

PORT of CALL The WESTERN ISLANDS

“After cruising about here and there we shaped our course for the Azores, or, as called by whalemens, the Western Islands”

Source: Nelson Cole Haley, Journal kept on board the ship CHARLES W. MORGAN [1849-1853], Log#145, G. W. Blunt White Library – Mystic Seaport Museum



Whaling Vessels in the Harbor of Horta, Faial Island, José Goulart [1910]. Source: Courtesy of Museu da Horta.

During the XIX century, the Azores – the Western Islands, how they were called by the American whalers – became a relevant support for the American Whaling Fleet crossing the Atlantic. Between spring and autumn, the Whaling Boats landed on the islands for supplies, to do maintenance on the boats, recruit crew or allow their crew to rest and enjoy a bit of liberty.

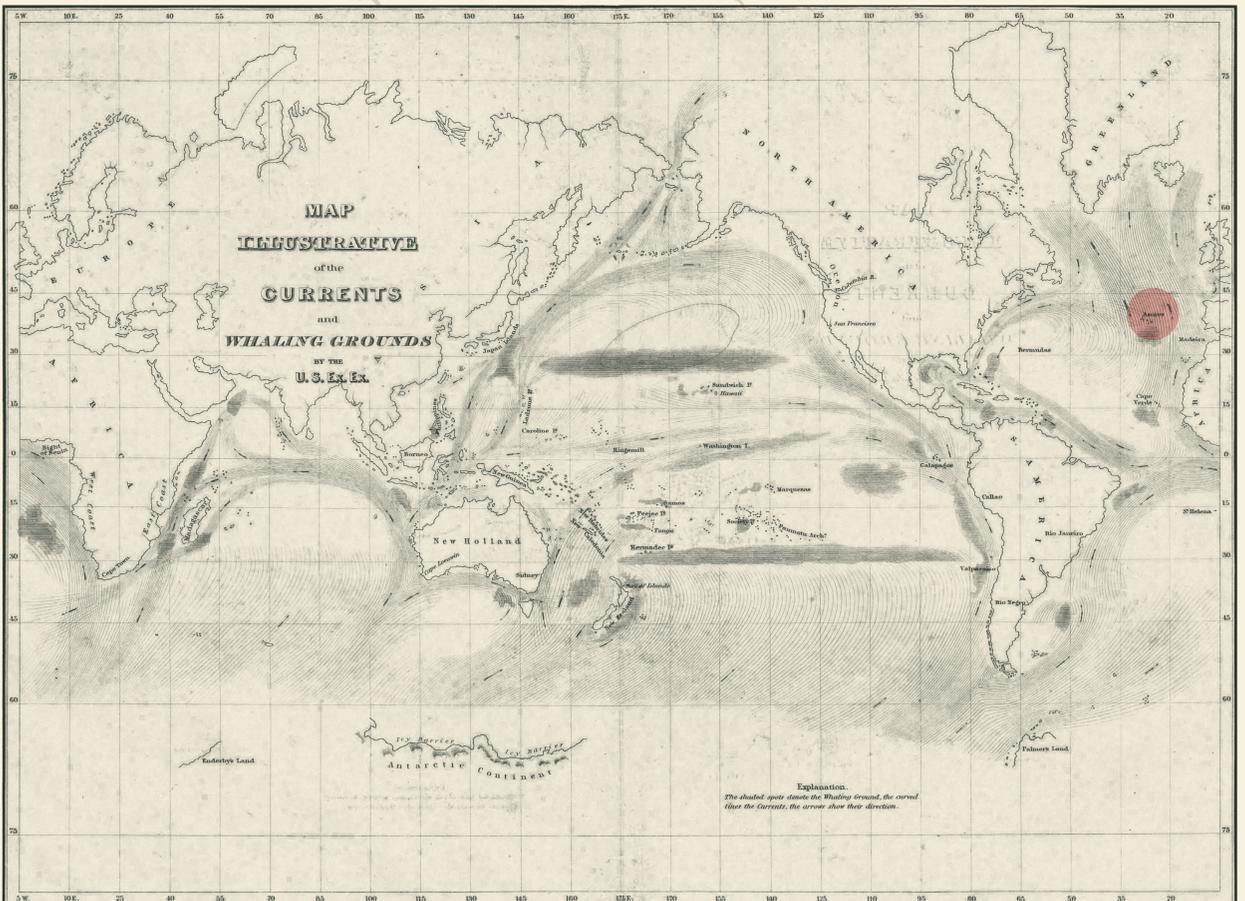
The privileged position and excellent conditions made the Horta Harbor, in Faial Island, the perfect port of call for the American Whaling Fleet. The affluence of the whaling ships to this island, after 1806, was reinforced by the presence of the American Consulate.

