelling of the war. His descriptions provide a first-hand account of the siege of Veracruz, and a defense of General Winfield Scott, who received considerable criticism for his fierce bombardment of Veracruz (152). Teachers might have students research Scott and the criticism surrounding his leadership in this battle. In so doing, teachers can remind students that personal narratives, like all narratives to a certain extent, endorse a certain point of view. What is Ballentine’s point of view? Can we discern his political understanding of the war? What does his narrative tell us about U.S. relations with Mexico? Does he seem like a reliable narrator? Such questions can help students to think critically about what they read, how they read it, and the role of the narrator. For instance, Ballentine compares the poor treatment of the American soldiers to his former experience in the British army. He writes in reference to the soldiers transportation aboard a ship, “In the American, service by the bye, soldiers always lie on the boards when on board ship; in the British service, where the health and comfort of a soldier are objects of study and solicitude, a different custom prevails; a clean blanket and mattress being issued to the soldier on his going on board” (89). Like many immigrant novels, Ballentine’s former homeland stands as a place of comparison. How does his British origin influence his narration of the U.S. and the U.S. Mexican War? Studying the relationship between Ballentine’s homeland (Scotland/Britain) and the U.S. can help students to understand how his perspective of the war was primarily developed outside of the U.S. How is this personal narrative representative of Ballentine’s transatlantic crossing? How is it also representative of borderlands and hemispheric narrative?

Teachers can also highlight Ballentine’s British-American perspective by calling attention to his use of

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literary references and conventions. For instance, his description of the siege of Veracruz recreates and relies on the sounds of battle, employing a literary allusion and generic convention to enhance his retelling of the event. Stationed at a small village four miles from Veracruz, he hears the terrifying sound of a canon shell whizzing past him. He writes:

There is no earthly sound bearing the slightest resemblance to its monstrous dissonance; the angriest shriek of the railway whistle, or the most emphatic demonstration of an asthmatic engine at starting of a train, would seem like a strain of heavenly melody by comparison. Perhaps Milton’s description of the harsh, thunder-grating of the hinges of the infernal gates, approaches to a faint realization of the indescribable sound, which bears a more intimate relation to the sublime than the beautiful. (155)

Portrayal of Satan from Paradise Lost

![Portrayal of Satan from Paradise Lost](image)

Figure 4.4: Satan, as drawn by Gustave Doré, in John Milton’s Paradise Lost.

This description of battle offers a key way for teachers to introduce literary concepts into what appears a straightforward autobiography. The “sublime,” a key concept of British Romanticism and, later, American Romantic literature, was originally used to describe feelings of awe and wonder often inspired by the natural world. Here, Ballentine uses it to describe the sounds of war, throwing in a reference to John Milton’s portrait of hell to dramatize his own terror and the unnerving sounds of battle. What does he compare his experiences to? How does his reference to Milton’s Paradise Lost (1667) formulate meaning within the text? What does it mean to locate a 17th century British poet within a story of the 19th century U.S.-Mexican War? This reference provides a key opportunity to define the literary term “allusion.” An allusion is: “a reference in a literary work to a person, place, or thing in history or another work of literature” (All American Glossary of Literary Terms).

These types of questions can help students to do the investigative work of literary analysis by urging them to find the references and conventions that configure meaning. In fact, Ballentine makes multiple literary
references throughout his autobiography. For instance, he makes allusions to Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1798), Frederick Marryat’s lesser-known novel Snarlewyow (1837), and Augustus Jacob Crandolph’s gothic novel The Mysterious Hand; or, Subterranean Horrors! (1811). Interestingly, these cultural references situate the literature of the British Romantics within the context of the Mexican-American War, allowing these texts to produce new meaning. Furthermore, many of these allusions refer to stories of the sea, and Ballentine’s brief experience of travel along the Atlantic and Gulf coastlines. For an exercise, teachers might have their students read a section of “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” and consider how Ballentine’s allusion works within the text. What can we learn from this type of reference? Is it helpful in understanding Ballentine’s experience? What new meaning does it add to Coleridge’s well-known poem? Although many of Ballentine’s references are allusions to British literature, they would not have escaped many of his contemporary American readers. Moreover, he also references American texts, such as Herman Melville’s 1851 American epic, Moby Dick. His use of both British and American literary references reveals the blending of literary cultures and histories and locates them within a story of shifting national borders.

After presenting a lesson on personal narratives, teachers might present students with the following questions:

1. What is a personal narrative? How does it function? Provide an example.
2. What influences Ballentine’s perspective in his autobiography?
3. What can we learn about the U.S. and the U.S.-Mexican War from Ballentine’s narrative?
4. What is a literary allusion? Do you think it is important or helpful to research historical references and/or literary allusions? Why or why not? (This is an opinion question).
5. Write your own one page personal narrative. Choose an event from your life and retell the story from your perspective.

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See the file at
<http://cnx.org/content/m39380/latest/http://www.uncp.edu/home/canada/work/allam/general/glossary.htm#a>

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Chapter 5

National and Imperial Power in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Fiction

5.1 National and Imperial Power in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Fiction

Non-fiction travel writing emerged within the U.S. as one of the dominant literary genres of the nineteenth century. Masses of readers consumed these travelogues as proxies for journeys that they did not have the means, or perhaps sometimes even the desire, to make personally. It comes as little surprise, then, that fictional counterparts to travel narratives appeared consistently throughout the century as well. [Please see the module entitled “The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature”\(^2\) for a positioning of these themes within non-fiction travel narratives.] After a brief survey of some of the more significant examples of nineteenth-century U.S. travel fiction, we will turn our attention to the connections between these works and George Dunham’s journal \textit{A Journey to Brazil} \(^3\) (1853) - located in Rice University’s Woodson Research Center as part of the larger ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership\(^4\). What we will discover is that Dunham’s travelogue shares with these novels a serious investment in the evolving nature of national and imperial power in the nineteenth century.

Travel played a key role in several of the female-authored sentimental novels that were so central to the reading habits of American women, including Susan Warner’s \textit{The Wide, Wide World} (1850) and Maria Cummins’ \textit{El Fureidis} (1860). Moreover, some of the century’s foremost canonical authors deployed this trope as the core foundation for their texts, none more so than Herman Melville. Melville drew on his own history traveling the world aboard various commercial ships in order to inform such seminal works as \textit{Moby-Dick} (1851) and "Billy Budd" (1924, published posthumously). Though not as widely read, Edgar Allan Poe’s only novel, \textit{The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym} (1838), anticipates in many ways Melville’s early work, predating those publications by nearly a full decade. As Melville would in novels such as \textit{Typee} (1846), \textit{Omoo} (1847), and \textit{Mardi} (1849), Poe displayed a keen interest in the emergent political relationship between the U.S. and the South Pacific as well as the power dynamics that typified life aboard a sailing vessel.

