

Myron Balcom's Whaling Voyage

As a young man of 22, Myron Balcom traveled from his home in Orleans, Co. New York, to New London, Connecticut. There, he signed on as a “greenhand” on the whaleship *Catharine*, a vessel of 384 tons. It was owned by Thomas Fitch II, and sailed under the command of Capt. Richard Smith.

The voyage began on September 3, 1845, and headed east across the Atlantic, stopping at the Cape Verde Islands. From there, the *Catharine* continued south, around the Cape of Good Hope, and into the Indian Ocean. The voyage continued into the Pacific Ocean, where stops were made in New Zealand, Tasmania, Hawaii, along with numerous other small island chains. Other places included: the southern coast of Alaska; Mexico; and Patagonia.

The trip returned to the Atlantic by rounding Cape Horn, and made it back to New London on April 29, 1848. Commercially, it does not appear to have been an especially profitable journey for the ship's owner. Myron returned to Upstate New York, married in 1849, and moved to Ionia Co., Michigan in 1850.



Myron Balcom c. 1863
(1823 — 1906)