The Dabney Family assured the American Consulate on Faial for three generations. The consuls carried out a lot of roles, in order to assist the whaling fleet. Among the most common cases were:

resolving contests between the whalers, provide medical assistance, support and the repatriation of the deserters.

The Dabneys provided other services besides the consulate. Their commercial house “Dabney & Sons” offered a variety of services essential to the whaling fleet, such as repair of any malfunctions on the boat or transshipment of the landed oil to the USA. The Dabney Family distinguished also for their hospitality towards the whaling ship captains and their wives, welcoming them in their beautiful houses and exotic gardens.

Through the voyages of the Bark Charles W. Morgan, with stopovers in the Azores, and consulate correspondence, this exhibit aims to reveal some situations involving the American Whaling fleet in the Western Islands.



Currents and Whaling Grounds [1845]. Source: David Rumsey Historical Map Collection © Cartography Associates.

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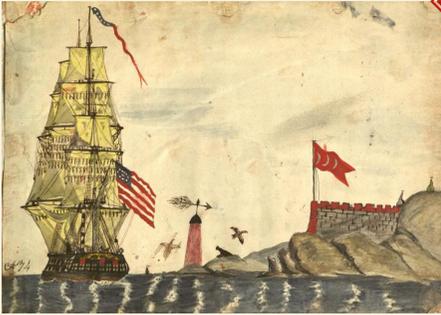
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SPONSORS



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The bark Charles W. Morgan leaving New Bedford on her 1st voyage.
Source: Log#143. G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.



Bay of Fayal Island.
Source: "The Innocents Abroad" by Mark Twain [1st Edition, 1869].

1841

1st VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1841-1845]

REMARKS ON BOARD ¹

Sunday, Sept 26th

[...] raised Fayal at ten AM.

Monday, Sept 27th

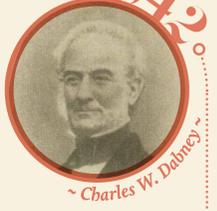
[...] laying off and on at Fayal, all hands employed in working ship. One boats crew went on shore, returned about 5 o'clock. The ship Margaret in company a Brig come to anchor in the harbor [...]

Tuesday, Sept 28th

[...] one boat went on shore. Sent off ashore boat with recruits. At 5 o'clock our boat come off [...]

"[...] I lament to have to inform you that few of the masters of whaling ships accede to pay three months in advance of wages of thirty six dollars which is the amount established for seaman discharge [...]. I have paid great attention to this brand of national industry [...] I have attending agents at all the Islands who made efforts prompt assistance for the whaling vessels [179 vessels last season]..."

Consular Correspondence [January, 3rd, 1842, Fayal].
The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



~ Charles W. Dabney ~

¹Source: Journal kept by James C. Osborn on board the ship Charles W. Morgan, Thomas Adams Norton, master [1841-1845]. Log#143. G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.

1845

2nd VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1845-1847]

JOURNAL OF THE WESTERN ISLANDS ²

Tuesday, July 1st

[...] at 6 made the land, the Island of Flores baring NE [...]

Wednesday, July 2nd

[...] at 5 AM saw the Islands of Pico & Fayal [...]