How, then, do we productively read Dunham’s \textit{Journey to Brazil} alongside these classics of American literature? On a purely schematic level, the outline of the action in Dunham’s travelogue resembles to a great extent that found in the novels of Poe and Melville. The early sections of these works all feature their protagonists on board a ship (named the \textit{Montpelier} in \textit{Journey to Brazil}), embarking on a voyage to a foreign territory. The latter portions, then, chronicle the characters’ adventures in these distant lands.
CHAPTER 5. NATIONAL AND IMPERIAL POWER IN 19TH-CENTURY U.S. TRAVEL FICTION

- Dunham in Brazil, Arthur Gordon Pym on an island in the South Pacific named Tsalal, and Melville’s protagonists from his “South Seas” novels across a variety of South Pacific islands. More interestingly, perhaps, these works share thematic threads that grow out of their similar content. Like Poe and Melville, Dunham transforms the activity of travel into a meditation on the formation, the execution, and the reach of U.S. national power. The experience of characters with life aboard commercial sailing vehicles as well as with foreign countries and peoples prompts an evaluation of both the U.S.’s own internal national formations and its evolving relationship to other locales across the globe. It is quite often through travel literature that commentators articulated the imperialist ambitions of the nineteenth-century U.S., whether forwarding them as a political agenda to be pursued or critiquing them as an affront to republican principles. As Dunham’s journal further demonstrates, nineteenth-century U.S. travel writing, fictional and non-fictional alike, became a discursive staging ground for the negotiation of numerous national and imperial anxieties.

Though utilizing different techniques of inquiry, Dunham, Poe, and Melville all consider the shifting relationship between a citizen and his country of origin after the citizen enters into the international arena. In their works, Poe and Melville tend to address the question of national order and power through the strategy of metaphor, relying on the figure of the ship as a symbolic stand-in for the nation itself. Through the figure of Ahab in *Moby-Dick*, Melville explores how powerful leadership can so quickly slip into obsessive psychosis, plunging the citizen-subject into ever more precipitous circumstances. In *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, Poe foregrounds an on-ship mutiny in order to emphasize the fragility of social order, forcing readers to contemplate the ease and violence through which social and legal bonds can be dissolved. Poe is also interested in the ways in which the citizen-subject abandons national laws and hierarchies once the boundaries of the nation have been crossed and left behind; implicit in his novel is a certain degree of degeneracy on the citizen’s part when they are not within the confines of established social order (some of the mutiny’s survivors flirt with cannibalism before being miraculously rescued by a passing British ship).

A Journey to Brazil, 1853

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure51.png}
\caption{An excerpt from page 14 of George Dunham’s travel journal.}
\end{figure}

Dunham is more literal in his addressing of the relationship between traveler-citizen, himself, and his home country, the U.S. After a few days on board the *Montpelier*, he writes almost in passing, “today I suppose Frank Pierce is inaugurated President of the United States but as I am out of his jurisdiction I care but little about it” (see Figure 1). Once he has arrived in Brazil, he notes a visit to the “American Consul,” compelling one to ask after the role of the U.S. in Brazil as well as what privileges Dunham might continue to enjoy as an American citizen even while on foreign soil. *Journey to Brazil* is a text that, like much of the travel literature of its day, questions the place of the nation and its citizen-subjects within an increasingly tangled set of international relations.

For readers of these texts, it is the relationship, or potential relationship, between the U.S. and other countries that takes center stage once the protagonists arrive at their destination. The novels of Melville and Poe were informed by the growing economic interest on the part of U.S. merchants in the South Pacific. As commercial activity increased in this portion of the globe, many observers agitated for the U.S. government to protect and facilitate the activities of these merchants. The disastrous encounters between the novels’
characters and the island natives seems to warn against U.S. imperial involvement so far beyond its territorial boundaries. That being said, in a series of articles he wrote for the *Southern Literary Messenger* around this same period, Poe advocated quite clearly for an enhancement of U.S. interests in the South Pacific, so by no means can we assume that the political leanings of these authors were set in stone.

Much like Poe in *Arthur Gordon Pym*, Dunham devotes a fair amount of his text to cataloguing and attempting to classify the exotic plant-life and wildlife that he encounters over the course of his journey. Dunham recounts that, during a hunting trip in Brazil, “I shot three large birds two of them was kinds that I had shot before but one was a long necked blue bird like some of our shore birds and when we got back he wanted my gun to shoot an owl he took it and went out and in about five minutes he came in with the most queer looking thing of owl kind I ever saw it was about four feet across the wings nearly white and the face looked almost like a human being” (154). These passages may seem innocent enough; however, Dana Nelson explains in *The Word in Black and White* that any instance in nineteenth-century U.S. writing of the accumulation and categorization of scientific knowledge regarding foreign territories portends some degree of imperialistic investment and desire. So although Dunham may have had no interest in presenting Brazil as a potential U.S. colony, it is possible, even likely, that he was adopting certain techniques and styles from other travel narratives that did possess an imperialistic bent.

**A Journey to Brazil, 1853**

![Figure 5.2: A pair of pressed bug wings from the back of George Dunham's travel journal.](http://cnx.org/content/col11315/1.3)

Another instance in the journal that finds Dunham reflecting on the connections between the U.S. and Brazil centers around their respective celebrations of independence. He reflects, “I think there is as much money spent in Brazil for powder and fireworks every week as there is in the United States on the fourth of July the 2nd day of July they celebrate their Independence and it is a queer kind of independence to make much fuss about” (111). Here Dunham is forced to recognize, even as he struggles to downplay, the commonalities between the U.S. and other places throughout the Americas, parallel histories that revolve around settler colonialism, anti-colonial independence, and African slavery. By reading *Journey to Brazil* carefully, one can detect the multiple strands for reading the nineteenth-century relationship between the U.S. and the rest of the hemisphere. Is that relationship one of imperialist domination, as presaged in José Martí’s brief essay “Our America” and analyzed in scholarly works such as Gretchen Murphy’s *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire*? Or is that relationship better explained by the set of mutual cultural, political, and economic exchanges chronicled by Anna Brickhouse in her book, *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere*? The real value of the Dunham journal, finally, lies in its ability to remind us that for writers and readers in the nineteenth-century U.S., concerns about the intersections between the national and the foreign stretched beyond the ever-expanding western frontier, beyond even a burgeoning spot of economic activity such as the South Pacific, and included, in fact, the entirety of the Americas.

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Chapter 6

The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature

6.1 The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature

The travel narrative emerged as one of the most popular, if not the most popular, literary genre among nineteenth-century U.S. readers. Several critics, including Justin Edwards in his *Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature, 1840-1930*, have speculated on the type of socio-cultural work performed by these writings. Edwards and others have observed the travel narrative as a meaningful blend of entertainment and education. Detailed accounts of journeys to locales outside of the nation’s boundaries fed the desire of readers for knowledge regarding the foreign and the exotic. Perceived differences in behavior, custom, and belief held a deep fascination for the nineteenth-century citizen, and, for many, the travel narrative provided the only vehicle for engaging that fascination. In addition to building a foundation of knowledge on foreign locales and populations, these narratives offered individual readers an opportunity to negotiate his/her position within the ever-shifting political landscape of the nation. With their authors/protagonists serving as a sort of proxy for those eager to experience their own encounter with the exotic, these writings encouraged their readers to think through their own national, racial, and gendered identities. The socializing function of the travel narrative, that which affirmed the place of its readers within the nation and subsequently the world, dovetailed nicely with the political project of Manifest Destiny and the westward expansion of the U.S. throughout the nineteenth century. Therefore, many of the most popular travel narratives, including Richard Henry Dana’s *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840) and Mark Twain’s *Roughing It* (1872), were those that centered around the western portions of what would eventually become the continental United States.

