

**JOURNAL OF A TRADING
VOYAGE AROUND THE
WORLD, 1805-1808**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760576981

Journal of a trading voyage around the world, 1805-1808 by Isaac Iselin

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ISAAC ISELIN

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1805-1808.

BY ISAAC ISELIN.



PRESS OF MCGLOY & EMMET,

26 CORTLAND ST., N. Y.



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DEPARTURE FROM NEW YORK.

The ship being ready for sea, left her anchorage in the North River on Thursday morning, for Staaten Island, about eight miles below, where she again came to anchor. On Friday night at eleven o'clock, I bade farewell to New York, went on board the pilot boat at Washington street, and accompanied by a number of gentlemen to the ship, where we spent, in a crowded room, the rest of the night. By eight in the morning, on Saturday, the ship weighed anchor and dropped down to the lighthouse, near which we came to, to await the captain's arrival, and finally, at five in the evening, we went to sea; but it was midnight when the pilot left us with the gentlemen who had thus far accompanied us. We had some apprehension of being overhauled by the British frigate *Cleopatra*, that had been cruising some time off the port and was in sight as we went out, manœuvring apparently to give us chase, but by good sailing we soon got out of her reach and view.

1805.
5th Sept.,

PASSAGE TO THE CAPE DE VERDE ISLANDS.

It had been determined to touch at the Cape de Verde Islands, in order to take in some fruit and replenish our stock of water for the long voyage before us.

With wind mostly light, variable and not generally favorable, our progress was slow. It was only on Sunday (Monday by sea reckoning) afternoon of 14th Oct., that we descried the Island of Bonavista, and next day the Island of Mayo, the whole southwest

14th Oct.

part of which we ran down with fine weather and fresh trades, and on Tuesday, 15th Oct., after a passage from New York of thirty-eight days, we came to anchor in Agoa Bay (Isle of Mayo), where we found five American vessels displaying their colors. During the passage a great number of vessels were descried and met with. The first spoken, 15th Sept., was a brig from Bordeaux for Rhode Island, whom we desired to report us all well. Next, 22d Sept., a brig, after a long chase, came up with us, and proved to be from Boston for the North West Coast, and a few hours after, amongst three sails in sight, we spoke the brig *Monongahela Farmer*, forty-three days from Malaga for New York. I was glad of this opportunity to forward some letters, amongst which one for my good mother. Fell in (24th Sept.) with ship *Dolphin*, thirteen days from New London, on a whaling voyage to the coast of Patagonia. Her Captain, Williams, took dinner with us and kept company the next day. The 3rd Oct. we caught a dolphin. On the 8th Oct. we came up with and spoke to the whaling ship *Exchange*, Capt. Barnard, fifty days from New Bedford, for the coast of Brazil, and treated the captain till midnight. In the morning, there were no less than seven sails in sight, amongst which the fourth whaler spoke on the passage. It proved the *Diana*, Capt. Paddock, thirty days from New Bedford, round the Cape Horn, with whom we kept company and exchanged dinner till the 12th and 13th, when a signal from the *Diana* for "whales" recalled Capt. Paddock to his own ship, when we finally parted with him.

STAY AT THE CAPE DE VERDE ISLANDS.

The five vessels found at Isle of Mayo proved to be ship *James*, Capt. Pinkhorn, of and for New York; brig *Minerva*, Capt. Richards, of and from Madeira, etc.; brig *Mary*, of Philadelphia, Capt. Suter, from Ireland, for

Philadelphia; brig *Paulina*, Capt. Wadsworth; brig *Rising State*, Capt. Dickey; all having called here to load with salt.

AT MAYO.

Soon after having come to anchor, we went ashore and first looked out for water. Some of the crew were directed to the beach with empty casks, but the method of digging wells and sinking barrels to collect the water in proving very tedious, we were delayed five days (till 19th Oct.) before all was completed. During this time a small slow trade was also carried on with the natives for some goats and other small live stock, fruit and vegetables. 19th Oct.

Captain Moore, Governor, Captain Tack and Colonel Cadover are the principal inhabitants whom we had to deal with (they are blacks—negroes) and also with a white man, Mr. Medina, a Portuguese by birth, who received and treated us in his modest house with great hospitality. He is called Collector of Customs of the island.

We made here, at Mayo, some trifling sales of biscuit at \$10.00 per barrel, and Negrohead tobacco at \$1.00 per fifteen hands, and took in for supply fifty or sixty lean goats at \$1.00 each, with some pigs.

I regularly went on shore three or four times a day to urge the supplies which delayed us. At one time I had a most narrow escape from being dropped a great height on the rocks, washed by the ocean, under the promontory to which I was dragged up along a stretched rope by means of a tackle, merely suspended by my hands holding fast to a hook, nor do I conceive to have run small danger of drowning, when, in an attempt to land, near the salt pans, the boat was overturned in a violent surf, from which I could extricate myself only with utmost exertions. On the evening of Thursday, the 17th Oct., while going on board, a heavy squall with rain