Thursday, July 3rd

[...] at 6 PM saw the Island of St. Michael baring ESE

Friday, July 4th

[...] at 8 AM a boat and the Captain went on shore [?] and a man and a boy with him.

Thursday, July 10th

[...] fine breezes and the Island of Terceira baring [...]

Monday, July, 21st

Begin with fine breeze [...] the Island of St. Mary and St. Michael in sight [...]

Saturday, July 26th

At St. Michaels

[...] the boat came off and we got potatoes and onions [...] steering W.N.W for Fayal to land our oil [...]



Whaling off São Miguel, Azores, 1845.
Source: Russel and Purrington's Panorama. Courtesy of New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Monday, July 28th at Fayal

[...] ship off shore [...] and at 9 AM loward a boat and the Capt. went on shore to Fayal lying off and on in company with the W. Hamilton and two other ships [...]

Tuesday, July 29th

[...] the boat come from the shore and took our oil at 3 the Capt. came of and we made all sail bound to the island of Bravo [...]



Whaling Vessels at Fayal Island, Azores, 1845.
Source: Russel and Purrington's Panorama. Courtesy of New Bedford Whaling Museum.

²Source: Journal kept by Frederick Vincent on board the ship Charles W. Morgan, John D. Samson, master [1845-1847]. Log#140. Providence Rhode Island Public Library, Nicholson Whaling Log Collection.

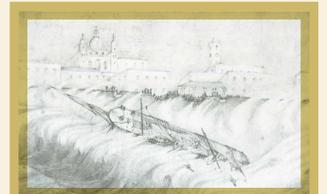
1848



~ Charles W. Dabney ~

"I have the honor to inform you that the whaling brig Helen of Mattapoisett was wrecked in this bay during a very violent gale of wind on the night of the 10th. The crew with difficulty were saved. I have to report the death of Evi Sayer of Milford....seamen landed here from the whaling ship Lalla Rookh of New Bedford who died on the hospital of this city on the 15th of pulmonary consumption."

Consular Correspondence [December, 28th, 1848, Fayal].
The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



Shipwreck of bark North Star at Horta bay, 1858. By S. Gough.
Source: Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum.

1849

3rd VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1849-1853]

JOURNAL OF NELSON CALE HALEY (HARPOONER) ³



Island of Fayal from Pico.
Source: "A Winter in the Azores and a summer at the baths of the Furnas" by Joseph and Henry Bullar [1849].



A group of Azorean ladies.
Source: Dabney Photo Album Collection, Courtesy of DRaC.



Downtown of Ponta Delgada in S. Miguel Island.
Source: Dabney Photo Album Collection, Courtesy of DRaC.

We stood in towards Fayal which the principal town of the group. [...] we approached the land near enough to haul aback the mainyard and lower a boat for the Captain to go on shore to take the letters and buy some recruits.[...] At sundown the Captain came on board, we squared the Yards and shape our course for another Island called Saint Michaels....

We did not require much more in the way of recruits, but now we went on shore and the Captain sent off a boat load of oranges [...] eggs and chickens.

[...] I told the boys they could ramble about the town, so they went off to some of many places where wine is sold [...]

I went out to the market place [...] I lost my heart half a dozen times to some of the pretty girls who were tending the sale of their fruit [...] They had a way of looking at you, out of their black eyes, and asking you to buy, in that sweet Portuguese manner[...]

We started off for dinner, came to a place that had the cleanest looking appearance, and went in.[...] We helped ourselves to chicken and commenced to eat. First one and then another stopped at the first mouthful, laid down knives and forks, and like myself almost spit out what we had in our mouths. I knew at once what the trouble was. The one who had cooked it had stuffed it full of garlic, and to us all, the taste no doubt could not have been much worse.

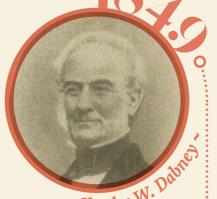
[...] The ship was now brought to the wind with the beeyards aback, heading offshore, which was not over half a mile off. [...] The boat-steerers were told by the Captain to go into the ship's run and take out fifteen or twenty boxes of tobacco [...]. This tobacco was to be sold to smugglers from shore.

