

**Guide to the Edward Peirce Collection
MS0394**

**The Mariners' Museum Library
at
Christopher Newport University**

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners' Museum Library

Title: Edward Peirce Collection

Catalog number: MS00394

Physical Characteristics: 1 folder

Language(s): English

Creator(s): Edward Peirce

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection consists of three pages from a journal written by Edward Peirce documenting his voyage from Baltimore, Maryland to San Francisco, California in 1849. It includes two hand drawn maps of the voyage which note the exact position of the ship each day of the voyage. Annotations of events during the voyage are also documented in the margins of the drawing which include contact with other vessels, a shark encounter, weather conditions and approximate locations to significant land marks.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession Number

Accession Date

7 May 2007

Restrictions

The collection is open to all researchers but all documents must be handled with extreme care.

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Preferred Citation

Edward Peirce Collection, MS 0394, The Mariners' Museum Library

Note to Users

Due to the fragile and rare nature of the collection, researchers are requested to handle the materials with caution and in accordance with prescribed archival practices. When using these materials, please preserve the original order of the collection.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH

Edward Peirce was born in Philadelphia to a Quaker family on 27th August 1820. His family moved to Montgomery County, Maryland in 1822 where Edward attended schools run by "Aunt Brown", Adam Mendenhall and later he attended E.J. Hall at Brookeville.

In 1837 he went to Philadelphia to apprentice as a carpenter to his uncle, George Chandlee. After 4 years of apprenticeship, Edward returned to his family home in Maryland and rebuilt his father's barn, which had burned to the ground in 1842. Using his newfound trade, Edward later built a house at Black Meadows in Maryland. Swept up by the Gold Rush Fever, Edward left for California 18 April 1849 aboard the ship *Andalusia* from Baltimore, Maryland bound for San Francisco. He documented his voyage from Maryland to California via Cape Horn through journals, maps and letters to his family. While in California, Edward continued to diligently write to his family about his failures at the mines, his job as a contracted carpenter building pre-fabricated houses from China and daily life in California. After being disillusioned by the Gold Rush Fever, Edward returned to Maryland in 1851 after taking board the ship *Orion* in which he also documents his voyage in his journal and a hand drawn map. Edward Peirce married Sophia E. Kummer on 16 October 1856 and moved to Fairfield, Maryland with his new family 1st June 1860. Edward was appointed Post Master of Fairfield 7 November 1860 and remained in that position until his resignation on 22 October 1903. He also opened and maintained a hardware store from 1864 until 20 May 1880. Edward Peirce died 2 October 1916 at the age of ninety six.

As "Queen of the Gold Rush Fleet", the ship *Andalusia* was hailed as "a fast sailer, and in every respect a vessel of the first class." Constructed in Baltimore, Maryland in 1848, *Andalusia* measured 771.71:151.4x33.5 and was owned by David S., Thomas I. and Henry Wilson of Baltimore (Cutler). Her between decks, where most of the passengers resided, were reported to be thoroughly ventilated and spacious, having dimensions of 8 feet high, 33 feet wide, and 150 feet long. Capt. Francis W. Willson, to command the *Andalusia*, was reportedly an experienced master and familiar with the Pacific Trade (Schultz). The *Andalusia* set sail bound for California on 18 April 1849 with 100 passengers and 25 crewmen. "While Baltimoreans constituted the largest group of passengers, there were people from other towns and counties in Maryland; from Columbia, Lancaster, and York, Pennsylvania; and from the states of Kentucky, Louisiana, Ohio and Virginia. Those from York, Pennsylvania, and those from Kentucky appear to have been members of organized companies" (Schultz). Many passengers aboard occupied themselves during the 155 day voyage by participating in activities such as mock trials and elections, religious practice, journals and map making, and letters to home. The *Andalusia* arrived in San Francisco on 21 September after sailing more than 8,000 miles and made the shortest voyage of most, if not all, of the Baltimore vessels that sailed before her (Schultz).

SERIES DESCRIPTION

This collection is organized into a single series

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1

Folder 1 Journal pages (Maps)

MATERIALS REMOVED

None

SOURCES CONSULTED

Cutler, Carl C. *Greyhounds of the Sea: The Story of the American Clippership.*

George Banta Company Inc. Baltimore, 1930. p391, 497

Iddings, Fanny Peirce. "Biographical Sketch [of Edward Peirce] as written by his daughter"

MS 0012 Edward Peirce Papers, The Mariners' Museum Library

Mystic Seaport Museum Library. <http://library.mysticseaport.org/>

Schultz, Charles R. "Andalusia: Queen of the Baltimore Gold Rush Fleet" *Maryland*

Historical Magazine, V86. No2, Summer 1991, p.151-171

SUBJECTS

Peirce, Edward, 1820-1916

California-Gold discoveries

Andalusia (Baltimore clipper : 1848)

Orion (Bark : 1847)

Pharsalia (Ship :1838)