Reading George Dunham’s *A Journey to Brazil* (1853) - part of the ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership, a digital archive collaboration on the hemispheric Americas - alongside texts such as *Two Years Before the Mast* and *Roughing It* will prove to be a highly rewarding endeavor for students of nineteenth-century U.S. culture and literature. Dunham has compiled a detailed, if somewhat haphazard, travelogue of his voyage on board the ship Montpelier and then his protracted stay in mid-nineteenth-century Brazil. Brazilian plantation owners brought him over in order to help modernize their plantation system through his knowledge of and experience with advanced agricultural technologies as well as the efficient organization of slave labor. If writers such as Dana and Twain provide us with insights into the role played by culture in the processes of territorial expansion that characterized the nineteenth-century U.S., then what may we

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1 This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m19517/1.13/>.
2 See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19517/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/9247>
3 See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19517/latest/http://oaap.rice.edu/>
learn from more obscure travel writings on what may be more unexpected locales? Dunham’s journal (held at Rice University’s Woodson Research Center) contains many of the same dynamics as those more studied travel narratives and will offer some useful points of comparison with those texts.

Map of the American Hemisphere, 1823

**Figure 6.1:** A portion of a map from Henry Tanner’s *A New American Atlas* (1819-1823) that includes the U.S.’s Atlantic seaboard and Brazil.

Similar to other works of the time, Dunham foregrounds the exoticism of the foreign that readers found so tantalizing. Arriving in Brazil for the first time, he marvels at the sense of difference he feels between this place and the U.S.: “I first sett (sic) foot on land in Bahia in Brazill (sic) and looked around in astonishment it seemed like being transported to another planet more than being on this continent everything was new and wonderfull (sic) the buildings without any chimneys and covered with tiles the streets narrow and full of negroes a jabbering” (35). He goes on to write, in a similar vein, “the trees green and covered with tropical fruit and every thing else so different from home that was some time before I could realize that I was here” (36). The combination of foreign landscape, architecture, and peoples overwhelms Dunham, producing in him a sense of disorientation that was common among nineteenth-century author-travelers. At the same time, the presence of a black slave population would have been a point of keen interest, as well as identification, for many U.S. readers. Dunham no doubt knew that readers would be projecting their own experiences with slavery onto these moments within his journal, exciting curiosity about his experiences and debate about the relative merits and practices of the slave system. Many critics, such as Amy Kaplan in *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*, have written that it is this blurring of the domestic and the foreign, of home and abroad, that is central to the socio-cultural operations of travel literature.

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Later in the journal, after he has spent some time in Brazil, Dunham engages in sharp criticisms of the practical workings of this society, another familiar trope from the travel narrative. Manifestations of his frustration take on nationalist overtones in statements such as, “I am satisfied it is of no use to make any calculation on anything in this country where it depends upon the people to perform it” (see Figure 2 [a]); or, “they say that whenever a person has the consumption in this country if they have the fever they die immediately” (see Figure 2 [b]). The latter pronouncement portends the death of the American traveler owing to the relative medical backwardness of foreign lands. The implied superiority of U.S. knowledges and practices pervades much travel literature of this time, including those aforementioned texts concerning the burgeoning western frontier. As scholars have noted, these articulated attitudes toward the western territories invited, or perhaps even demanded, the civilizing influence emblematized by competent white Americans.

**A Journey to Brazil, 1853**

![Excerpts from the original manuscript of George Dunham's travel journal.](http://cnx.org/content/col11315/1.3)

In designing a lesson plan around *Journey to Brazil* and nineteenth-century U.S. travel narratives, an instructor may also want to include a representative of those works dedicated to travel in the Holy Land. Texts that focused on journeys to Palestine and its surrounding territories enjoyed a massive degree of popularity among American readers, particularly in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Some of the more popular of these works included Twain’s *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) and W. M. Thomson’s *The Land and the Book* (1870), an illustrated travelogue of the Holy Land. In his critical study *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*, Hilton Obenzinger argues that since many Americans regarded themselves as a chosen people, anointed by God to carry out a revivalist mission in this new nation, written works on the Holy Land held for them a special interest. Obenzinger insists, and many critics agree with him, that even if Holy Land literature was not the most popular form of travel narrative (though it may have been), then it was certainly the most ideologically significant. Dunham’s journal forces us to at least re-think that assertion. The 1853 publication of the journal shows an interest on the part of the American reading public in travel, both real and imagined, to places throughout the Americas as well. Richard Henry Dana, the same man who famously wrote on the western frontier, would chronicle his travels in the Caribbean in an 1859 book entitled *To Cuba and Back: A Vacation Voyage*. John O’Sullivan, accredited with the coining of the term “Manifest Destiny,” would in later years become a staunch advocate for the annexation of Cuba to the U.S. Finally, *A Journey to Brazil* provides yet another piece of compelling evidence that the hemisphere as a whole played a role in the U.S. imagination equal to that of both the western frontier and the Holy Land.

**Bibliography**


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CHAPTER 6. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE FOREIGN IN 19TH-CENTURY U.S. TRAVEL LITERATURE


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Chapter 7

Discovering U.S. Empire through the Archive

7.1 Discovering U.S. Empire through the Archive

An important turn in American Studies over the past twenty years has begun to read U.S. expansionism in the nineteenth century as part of a larger imperialist project. Whereas older histories tended to coordinate the U.S.'s territorial growth with the spread of democracy across the Americas, the “New American Studies,” as it came to be called, saw in it an aggressive desire for economic and political domination that echoed contemporary European imperial powers. The established historical narrative largely accepted that at the turn of the century the Spanish American War, during which the U.S. occupied such locales as Cuba and the Philippines, marked a turn in U.S. political activity toward an imperialist-inflected globalization. However, newer critics now pointed toward earlier instances, including the U.S.-Mexican War and the subsequent appropriation of vast Mexican lands, as manifestations of U.S. imperialism. Moreover, in their studies, they applied the paradigms of imperialism to longstanding U.S. practices such as Native American removal and African slavery. One of the earliest significant works to mark such a shift in scholarly perception was a collection of essays entitled *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, edited by Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease. Several studies followed that took seriously the proposal that the nineteenth-century U.S. operated as an empire, including Malini Schueller’s *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature*, Shelley Streeby’s *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture*, and Eric Sundquist’s *Empire and Slavery in American Literature*. What most of these works shared in common was that they emerged from the field of cultural studies, rather than from a straight historical perspective. Indeed, the concept of nineteenth-century U.S. imperialism has had a profound impact on cultural studies, as critics began to interpret literary and artistic productions in terms of either their participating in or critiquing the U.S. as empire.

The ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership, a collection of rare documents that promotes a hemispheric approach to American Studies, contains a host of writings that places the nineteenth-century U.S. within a broader network of inter-American relations, whether they be economic, political, or cultural. As such, this archive will prove to be of particular value to scholars and students who wish to track the long history of U.S. imperialism. It possesses an especially rich amount of content on the state of U.S.-Mexican relations during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, particularly as they revolved around the contested Texas territory. One such document is the travel journal of Mirabeau B. Lamar—held physically in the special collections library at Rice University—which offers a ground level view of the tensions in 1835 between Mexico and the emerging Republic of Texas. Lamar fought for Texas independence at the Battle of San Jacinto and was named Sam

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1 This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m38435/1.2/>.  
2 See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m38435/latest/http://rasa.rice.edu/>  
3 See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m38435/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/21658>  

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Houston’s Vice President once Texas was declared a republic. In 1838, Lamar was chosen to succeed Houston and became the second President of the Republic of Texas. He fought in the U.S.-Mexican War and was cited for bravery at the Battle of Monterey. Toward the end of his life, from 1857 to 1859, he served as the Minister to Nicaragua under President James Buchanan. Several schools throughout Texas are now named in his honor. In addition to being an accomplished politician and soldier, Lamar was a prolific writer during his lifetime, authoring not only travel narratives but a great deal of poetry as well. For a thorough account of his life and writings, see Stanley Siegel’s biography, *The Poet President of Texas: The Life of Mirabeau B. Lamar, President of the Republic of Texas.*

**Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar**

![Figure 7.1: A 19th-century portrait of Lamar.](http://cnx.org/content/col11315/1.3)

Lamar was participating in a popular nineteenth-century literary genre in authoring his travel journal. The most popular travel narratives produced in the late nineteenth generally involved journeys to foreign lands, usually Europe or the Holy Land. It was not uncommon during the first half of the century, however, for U.S.-authored travel narratives to focus on domestic sojourns, particularly ones to the nation’s ever shifting western frontier. Lamar begins by declaring his intention to settle in Texas if he can discover there a profitable opportunity for himself. His travel journal follows his journey from Columbus, Georgia to Mobile to New Orleans to Baton Rouge to Natchitoches, Louisiana and finally into Texas. At each stop, he provides an extended history of the area along with an account of the contemporary social, religious, and cultural practices that he is able to observe. His “histories” operate through a combination of formal, official facts and local, often humorous anecdotes. Before it arrives at his experiences in Texas, the longest section of Lamar’s journal is the one concerned with the city of New Orleans. He moves frequently between histories of the region, including a long history on the settlement of the Louisiana Territory in general, and his observations of everyday life in the city. Interestingly, he spends a great deal of time on the city’s churches and various religious sects, leading him to comment, “The Methodist I believe are the only sect that has sincerely done any thing for the negroes; a large portion of their congregation and members are black” (13). What is especially noteworthy about this passage is that marks one of the only instances in which Lamar mentions the presence of African Americans in his text. Unlike many other travel narratives of the time, Lamar’s is barely concerned with the issues of slavery or relations between black and white populations. It is certainly not around the issue of slavery that Lamar’s journal provides us with insight into U.S. imperialist ideology. Instead, we must look to his treatment of both American Indians and Mexico in order to excavate the specters of U.S. empire from his writings.

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Lamar encounters several Native American tribes during his journey to Texas, including the Comanche and the Caddo. He writes at greatest length about the Comanche, whom he primarily characterizes by their warlike and nomadic natures. It is the latter quality that feeds into Lamar’s indirect justification of the U.S.’s continued westward expansion. He writes, “All the beauties and blessings of nature, all the blessings of industry; all the luxuries that God and art have contributed to place within the reach of man, despised and unheeded by this iron race who seem to have no aim ambition or desire beyond . . . the uncouth wildness of native liberty & unrestrained licence” (55). Lamar’s implication is that if tribes such as the Comanche will not take advantage of the productive land all around them, then another group of people — namely white Americans — should be able to. He deploys much the same rhetoric when discussing the population he terms the “natives” of Texas, whom he describes as the product of intermarriage between Spaniards and the region’s Indians. First, he racializes them, differentiating them based upon the darkness of their skin: “They are of dark swarthly complexion, darker than the inhabitants of old Spain & not possessing the clear red of the Indians” (37). He goes on to name these people among the laziest in the known world, claiming, “These people have long been in possession of the fairest country in the world . . . and yet from their constitutional & habitual indolence & inactivity they have suffered these advantages to remain unimproved” (38). In order to explain the mass migration of Americans into this region, he portrays Texas as an uncultivated territory waiting upon the arrival of an eager and industrious population. Again, Lamar is operating within a long discursive tradition that uses unexploited economic opportunity as a rationale for imperialist projects.

Lamar reserves his praise of Native Americans for the lost Aztec and Mayan societies of Mexico. Evaluating the state of these societies at the time of Hernándo Cortés’s invasion, he writes, “This is manifest from the stupendous works of arts and monuments of ingenuity which were destroyed by the above brutal & ferocious invader who treated this people as an ignorant race, himself however not knowing a letter in the alphabet” (56). Here he is rearticulating a version of the Black Legend, a narrative which casts the practices of the Spanish Empire in the Americas in as negative light as possible. This version of history insists that Spanish imperialism exhibited a more violent and evil nature than the colonizing practices of other European powers. One payoff of Lamar’s introduction of this discourse into his journal is that it makes the modern processes of Native American removal seem like a humane venture when compared to the atrocities committed by Spain. The other result for the journal is that the Black Legend discourse initiates a rhetorical strain in which Lamar contrasts present day Mexico (an inheritor of Spanish power in North America) as an embodiment of tyranny against the U.S. as a representative of freedom. He makes this dichotomy most explicit when recounting a tribute to those who died in the 1832 Battle of Velasco, a conflict between Texas colonists and Mexico that anticipated the Texas Revolution: “Epitaph written for the Americans who fell at Velasco – ‘Who fought here fell in freedom’s cause – the Brave Tyrants beware! Man will not be a slave’” (see Figure 2). Lamar frames the growing Texas Revolution not as a fight against federalism or a struggle to maintain the institution of slavery — how most historians have since interpreted it — but rather as a righteous strike against despotism in the Americas.

**Mirabeau B. Lamar Travel Journal, 1835**

![Epitaph](image)

Figure 7.2: An actual excerpt from the very end of Lamar’s travel journal.

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CHAPTER 7. DISCOVERING U.S. EMPIRE THROUGH THE ARCHIVE

Mexico’s disconnect from the principles of justice, according to Lamar, has resulted in a Texas territory that has fallen into lawlessness and violence. The resonance here with his description of the Comanche is purposeful, as he feels that neither they nor Mexico is worthy of controlling Texas and its bountiful resources. Lamar critiques the Mexican residents of Texas for their ignorance of the modern legal system when he writes, “Amongst other petitions this province laid in one for a system of Judicature more consistent with the education and habits of the American population which was readily granted, but the members of the Legislature, familiar with no system but their own were at a loss to devise one which would likely prove adequate to the wants and suited to the genius of the people” (77). Texas emerges in the journal, then, as a site in need of order and desperate for progress. While Mexico and the region’s Indians cannot provide these things, Lamar indicates that American settlers bring with them the promise of both peaceful stability and economic productivity. Ultimately, the place of Texas within the historiography of U.S. as empire is a complex one. After all, the U.S. itself was not directly involved in the Texas Revolution, though many of the revolutionaries hailed from the United States originally. However, its 1845 annexation to the U.S. shortly before the outbreak of the U.S.-Mexican War continued to involve Texas in the escalating tensions between the two countries. Lamar recognized the critiques that could be leveled against U.S. settlers and their actions in Texas, and much of his journal is designed to justify their behavior. Taking these histories into account, it would be worthwhile to compare some of the language found in Lamar’s travel journal with the rhetoric driving U.S. expansionism over the course of the nineteenth century.