[...] Shortly afterwards the Captain came down the companionway into the cabin, accompanied by three finely dressed Portuguese, having every appearance of gentleman. They bought twenty boxes for which they paid nearly \$900.00. This same tobacco cost in New Bedford about \$260.00. Pretty fair profit [for the ship's owner].

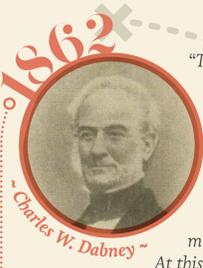
³Source: Journal kept by Nelson Cole Haley on board the ship Charles W. Morgan, John D. Sampson master [1849-1853]. Log#145. G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.

"If any class of deserters can be justified it is that of an unfortunate landsman who has been enticed by some shipping broker to enlist for Whaling Voyage of three or four years duration. This is almost the only circumstance under desertion occur at those Islands [...]. I offer high rewards for their apprehension but as the vessels rarely anchor we cannot always find them in time and as they cannot be suffered to starve I allow them bread [...] on condition of their entering on board of other vessels when opportunity offers."

Consular Correspondence [November, 16th, 1849, Fayal].
The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



~ Charles W. Dabney ~



1862

"The whaling brig Eschel, Robertson master of New Bedford arrived at this port and reported yesterday that on Tuesday off the Western end of Flores [...] that the smoker they had seen was not caused by steamers, but by the hulls of two burning vessels [...]. Another steamer had burned four vessels whalers off the Eastern side of Flores [...] the whaler Ocmulgee which, at the time, had a large whale alongside. [...]

I have no doubt that this steamer is one of two which were at Terceira some three weeks since and which under English colors! Outside the harbor received munitions from a bark also under English colors [...]

At this time of year it is custom for the North Atlantic whaling fleet to touch at these Islands for supplies. These fact is known to these predator and I think it probable, therefore, that they will cruise in these waters for some weeks [...]"

Consular Correspondence [September, 15rd, 1862, Faial].
The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



936
gl. oz



Ilheos P.
290°(N.46°W.Mag.)

FLORES ISLAND
From the Escolar Sunken Rock

Lagens P.
45°(N.69° E.Mag.)

Flores Island. Source: Hydrographic Charts by Alexander T. E. Vidal, British Admiralty. Courtesy of Angra do Heroísmo Museum (MAH).

WHALEMEN'S SHIPPING LIST

Shipping List. **WHALEMEN CAPTURED AND BURNED BY A REBEL PRIVATEER.**

Our community was started on Friday by a dispatch received at the Six O'Clock News from Boston, announcing that ship Ocmulgee, of Edger town, with 250 bbls. sperm oil on board, had been captured and burned off Flores September 5th, by the rebel steamer "20," and that four other whalers had also been burned, names not stated.

The news was brought by the Perina from Liverpool which arrived at New York.

The London Shipping Gazette of Sept. 27, contains the following report made by the British ship Calcutta, at London from Sydney:

"Three white and seven crew all speared at Flores from the steamer Alabama, Capt. Rogers, and wished to be reported as having had their ship Ocmulgee, American whaler, sailing from Edgewater, (Connecticut), set on the 5th inst, and totally burned by the Ocmulgee steamer above named. The Ocmulgee had on board two hundred and fifty barrels oil. These were all speared and all taken and burned four whalers within a short time. The Alabama took an American schooner (name unknown) while the Calcutta was off Flores."

The Ocmulgee was owned by Abraham Osborne and others, of Edgewater, and sailed from that port on the 2d of July last. The news of her having 250 bbls. sperm oil had not been before reported. She was raised, with her outfit, at about \$25,000, and with her partly insured in this city, will prove a total loss, as the office did not insure against the war.

