ERASTHUS BURNHAM

SOUTH WINDSOR, NEW LONDON, HONG KONG AND HOLYOKE · 1834–1921

On Whales, Bandits, Bone Saws and Such

Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; ... then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can.

HERMAN MELVILLE, MOBY-DICK

Bearing the bandages, water and sponge,
Straight and swift to my wounded I go,

WALT WHITMAN, THE WOUND-DRESSER

THIS CHAPTER IS FAMILY LORE. It is the story of Daniel's great-great-grandfather, Erasthus Burnham, as it came down the family: from the old man to his grandson, William Burnham Krug, who spent years at his side, and from Krug to Daniel, who spent much of his own boyhood with Krug. A story that travels that far changes on the way, and Daniel knew it. "My thought was, oh, yes, my grandfather taught me that and told me that," he said, and he wondered how anyone could prove it. As it turns out, a good deal of it can be proved and some of it cannot. Where the records and the family part company, this chapter says so.

The story begins on the Connecticut River. In the middle of the 1800s the river ran through farm country all the way down to Long Island Sound, and at its mouth stood New London, one of the great whaling ports of the world. For a time only New Bedford sent more ships after whales. Whale oil lit the lamps of America, and sperm oil, which burned clean and ran fine and slick, greased its machines. Daniel put it more grandly: whaling "actually encouraged the Industrial Revolution by being able to oil gears and so forth."

Up the river, in South Windsor, on April 28, 1834, Erastus Williams Burnham and his wife, Emeline, had a son and gave him his father's name. He was the first of their eleven children. The family would call him Erasthus; his wife, one day, would call him Bill. His father farmed, and was for a time the foreman of a brad factory. It was farm country, and farm work was what a boy could look forward to. Daniel understood the appeal of the alternative. "Say you're 12, 14 years old and you want to do something," he said. "And all you have to look for is drudgery on a farm."

The Burnham name turns up early in a shopkeeper's books. A storekeeper named Henry M. King kept a day book of his customers from November 1841 to February 1849, with what each one bought and what it cost, and among

THE LINE OF DESCENT

Erastus Williams Burnham (1810–1854) = Emeline Parsons
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Erasthus (Erastus W.) Burnham Jr. (1834–1921) = Mary Graham Devine, m. 1855
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Agnes Maria Burnham (b. 1862) = Wilhelm Friedrich Krug (d. 1938)
↓
William Burnham Krug (1894–1967), "Grandfather Krug" = Elizabeth Cofer
↓
Daniel's mother (b. 1920) = John St. John (b. 1921)
↓
Daniel St. John (b. 1943) = Regina
↓
Alex, Rex and Yana



ERASTHUS BURNHAM IN UNIFORM, 1862–65 (DIGITALLY RESTORED)

the names is Erastus W. Burnham. The ledger's subjects run to dry goods, groceries and tobacco. Which Erastus it means, the catalogue does not say, but the son was seven when the book was opened, and the father is the likelier customer.

When he was fourteen, by his own account given to *The Hartford Courant* nearly seventy years later, he set out "with a companion and a few dollars" to see the world. The railroad and the steamboat lines were fighting for the Hartford trade, "the trip from Hartford to New York being made by boat for 25 cents." The world, it turned out, could be seen in a short visit. "After seeing the 'Big Town' Mr. Burnham was glad to return home where he remained until he was 17."

In the summer of 1851 he went to sea. On June 21 a clerk at New London wrote him onto the crew list of the whaleship *Hannibal* as "Erastus W. Brunham," of South Windsor, eighteen years old, five feet six, light complexion, light hair. The *Hannibal* was a ship of 441 tons, built in New York in 1821 and so already thirty years old, owned by Benjamin Brown's Sons of New London. Her captain was Jeremiah Lester Jr., a Waterford man of twenty-eight.

Of the thirty-one men on the list, ten had been born in the Azores. Three days later she sailed for the North Pacific. Whaleships were provisioned for up to four years, and by then the average voyage lasted forty-six months: out through the Atlantic, around Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope, and up into the Pacific to wherever the



A NEW ENGLAND WHALESHIP

whales were. Which cape the *Hannibal* took, no surviving record says.

Erasthus remembered, sixty-five years later. His father had gone with him to New London, he said, and the *Hannibal* "sailed around the Cape of Good Hope to Australia, at the time gold was discovered in Tasmania. The crew were anxious to stop at Tasmania, but the captain fearing desertion by the larger part of his crew cruised to New Zealand and among the lesser Pacific Islands." No ship's record names the cape; the old man's memory is the only witness.