Lamar’s involvement in the Texas Revolution, as glimpsed in this journal, already makes him an important figure in the burgeoning field of inter-American studies. His participation in the U.S.-Mexican war and the time he spends in Nicaragua further cement him as a person of great interest to those students and scholars who wish to use a hemispheric approach in the study of American history and culture. These latter two ventures also resulted in several poems, in which Lamar writes adoringly of beautiful local women. During his time as a soldier in Mexico, he produced “To a Mexican Girl” and “Carmelita,” while his ambassadorship to Nicaragua saw his writing of “The Belle of Nindiri” and “The Daughter of Mendoza,” all of which can be found in The Life and Poems of Mirabeau B. Lamar. Lamar’s travel journal will prove useful to literature and history classrooms alike that take inter-American studies as a point of interest. Moreover, it could play a central role in courses devoted to the history of Texas as well as to the history of U.S.-Mexican relations. Like any number of documents found in the ‘Our Americas’ Archive, Lamar’s journal ultimately invites us to forge connections across both geopolitical and disciplinary boundaries.

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Chapter 8

A Global View of Disease: Yellow Fever and the Panama Canal

8.1 A Global View of Disease: Yellow Fever and the Panama Canal

The idea of an interoceanic canal in Central America had captivated the leaders of Britain, the United States, and France since the early nineteenth century. A canal in Central America would allow ships from these world powers to quickly and efficiently transport goods and peoples to Asia and beyond. Despite these incentives, building a canal would prove difficult and costly, in terms of lives lost and money spent. In 1881 Ferdinand Marie de Lesseps, representing the French in Panama, began work on his grand canal. Only eight years later de Lesseps was forced to admit defeat due, in great part, to the thousands of lives that were lost throughout the construction process of the still unfinished canal. It has been estimated that 60 percent of the Frenchmen who labored on the canal died in the process (Sánchez 48). Many of these deaths resulted from diseases (yellow fever, malaria, bubonic plague, pneumonia), however this percentage also reflects accidental deaths as well. It would take the intervention of the United States, and a few more years, before a functioning canal was completed in Panama. The United States, in a similar fashion as France, would have to deal with the deadly disease environment of Central America, including the prevalence of yellow fever. The personal letters and medical documents of Paul Osterhout, a visiting U.S. official in Panama, as well as the journal of George Dunham, provide detailed descriptions and human insight into the causes and consequences of yellow fever. These items are physically housed in Rice University’s Woodson Research Center, but are made available online through the ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership (a digital collaboration on the hemispheric Americas).

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CHAPTER 8. A GLOBAL VIEW OF DISEASE: YELLOW FEVER AND THE PANAMA CANAL

The French in Panama

Figure 8.1: This image (ca. 1910-1914) shows abandoned machinery from the French attempt to build a canal in Panama.

Used in conjunction with a partner module on yellow fever, Environmental History in the Classroom: Yellow Fever as a Case Study⁴, this module describes how educators can incorporate a study of disease and empire within the Progressive Era (1890s-1920s) or, as the AP guidelines state, “The Emergence of America as a World Power” lectures in introductory U.S. history and literature courses. In particular, a class lesson could focus on how the U.S. became involved in Panama, which led to the creation of the canal. This involvement was not accidental, but the continuation of an international policy that highlighted the acquisition of territories, including Puerto Rico. Of course, these expansionist policies were not without financial costs and risks. Along those lines, students could be asked to look at items such as Osterhout’s Bocas del Toro (Panama) Yellow Fever Victim List and ask what was the financial impact of these lost lives? At one point in 1906, the casualty figures became so great that President Theodore Roosevelt visited Panama to quell worker discontent and build confidence in the project (Missal 48). For a solid overview of the Panama project see Alexander Missal’s Seaway to the Future (2008).

⁴See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/> and <http://cnx.org/content/m32888/latest/>.
Construction

Figure 8.2: A photo (ca. 1906) showing men laboring on the canal. Many of these individuals were probably West Indian laborers who migrated for the work opportunity.

It is often hard for students to grasp the actual size, and therefore the impact, of an undertaking such as the Canal. The Canal Zone was ten miles wide (five on each side) and stretched fifty miles long (Greene 38). The dirt dredged from the Zone was enough to create a series of pyramids alongside the Canal. For additional media sources, it is recommended that educators search the Library of Congress’s catalog of images and/or utilize videos documenting the construction, such as A&E’s ‘Panama Canal’ (1994).

Map of the Panama Canal

Figure 8.3: A map showing the route of the completed canal. A series of "locks" are used to control the water level within the canal.

These media sources will convey the fact that the Canal was situated in prime mosquito territory amid miles of swamp and jungle. To keep the project functioning on schedule, Roosevelt brought in William C. Gorgas as the chief sanitary officer in charge of combating yellow fever and other diseases. One exercise would involve educators asking students how they would combat the illness if they were in Gorgas’s position. Osterhout’s letters provide some indications of how the medical community responded to the challenge. To begin with, they attempted to document all aspects of the disease. This is evident via Osterhout’s Clinical
Charts for individuals such as Elias Nelson, Charles Raymond, Vaughan Philpott, and W. B. Dunn. These charts could be printed out and passed around the room for student inspection or projected on the board and discussed. Gorgas and his men also attempted to remove all the mosquitoes from the Panama Canal Zone and, to a great extent, they succeeded. To this end they drained swamps, attached screens to windows, and quarantined infected patients. Some companies wanted to take more extreme measures. One example of this is a letter received by Osterhout from a manager of a Panamanian Fruit Company, requesting permission to use kerosene to “exterminate the mosquito.” In the end, Gorgas’s methods were successful in reducing yellow fever outbreaks in the region, leading to the widespread belief that civilization and science had conquered a wild land.

S. G. Schermerhorn to Paul D. Osterhout

Figure 8.4: This is an excerpt from a letter dating March 7, 1906, in which Schermerhorn, the manager of the Panamanian United Fruit Company, requests permission to use kerosene to battle the mosquitoes in his region.

However, yellow fever was not simply a disease found in ‘uncultivated’ swamplands. In actuality, the fever had been impacting the U.S. and other American locales for quite some time. For example, George Dunham, in his travel journal, documents Brazil’s struggle with yellow fever in the 1850s. Dunham tried to nurse numerous individuals through the disease, even stating in reference to his friend, “I shall take care of him for as long as I can for I have been with him all the time so far and now I think there is no use in trying to run away from it I shall be as careful as I can of myself and try to escape” (Wed. May 25, 1853). Dunham repeatedly emphasized his feelings of helplessness in the face of the fever, a sentiment echoed in other infected locales across the globe. An activity could ask students to analyze the impact of the fever across the globe, using the ‘Our Americas’ Archive Partnership, including the following modules: Environmental History in the Classroom: Yellow Fever as a Case Study, The Experience of the Foreign in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Literature, and National and Imperial Power in 19th-Century U.S. Travel Fiction.

Bibliography

5See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/27336>
6See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/27342>
7See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/26577>
8See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/27351>
9See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://hdl.handle.net/1911/22005>
10See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://oap.rice.edu/>
11See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://cnx.org/content/m32868/latest/>
12See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://cnx.org/content/m19517/latest/>
13See the file at http://cnx.org/content/m34201/latest/http://cnx.org/content/m19518/latest/>
Chapter 9

Principal Parts and Sails of 19th-Century Sailing Ships

9.1 Principal Parts and Sails of 19th-Century Sailing Ships

This module describes the principal parts of a sailing ship in the British or American fleets of the 19th century, as well as the locations and naming protocol of masts, yards, gaffs, stays and booms and the sails they spread. A ship illustration is included, labeled with the names of sails typically used for propulsion. Most information was obtained from the book Seamanship: Including Names of Principal Parts of a Ship; Masts, Sails, Yards, &c. by Captain Sir G. S. Nares.