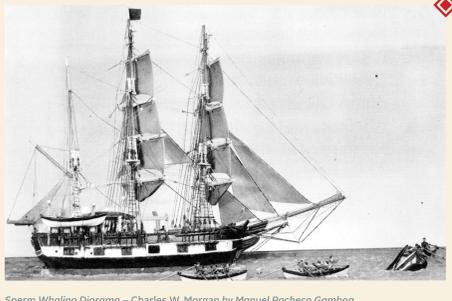
Great anxiety of course prevails as to the other vessels captured, and as in relation to the whole Atlantic fleet cruising about the Western Islands, as at the end of the capture of the Ocmulgee, a large number of them would be touching at Fayal to land oil, and obtain recruits, and very

Several of these whalers were captured on the 1st of October, and the news of their capture was not known until the 15th of that month. It is not known whether the whalers were captured in the vicinity of Flores, or whether they were captured in the vicinity of the North Atlantic. It is not known whether the whalers were captured in the vicinity of the North Atlantic, or whether they were captured in the vicinity of the North Atlantic.

WHALEMEN CAPTURED AND BURNED BY THE REBEL PRIVATEER ALABAMA. Source: Whalemens Shipping list and Merchants' transcript (October, 14th 1862). Courtesy of New Bedford Whaling Museum.

1867 8th VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1867-1870]

REMARKS ON BOARD



Sperm Whaling Diorama - Charles W. Morgan by Manuel Pacheco Gamba. Source: Courtesy of New Bedford Whaling Museum



The Isle of Pico. Source: Logbook of Lucy Ann [1844]. Courtesy of New Bedford Whaling Museum.

Wednesday, Aug. 7th

[...] at 7 AM the Island of Flores in sight [...] at 7 PM [...] C. Morgan off Corvo [...]

Tuesday, Aug. 20th

[...] Corvo in sight at 8 AM Capt. Athearn and boats crew went ashore to Corvo after recruits. Latter part with some rain at 3 PM one boat come from shore with potatoes. At 2 PM Capt. Athearn came off, and another shore boat with recruits and 5 men to go in the ship [...]

Saturday, Aug. 24th

[...] At 10 AM spoke the Bark DRACO sailed from Fayal, left the Captain a shore sick[...] off Port Pray at 2 PM one ship on shore. At 7 PM one ship of shore [...] and took in sail. Crew employed in decking over potatoes [...]

Tuesday, Sept. 3rd at Fayal

[...] working up off the Passage. At 8 AM task in main top gallant [?] main top sail and main sail sent down the band on the main mast for Captain Athearn to carry a shore to get repaired. At 9 AM Capt and boat crew went ashore.[...]

Wednesday, Sep. 4th

[...] At 10 AM left to off the town of Fayal [...] At 9 PM ship off St. George. Leading to the Eastern.

Thursday, Sept 5th

[...] Oswald Julp and August Brotzzer deserted at Fayal [...]

⁴Source: Journal kept on board the bark Charles W. Morgan, George Athearn, master [1867-1871]. Log#147. G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.



Isle of Terceira & Town of Praya bearing. Source: Courtesy of João Gomes Vieira.

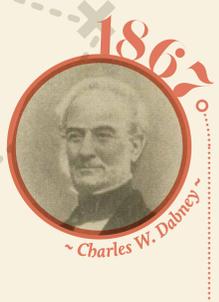


Downtown of Horta, Faial Island. Source: Dabney Photo Album Collection, Courtesy of DRAC.

"There being a large number of destitute seamen a charge to this Consulate, I avail of the English Br. "Fredonia" (there being no American vessel in Port bound to the States) about sailing for New Bedford to send nine of them [...]"

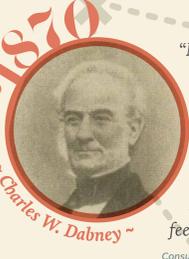
"The subject of desertions from our Whalemens again disturbs the equanimity of those who are affected by it [...] The Govt. of Portugal has created new police regulation there is to be a regular corps and shore been assured by the authorities that it will check the scandalous desertions that have been so troublesome to us. [...]"

