

American whaling visitors, the length of their visits, and the approximate locations of their whaling activities.

It is important to note that from Canham's exhaustive, and practically definitive, list, New Zealand researchers may now readily identify which American whalers were about a particular section of the New Zealand coast in any desired month (e.g. at and off Otago in May 1840), and may confidently estimate from these lists of known visitors, totals of American whaling visitors to any specific area of New Zealand (e.g. East Cape, Port Nicholson, Cloudy Bay).

While it is not denied that further exhaustive local studies, such as that recently completed of American whaling activities at and off the Chatham Islands, produce some whaleships not listed by Canham, nor that his terminal date of 1850 excludes almost the last two decades of the dying whaling industry, it is nevertheless held that Canham's compilations, plus his list of logbook locations, are a major, unappreciated, contribution to our historical records of that early period.

Consider next the search for a logbook or journal of a particular whaleship known from Canham or some other source to be of possible relevance. The American whaling industry was so vast that no such search can commence without most, or preferably all, of the following four essentials:

1. *Ship's Name.* It is striking how often land orientated sources improperly record this obvious essential. Recourse to Canham's lists might help even here, providing a whaler's location can be dated exactly, though this would of course require a tedious check of every whaleship he lists.

2. *Homeport.* This is an essential part of identifying any American whaler because very frequently several ships of the same name whaled simultaneously from different ports. Mention should also be made here of the many French whalers with American names (and captains) who in several cases met in New Zealand waters American whalers with the same names (e.g. the *Neptune* of Sag Harbour met the *Neptune* of Havre off Otago in April 1839).

3. *Captain or Master's Name.* Probably there are also instances of two whalers with the same name and the same homeport simultaneously in New Zealand waters, which could be distinguished most easily through their respective masters. Fortunately these must be rare, and the captains' names are only occasionally essential.

4. *Voyage Dates.* As whaleships often made several consecutive voyages along the same routes or to the same locations, any identification should include a specific month and year, or the years spanning that particular voyage. Especially after 1840, an error of two months or more could find the ship far distant en route elsewhere or even home in the U.S.A.