1This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m31285/1.8/>.

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CHAPTER 9. PRINCIPAL PARTS AND SAILS OF 19TH-CENTURY SAILING SHIPS

USS Young America (1853)

Figure 9.1: The names and locations of sails on the USS Young America.

Principal Parts of a 19th Century Ship of the British or American Fleets

A ship is divided crossways, into the

- Fore
- Midship and
- After parts

The bow is the front or foremost end of the ship.

The midship is the middle part of the ship.

The stern is the aftermost end of the ship.

The starboard side is the right-hand looking towards the bow.

The port side is the left-hand side, looking towards the bow.

| Keel | The principal piece of metal or timber at the lowest part of the ship, running fore and after; it is the foundation from which all the other parts rise to form the ends and sides of the ship |

continued on next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stem</td>
<td>Rises from the fore part of the keel to form the bow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stern post</td>
<td>Rises from the after part of the keel to form the stern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body post</td>
<td>Rises from the keel before the stern post. The space between it and the stern post is called the screw-aperture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribs</td>
<td>A figurative expression for the framework which, resting on the keel, forms the sides of a ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keelson</td>
<td>An internal keel, lying fore and after above the main keel and lower pieces of the ribs confining the floors in their places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knight heads</td>
<td>Two strong uprights, one on each side of the upper part of the stem, to strengthen the bow and support the bowsprit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False keel</td>
<td>An additional keel below the main keel. By offering greater resistance, it prevents the ship being driven so much sideways through the water away from the wind. It also protects the main keel, should the ship take the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gripe</td>
<td>A projection forward at the lowest part of the stem; by exposing a larger surface it prevents the foremost part of the ship, when sailing with the wind on one side, from being driven sideways away from the wind, and therefore effects the turning power of the ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilge pieces</td>
<td>Long pieces of wood or iron affixed to the outside of the ship's bottom, in a position to offer resistance to the water as the vessel rolls, and thereby lessen the motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garboard strakes</td>
<td>The lowest planking outside, nearest to the keel, running fore and aft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bends</td>
<td>The thickest outside planking, extending from a little below the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter</td>
<td>The afterpart of the bends, the round of the stern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run</td>
<td>The narrowing of the afterpart of the body of the ship below the water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued on next page*
**CHAPTER 9. PRINCIPAL PARTS AND SAILS OF 19TH-CENTURY SAILING SHIPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limbers</td>
<td>Gutters formed on each side of the keelson to allow the water to pass to the pump-well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limber boards</td>
<td>Form a covering over the limbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-bottom</td>
<td>In some iron ships the frames and girders are covered in with iron plates, forming literally an inner ship, the space between the inner and outer ships being termed the double bottom; this method of construction gives great strength, and safety in the event of damage occurring to the outside skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water-tight bulkheads</td>
<td>The name applied to the sides of the numerous compartments into which it is customary to divide iron vessels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>In addition to the safety afforded by the “double bottom” and “Water-tight compartments,” a perpendicular bulkhead is run fore and aft the center portion of the vessel, some few feet from the skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pump-well</td>
<td>An enclosure round the mainmast and pumps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beams</td>
<td>Horizontal timbers lying across the ship, to support the decks and connect the two sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelf piece</td>
<td>Extends all round the ship inside for the beams to rest upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterway</td>
<td>Thick planking extending all round the inside of the ship immediately above the beams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Frames of timber fitted into the decks to strengthen them, immediately round the masts, capstans, bitts, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>Short pieces of timber, running fore and aft, connecting one beam to another, to distribute the strain of the masts, capstan, and bitts, among the several beams so connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knees</td>
<td>Pieces of iron uniting the beams to the shelf-piece and the ship’s side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanchions</td>
<td>Pillars of metal or wood supporting a beam amidships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treenails</td>
<td>Wooden bolts used in fastening the planks to the timbers and beams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued on next page*
Caulking | Driving oakum between the plans, it is then payed (filled in) with pitch or marine blue
---|---
The rudder | Hangs upon the stern post by pintles and braces, for steering or directing the course of the ship
Tiller | A piece of timber or metal fitted fore and aft into the head of the rudder, by which to turn it in steering
Yoke | A cross-piece of timber or metal fitted on the rudder head when a tiller cannot be used
Wheel | A wheel, to the axle of which the tiller or wheel ropes are connected, by which to move the rudder
Helm | The rudder, tiller, and wheel, or all the steering arrangements of a ship

Table 9.1

**USS Monongahela (1862)**

![Image of USS Monongahela](http://cnx.org/content/col11315/1.3)

**Figure 9.2:** A portrait of the USS Monongahela under full sail.

**Names of Masts, Yards, and Sails on a 19th Century Ship**

| Mast, a bowsprit, and booms | Placed to spread the sails upon |
---|---

Table 9.2

In a vessel with three Masts, they are named the *fore*, the *main*, and the *mizzen* masts.

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CHAPTER 9. PRINCIPAL PARTS AND SAILS OF 19TH-CENTURY SAILING SHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The mainmast</th>
<th>The middle and largest mast of the three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The foremast</td>
<td>The furthest forward, and the next inside to the mainmast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mizzenmast</td>
<td>The aftermost and smallest mast of the three</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Each mast, taken as a whole, is composed of four pieces, one above the other, each of which has its distinguishing name.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The lower masts</th>
<th>The lowest pieces of each mast, or those attached to the ship; they rest or step on the keelson at the bottom of the ship (In a screw steamer, the screw shaft prevents any mast abaft the engines being stepped on the keelson. It is then stepped on the lower deck, which is well supported with extra stanchions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The topmasts</td>
<td>The next pieces above the lower masts, and are supported by the lower trestletrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The top-gallant masts</td>
<td>The next pieces above the topmasts, and are supported by the topmast trestletrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The royal masts</td>
<td>The upper pieces, and are a continuation upwards of the top-gallant masts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Thus, there are three principal masts, each of which is composed of four masts.