Consular Correspondence [September, 24th, 1867, Faial]. Source: The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



1867

~ Charles W. Dabney ~



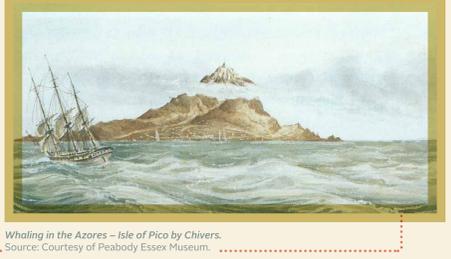
1870

"My returns show the great expensiveness of supporting men here besides the impossibility to kept them out of hospital - on account of the great impurity of women. It would pay the Government to keep a dozen or twenty women here free for disease, for the use of these seamen! [...]

A trouble is to prevent the selling of clothing by the seamen for money to pay for liquor and women. And if refused, they are viable to sicken from exposure and then greater expenses than ever for doctoring and Hospital charges. [...]

The laws rattier encourage desertions from the whalers by offering pres feed and clothes to deserters, besides freedom to live a lazy life [...].

Consular Correspondence [July, 13rd, 1870, Faial]. The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



Whaling in the Azores - Isle of Pico by Chivers. Source: Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum.

10th VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1875-1878] 1876

REMARKS ON BOARD

Saturday, May 27

[...] saw the Island of Flores and Corvo. So ends this day

Seaman died. Died on board.

Sunday, May 28th

[...] heading up to Corvo. Latter part the same. At 5 AM went on shore. At 11 caryed the corps on shore.[...]

Monday, May 29th

[...] Laying off and the Island of Corvo at ½ past PM a boat from shore came to buy tobacco at 11 PM. Stood off shore, latter part calm. So ends Land in sight

Wednesday, May 31st

[...] the same four sails in sight and to island of Fayal [...]

Thursday, June 1st

[...] lowered the Boat and went ashore [...]

Friday, June 2nd

[...] heading in shore boat still on shore [...] laying off the part at Fayal at ½ past five the boat came on board and kept off steering E. So ends.

Wednesday, June 7th

[...] heating for Fayal [...] at 10 AM came to anchor in Fayal harbor. So ends.

Friday, June 9th

[...] employed in getting water and sending oil on board the Azor [...]

Thursday June 22nd

[...] laying off and on Corvo to rugged to land [...] at 8 AM a boat went on shore [...]

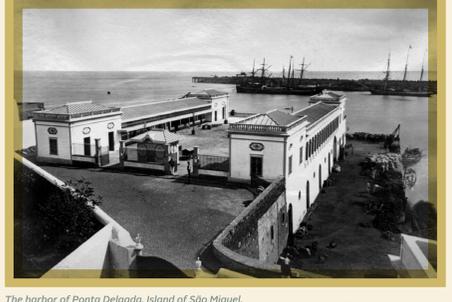
Friday, June 23rd

[...] at 3 PM boat came on board and stered for St. Cruise Floris. At 7 PM Capt went on shore [...] at ½ past 9 AM sent the boat and Capt. Came on board with seven men [...]

Saturday, June 24th

[...] heating round the Island [...] at ½ past four AM boat went on shore after crew but did not get any. One man runaway at 10 AM boat came on board. So ends.

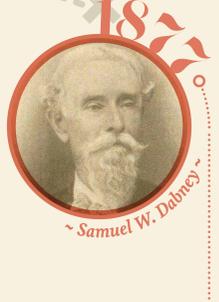
⁵Source: Journal kept on board the bark Charles W. Morgan, John M. Tinkham, master [1875-1878]. Log#141. Providence Rhode Island Public Library, Nicholson Whaling Log Collection.



The harbor of Ponta Delgada, Island of São Miguel. Source: Dabney Photo Album Collection, Courtesy of DRAC.

"St. Michaels has been tried new for two summers as a refitting port for many of our whalers, but is becoming so unpopular with owners. The ships there lie close to the shore inside of the breakwater, which affords the crews great facilities for dissertations, and the island being large, when once among the mountains and befriended by the peasantry as be generally is, the deserter is hardly apprehended [...]"

