

## **HISTORY OF THE SHIP**

The Helen Augusta was a whaling vessel out of Holmes Hole, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, mastered by Charles West. The ship was bound on a voyage June 23, 1852 – March 12, 1854 to the South Atlantic whaling grounds. The agent-owner was Thomas Bradley. The ship was built in 1849 and made several whaling trips until 1861 when it was withdrawn for merchant service.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Helen Augusta's log is a 102-page journal that records a complete whaling voyage from June 23, 1852 to March 12, 1854. Daily entries record the date, location, sailing conditions, riggings used, whaling activity, and sightings of other ships. Places represented include Fayal Island near the Azores, Carrol Ground near the Island of St. Helena, and Tristan da Cunha. The log includes inventories of sperm oil, whale oil, whalebone, and whale stamps. Captain West's name appears in the log along with the names of his wife, Betsey L. Dillingham, and daughters, Mary Jane and Alice Ann.

The logbook also includes Charles West's 15-page journal for the Liverpool (Ship) that records a whaling voyage bound for the Arctic Sea. The entries commence March 13, 1850 and end mid-sentence on June 3, 1850 with the observation "saw large quantities of ice." The Liverpool sailed out of New Bedford, Massachusetts in October of 1847 and completed its voyage in April of 1851.

A record of the routes of the Helen Augusta and the Liverpool can be traced by searching the pages of *The Whalemens' Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript*, a newspaper first published in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1843. The publication was the main source of information on the American whaling industry in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. For more information, search the American Offshore Whaling Voyages database, a joint project of the National Maritime Digital Library in association with the Collections and Research Department of Mystic Seaport.

Source: Lund, Judith N., Elizabeth A. Josephson, Randall R. Reeves and Tim D. Smith.  
"American Offshore Whaling Voyages: a database." World Wide Web electronic publication.  
<http://www.nmdl.org>

## **PROVENANCE**

The Helen Augusta ship's log was given to Lafayette College on December 18, 1962 by George Bunker Markle III, Class of 1913 in memory of his father, George Bunker Markle II, Class of 1878.