To distinguish any particular mast, one of the principals’ names, fore, main, or mizzen is prefixed to its other name; thus, the masts associated with the foremast are:

- the fore-topmast,
- the fore-top-gallant mast, and
- the fore-royal mast.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trysail masts</th>
<th>Small masts placed immediately abaft the lower masts; to which they are connected.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The bowsprit</td>
<td>Projects out from the bows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The jib-boom</td>
<td>Boom outside of, and supported by the bowsprit, by means of the heel and crupper chains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued on next page*
The masts, yards, gaffs, stays, and booms are named the same as the sails which they spread; thus:

- the main-sail is set upon the main-mast, and is spread by the main-yard.
- the main royal sail is set upon the main royal mast and main royalyard.
- the spanker sail is set upon the spanker gaff and spanker boom.
- the main try sail is set upon the main try sail mast and main try sail gaff.
- the fore-topmast studding-sail, upon the fore-topmast studding-sail yard, and fore-topmast studding-sail boom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The jib sail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flying jib sail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A staysail (stays'l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A trysail (trys'l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The spanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fore-and-aft sail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studding-sails (stuns’ls)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are no studding-sails on the mizzen mast, or on either side of the main-sail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lower yard on the mizzen mast has no sail set below it, and is named the cross-jack yard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give more support to the jib and flying jib-booms, gaffs are placed on the bowsprit to spread the rigging out in each direction and give it a larger angle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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CHAPTER 9. PRINCIPAL PARTS AND SAILS OF 19TH-CENTURY SAILING SHIPS

| A dolphin striker | Used in connection with the martin-gale |
| Spritsail, gaffs, or whiskers | In connection with the jib guys (The name *spritsail* is derived from an obsolete sail, which was in old times set on a yard below the bowsprit.) |

Table 9.7

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Nares, Sir George S. *Seamanship: Including Names of Principal Parts of a Ship; Masts, Sails, Yards, &c.* Portsmouth, England: Griffin & Co., 1877.
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Chapter 10

Sea Terms and Types of 19th-Century Sailing Vessels

10.1 Sea Terms and Types of 19th-Century Sailing Vessels

This module describes the sailing vessels of the British and American fleets primarily used during the 18th and early 19th centuries, as well as their purposes, and includes illustrations of some of the ships. Also included are commonly used sea terms.

¹This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m31284/1.3/>.
Types of 18th and Early 19th Century British or American Sailing Vessels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barge</td>
<td>A boat of a long, slight and spacious construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barque (Bark)</td>
<td>A sailing vessel with three masts, square-rigged on the fore and main and with only fore-and-aft sails on her mizzen mast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat</td>
<td>Any small open craft without decking and propelled by oars, sometimes assisted by a small lugsail on a short mast.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued on next page
| **Brig** | A two-masted square-rigged vessel, a brigantine. |
| **Clipper** | A three-masted vessel used to transport tea, silks and spices from the East. The ships were named clippers because their speed could “clip” the time of a formerly long journey. |
| **Cutter** | A one-masted vessel rigged with a gaff mainsail, topsail, headsails and usually a square topsail. The name is derived from their fast sailing. |
| **East Indiaman** | The name given to the ships of the various East India companies. Ships of these companies were highly gilded and decorated with carving and were often well furnished. Always well armed as warships. The English and Dutch companies built and serviced their own ships and maintained them in their own private dockyards. |
| **Fireship** | Specialized vessel converted or built for the purpose of attacking moored or disabled vessels. |
| **Frigate** | (1) A large sloop of 16 or 18 guns, or (2) Any small cruising warship. |
| **Gig** | A light, narrow ship’s boat, built for speed. |
| **Hospital Ship** | An old warship or merchantman converted to serve as a floating hospital, usually to accompany a fleet or to be moored as a hulk [Not purpose-built during this period]. |
| **Hoy** | A small single-masted sailing cargo vessel – used as a dockyard craft. |
| **Hulk** | A dismasted ship, usually old and past active service, used as a receiving ship, sheer hulk, hospital or accommodation ship, or stationary storeship. |
| **Jollyboat** | A small ship’s boat, used for a variety of purposes. It was clinker-built, propelled by oars, and was normally hoisted on a davit at the stern of the ship. |
| **Ketch** | A vessel fitted with two masts (i.e., the main and mizzen masts). |
| **Lazarette (or Lazaretto)** | A hulk used as accommodation for seamen undergoing quarantine (to prevent or limit the spread of plague and other infectious diseases between ship and shore). |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lighter</td>
<td>A large, open, flat-bottomed boat, with heavy bearings, employed to carry goods to and from ships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longboat</td>
<td>The largest ship's boat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugger</td>
<td>A small vessel with four-cornered cut sails, set fore-and-aft, and may have two or three masts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lump</td>
<td>A short, heavy lighter used in Dockyards for carrying anchors, chains and heavy stores to and from ships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packet</td>
<td>A small vessel usually employed to carry mails between ports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinnace</td>
<td>A type of ship's boat which was rowed with eight oars (later increased in length to take sixteen oars).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powder hulk</td>
<td>A vessel for storing and issuing gunpowder – preferably moored at a safe distance from the dockyard to which it was attached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privateer</td>
<td>An armed merchant ship, licensed by a letter of marque to cruise against enemy ships to her owners' profit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prize</td>
<td>Name used to describe an enemy vessel captured at sea by a ship of war or a privateer. The word is also used to describe a contraband cargo taken from a merchant vessel and condemned in an Admiralty Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner</td>
<td>A small vessel rigged with fore-and-aft sails on her two or more masts; largely used in the coasting trade – they required a smaller crew than a square-rigged vessel of comparable size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheer hulk</td>
<td>A vessel fitted with a pair of “sheer legs” (two large spars formed into an “A frame”) to hoist masts in and out of vessels; in effect, a “floating crane”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>From the Old English <em>scip</em>, the generic name for sea-going vessels (as opposed to boats). Originally ships were personified as masculine but by the sixteenth century almost universally expressed as feminine. In strict maritime usage, signified a vessel square-rigged on three masts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship of the line</td>
<td>A line-of-battle ship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloop</td>
<td>A small man-of-war, rigged as a <em>ship, brig</em> or <em>ketch</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smack</td>
<td>A small fore and aft rigged single masted coastal craft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>A small square-rigged vessel (similar to a <em>brig</em>) with a supplementary <em>trysail</em> mast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storeship</td>
<td>A ship intended to carry naval stores (spars, timber cordage, tar, etc. – all the material needed to repair naval warships). In contrast, a <em>transport</em> was intended to carry men. Storeships were auxiliary vessels with a small defensive armament. Most were converted from merchantmen, though in some instances they were purpose-built or converted from first-line fighting vessels of different types.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tank vessel</td>
<td>Dockyard craft fitted with iron tanks and pumps to provide water to ships in harbor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>A vessel employed to assist or serve another, an auxiliary vessel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>A cargo vessel engaged by the government to convey troops, convicts, or stores (invariably these were chartered merchantmen – the Navy owned and manned only a small number).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troopship</td>
<td>A ship converted to carry troops. It could be a regular warship or a converted merchantman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whaleboat</td>
<td>The name given to an open boat, pointed at both ends so that it was convenient for beaching either on the bow end or the stern. Used under oars, and had to rudder – steered by an oar over the stern. The whaling ship, according to its size, carried as many as six or eight whaleboats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whaler</td>
<td>The name used for the vessel, with its complement of <em>whaleboats</em>, which sailed to catch whales with hand-thrown harpoons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wherry</td>
<td>A light rowing boat used chiefly on rivers for the carriage of passengers and goods; also a shallow single sail boat indigenous to the Norfolk broads (East Anglia).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.1
Figure 10.2: Barque