Consular Correspondence [January, 20th, 1877, Faial]. The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



1877

~ Samuel W. Dabney ~

1878 11th VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1878-1881]

REMARKS ON BOARD ⁶



Postcard showing Whaling ships in the Harbor of Horta. Source: OMA's Postcard Collection



The village of Vila do Corvo in Corvo Island. Source: Courtesy of João Saramago

Sunday, Aug. 11th

Sight the Islands of Flores & Corvo. Lower and chase a school of grampus.

Monday, Aug. 12th

Raise a large Sperm Whale at daylight, going to the windward thick fog, so lose sight of him.

Wednesday, Aug. 21st

Sight the Island of Flores. Boat goes ashore. Captain stays ashore.

Thursday, Aug. 22nd

Boat goes ashore Capt. Comes aboard & goes to Corvo. Boat goes ashore. Square the yards at sunset for Fayal.

Friday, Aug. 23rd

Reach the Island of Fayal at noon the Capt. Goes ashore.

Saturday, Aug. 24th

Off Fayal, boat goes ashore.

Sunday, Aug. 25th

Boat goes ashore.

Monday, Aug. 26th

Boat goes ashore The Capt. Comes aboard. Start south.

⁶ Source: Logbook kept on board the bark Charles W. Morgan by William L. Baker, Thomas L. Ellis, master [1878 – 1881]. Log# 701, KWM, New Bedford Whaling Museum.



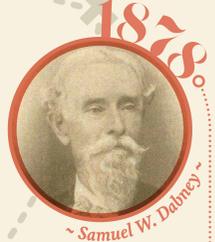
Fayal Hotel, property of the Dabney Family, was regularly frequented by the whaling captains and their wives. Source: Dabney Photo Album Collection, Courtesy of DRaC.

"[...] The fact is undeniable that the masters of our whaler do often receive on board their ship, at these Islands, young men disproved with licenses to on-board. [...]"

Consular Correspondence [1878, Faial]. The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.



Estate "Bagatelle" and its gardens, where the wife's of the whaling captains enjoyed their leisure times in Faial Island. Source: Dabney Photo Album Collection, Courtesy of DRaC.



~ Samuel W. Dabney ~

1881 12th VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1881-1886]

REMARKS ON BOARD ⁷

Oct, Saturday 22nd

[...] about three PM sighted the Island of Flores [...]

Oct, Sunday 23rd

[...] three PM sighted Fayal ahead

Oct, Wednesday 26th

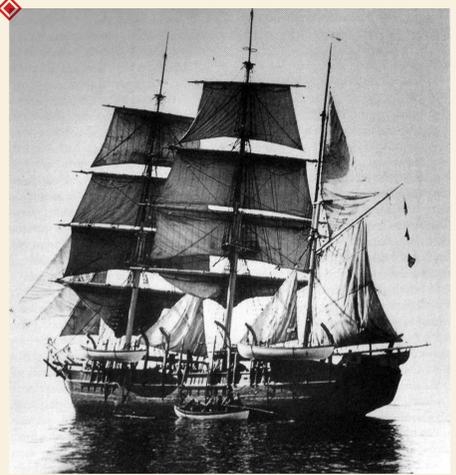
Laying Off The Island of Fayal

[...] About four ship off Fayal harbor. Captain went on shore at six PM boat returned with two bags of potatoes and the mail [...] About nine AM came to anchor [...] broke out the oil and sent 15 package on board Bark SARAH B. HALE

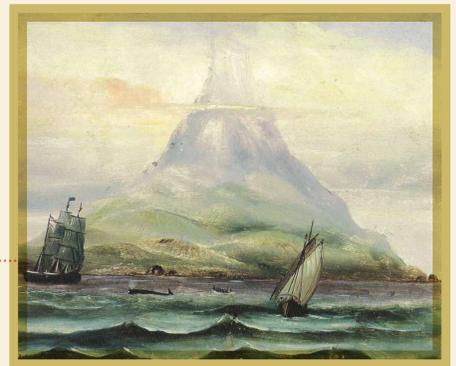
Oct, Thursday 27

[...] Took from shore sweet and Irish potatoes, beets and onions. Discharge the Cook on account of sickness. About six PM Captain came on board. Took the anchor and stood out to sea [...]