General Sea Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weather side</td>
<td>The side against which the wind blows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee side</td>
<td>The opposite to the weather side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starboard tack</td>
<td>Sailing as nearly as possible in a direction towards the wind, with it blowing against the starboard side of the ship, and consequently the starboard tacks being in use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port tack</td>
<td>Sailing as nearly as possible in a direction towards the wind, with it blowing against the port side of the ship, and consequently the port tacks being in use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacking</td>
<td>Going round from one tack to the other, passing head to the wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing</td>
<td>Going round from one tack to the other, passing stern to the wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beating to windward</td>
<td>Proceeding as nearly as possible in a direction towards the wind, and continually tacking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To weather</td>
<td>To pass on the weather side of anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a wind</td>
<td>Sailing as close to the wind as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the wind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close hauled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide abeam</td>
<td>Sailing with the wind directly on one side, or at right angles to the keel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off the wind</td>
<td>Sailing with the wind on the beam or quarter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before the wind</td>
<td>Having the wind exactly aft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scudding</td>
<td>Running before a gale of wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conning</td>
<td>Directing the helmsman in steering the ship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep her away</td>
<td>To alter course, turning the ship’s head more away from the wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bear up</td>
<td>To alter course, bringing the ship’s head nearer to the wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luff</td>
<td>To keep the ship’s head steady in the same direction (used when the ship is sailing close-hauled).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very well thus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nothing off | To bring the ship's head nearer to the wind (used when the ship is sailing close-hauled).
---|---
No higher | Not to bring the ship's head nearer to the wind (used when the ship is sailing close-hauled).
Starboard (the helm) | To alter course by putting the tiller or helm to starboard, so as to force the rudder and ship's head to port when the ship is going ahead.
Port (the helm) | To alter course by putting the tiller or helm to port, so as to force the rudder and ship's head to starboard when the ship is going ahead.
Hauling to the wind | Altering course, bringing the ship's head as near to the wind as possible.
Hove to | Keeping the ship stationary, by making one said act against another.
Lying to | Keeping the ship to the wind in a gale with little sail.
Making asternboard | Trimming the sails so as to force the ship astern.
Stern way | Going astern.
Lee way | Going sideways away from the wind.
Brought by the lee | When running, if the wind changes from one quarter to the other
Broaching to | When running with the wind on the quarter, and the ship's head comes up towards the wind, in consequence of a sea striking the stern, or through bad steerage.
Gybing a sail | When running nearly before the wind, if the wind gets on the lee side of a fore-and-aft sail, blowing it over to the other side of the ship.
Weather tide | A tide which will carry the ship towards the wind or to windward.
Lee tide | A tide which will carry the ship away from the wind or to leeward.
Bearing | The situation of any distant object in relation to the ship.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Striking a mast</td>
<td>Sending the mast down on deck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing a mast</td>
<td>Lowering the mast down as low as possible without taking the rigging off the masthead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single anchor</td>
<td>Having only one anchor down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moored</td>
<td>Having two anchors down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorings</td>
<td>Anchors and chains laid down ready for a ship to be secured to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short stay</td>
<td>When the cable is nearly straight up and down from the ground to the bows of the ship; or when the amount of the cable out is a little more than the depth of water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long stay</td>
<td>When the anchor is some distance ahead, and the cable forms a small angle with the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foul hawse</td>
<td>When moored, if one cable is twisted round another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To veer cable</td>
<td>To ease away or pay out the cable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surging</td>
<td>The hawser slipping up the barrel of a capstand, or veering out the cable suddenly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warping</td>
<td>Using a hawser to haul the ship ahead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedging</td>
<td>Using a kedge anchor to warp the ship ahead by, when there is no place to secure a hawser to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A spring</td>
<td>A rope led from aft and made fast to the cable, or an object a short distance off, in order to turn the ship’s head round, and present her broadside to any required direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolding</td>
<td>A strong lashing around a spar or spars. After passing the turns it is wedged out to tighten them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binnacle</td>
<td>A box containing a compass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubber’s point</td>
<td>A mark on the foremost side of the compass bowl, through which, if a line were drawn from the center of the compass, it would be parallel to the keel. It shows the helmsman how the ship’s head is pointing with regard to the compass.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guesswarp</td>
<td>A rope used to secure or haul a boat ahead with (in laying out a guesswarp, the whole hawser is taken on the boat, and the end is brought back to the ship, the distance being “guessed”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighing</td>
<td>Getting the anchor out of the ground and up to the bows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casting</td>
<td>Trimming the sails in order to turn the ship’s head round away from the anchor after weighing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxing off</td>
<td>Backing a head sail in order to pay the ship’s head off if she has approached too near the wind, in consequence of bad steerage, or the wind drawing ahead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backing and filling</td>
<td>Trimming the sails in order to go backwards and forwards across a river, letting the tide take the ship to windward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sued</td>
<td>The condition of a ship when she has run ashore, and the water has partly left her. If the water has left her two feet, she has sued two feet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The buoy watching</td>
<td>The anchor buoy being above water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up rigging</td>
<td>Hauling the shrouds, etc, taut by means of tackles on the lanyards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swifting in</td>
<td>Steadying the shrouds in their places before putting on the ratlines. Also done in a gale of wind when rigging becomes slack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spar down</td>
<td>Putting spars in the rigging for the men to stand upon while rattling down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotchman</td>
<td>A piece of hide, wood, or iron on a rope to prevent its being chafed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swamped</td>
<td>A boat being filled with water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batten down</td>
<td>Closing the hatchways with gratings and tarpaulings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake of a ship</td>
<td>The track left by a ship in the water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnet of a sail</td>
<td>An additional part made to lace on to the bottom of a trysail or other sail. By taking the bonnet off, the sail becomes a storm sail.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued on next page*
Hogging | Scrubbing the ship’s bottom under water.
---|---
Hogged | The bow and stern of the ship having settled down in the water below the level of the midship part.
Sagged | The midship part of the ship having settled down below the level of the bow and stern.
Athwart | Lying across any part of the ship.
Sprung | Signifies that a spar is strained, and that some of its fibers are broken.
Battledore | A moveable iron arm in the cable bitts of most vessels.

**Table 10.2**

**Figure 10.3:** Schooner

**Bibliography**


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Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center http://www.history.navy.mil/


\(^3\) http://www.history.navy.mil/

\(^4\) http://www.portcities.org.uk/london/server/show/ConFactFile.89/Clippers.html

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' 'Our Americas' Archive Partnership, § 1(1), § 5(21), § 6(25), § 9(39), § 10(47)

A American literature, § 5(21), § 6(25)
Atlantic creole, § 2(5)

B Brazil, § 6(25)

C Colonel William Fairfax Gray, § 3(11)
communication, § 3(11)

D disease, § 8(33)

E Edgar Allan Poe, § 5(21)

G George Dunham, § 8(33)
Gustavus Vassa, § 2(5)

H Herman Melville, § 5(21)
Holy Land, § 6(25)

I imperialism, § 5(21), § 7(29)
Indentured Servitude, § 1(1)
Ira Berlin, § 2(5)

J James Revel, § 1(1)

M M. Mattock, § 3(11)
Manifest Destiny, § 6(25)
Mark Twain, § 6(25)

Mexico, § 7(29)
migration, § 3(11)
Mirabeau Lamar, § 7(29)
Moreau Forrest, § 3(11)

N nationalism, § 5(21)

O Olaudah Equiano, § 2(5)
Our Americas Archive, § 7(29)

P Panama, § 8(33)
Paul Osterhout, § 8(33)
Personal Narrative, U.S.-Mexican War, Mexican-American War, Narrative, Borderlands, Atlantic, Transatlantic, Immigration, War, § 4(15)

R Richard Henry Dana, § 6(25)

S Sailing, § 9(39), § 10(47)
Sea Travel, § 9(39), § 10(47)
Slavery, § 1(1), § 2(5)

T Texas, § 3(11), § 7(29)
the Americas, § 5(21), § 6(25)
Transportation, § 1(1)
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