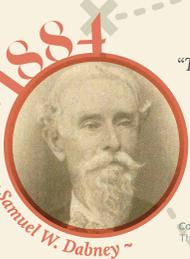
⁷ Source: Journal kept on board the bark Charles W. Morgan, Charles F. Keith, master [1881-1886]. Log#149, Mystic Seaport Museum. G. W. Blunt Library.



The Charles W. Morgan after refitting and modernization. This was it looked like from the early 1880's to 1921. Source: Courtesy of Mystic Seaport Museum.



Whaling in the Azores - Isle of Pico, by Chivers. Source: Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum.



~ Samuel W. Dabney ~

"The Fayal Consulate with its five agencies [...] was played an important role particularly was it brought into notice by the gallant fleet of American whalers that through the summer months sought Fayal to land it oil, give liberty to its crew and obtain supplies of vegetables.[...] Now all is changed; the whaling fleet in these days is diminished, perhaps a tenth part of what it used to be, and the appearance of our play. [...] Consequently the duties of the Fayal Consul are decrease many much in volume [...]"

Consular Correspondence [October 15th, 1884, Faial]. The National Archives of the United States. IAC Compilation.

1911 33rd VOYAGE OF CHARLES W. MORGAN [1911-1913]

REMARKS ON BOARD ⁸



Charlotte Church "Lottie" and Captain Charles S. Church aboard Charles W. Morgan, ca. 1911. Source: Courtesy of Mystic Seaport Museum.



Postcard alluding to the 1st Anniversary of the Portuguese Republic, by Cândido da Silva. Source: OMA's Postcard Collection

Friday, Sept. 15th

[...] at 7 AM dropped anchor in the harbor of Fayal [...] rest part of the day crew employed scrubbing ship and washed the decks[...] Schr. Mystic came in [...]

Saturday, Sept. 16th

[...] cooper and 2 men ashore set up cask [...] Watch went ashore and run for the night [...]

Sunday, Sept. 17th

[...] Mr. Tilton went to the hospital [...]

Tuesday, Sep. 19th

[...] crew employed breaking out oil [...]

Friday, Sept. 22nd

[...] Gomes, Macdonald, Philip, Selea, Joseph Shea, Clayton Bills, Manuel Pena, Manuel Tegue deserted ship, having been gone 48 hours and have not been seen

Saturday, Sept. 23rd

[...] finished discharging oil crew employed painting, Herbert Munson deserted ship, had 6 men from shore, for half day and let them go ashore not having anything to do

Sunday, Oct. 1st

[...] crew ashore and run, most part of them came back at dark. Abram Goodman deserted ship [...]

Thursday Oct. 5th

[...] a German Man war ship came in today. Portuguese Celebrating annual of their Republic. Can't get anything done till Monday. So ends this day.

Wednesday, Oct. 11th

[...] Head Police searched ship to see if any natives stowed away, did not find anybody. 12:30 towed out and made sail [...]

Thursday, Oct. 12th

[...] one stowaway came on deck by the name of Joseph Mashoud [José Machado] a native from Fayal [...]

⁸ Source: Journal kept on board the bark CHARLES W. MORGAN by William H. Griffith, Charles S. Church, master (1911-1916). Log#157, Mystic Seaport Museum. G. W. Blunt Library.

CAPTAIN JOSEPH F. EDWARDS 1918

Captain Joseph F. Edwards, a native from the Island of Flores, took the command of Charles W. Morgan where he made two successive voyages, 1918 – 1920.



Captain Joseph F. Edwards Source: Courtesy of New Bedford Whaling Museum.