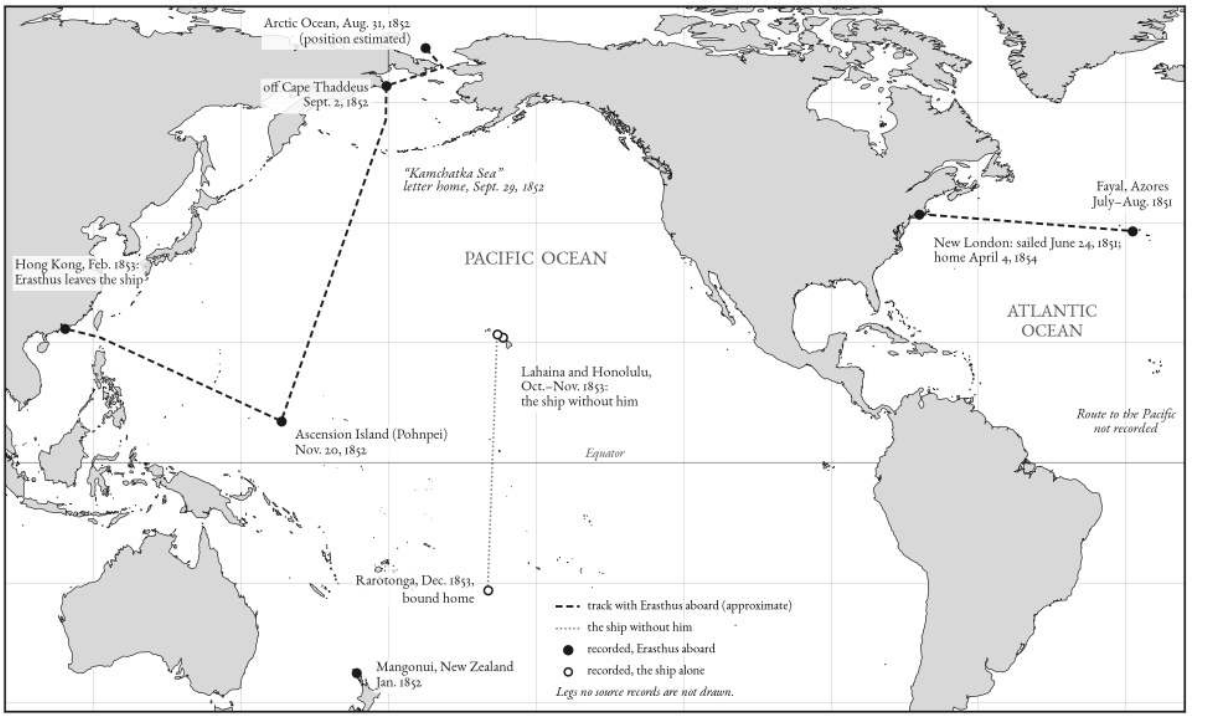
A green hand lived in the forecastle, a narrow three-cornered room under the deck in the bow, lined with bunks. One young man who shipped out a few years earlier found his "black and slimy with filth, very small, and as hot as an oven," and full of "tainted meat, Portuguese ruffians, and sea-sick Americans." The men stood watch four hours on and four off. They ate salt meat, hard biscuit and molasses; the same writer noted the "well-fed cockroaches in my molasses" and allowed that they sometimes gave it a rich flavor. The high point of the week was duff, a boiled flour pudding, and the men sang about it at the windlass.

The first stop was the Azores, the Western Islands, where American whalers took on fresh food and, often, fresh men. The *Hannibal* called at Fayal on July 26 with nothing yet to show for the voyage, and again on August 11 to land sixty-five barrels of sperm oil for shipment home; the *Vesper* of New London was there landing oil at the same time. Erasthus wrote home that summer, and his letters mention the island of Flores.

Trade there ran on barter; a few years earlier a whaler at Flores had bought three thousand onions, two hundred eggs and four dozen cabbages for a single barrel of oil. On August 20, while the *Hannibal* was in those waters, a sperm whale in the Atlantic smashed a whaleboat of the New Bedford ship *Ann Alexander* "to fragments no larger than a common chair" and then sank the ship. Two months later a New York writer named Herman Melville published a very long novel about a whale that sank a ship. *Moby-Dick* came out in London in October and New York in November, sold poorly, and earned its author, in the end, $556.37.

No report of her survives for the next five months, and which way she went is not known. In January 1852 she turned up at Mangonui, on New Zealand's Doubtless Bay, with ninety barrels of sperm oil and two hundred of whale, bound for the Northwest Coast.

Of those months he kept one memory. On Christmas Day, 1851, off New Zealand, a whale "of monstrous size had been harpooned and towed



THE VOYAGE OF THE HANNIBAL, 1851–1854

for miles in a vain effort to tire it, but finally broke away after a hard struggle."

For the *Hannibal*, wherever the whales were meant the far north. Three years earlier a Sag Harbor captain named Thomas Roys had taken his ship through the Bering Strait and found the vast herds of bowhead whales, and the fleet had followed him: fifty ships in 1849, and in 1852, the peak, two hundred and twenty-four. A bowhead could yield more than a hundred and fifty barrels of oil and a ton or more of baleen, the springy "bone" that stiffened corsets and hoop skirts.

In the Arctic summer the sun barely set, and the first whale ever taken there was killed at midnight. In fog the ships called to one another with bells, guns, horns and by pounding on empty casks. Not all of them came home. That July a New London ship, the *Superior*, went ashore on the Siberian coast in thick fog while boiling out a whale. On August 18 two ships reported speaking the *Hannibal*, one crediting her with thirteen whales and the other with eleven.

On August 31 the *Betsey Williams* of Stonington met her north of the Bering Strait, and whoever kept that ship's log wrote, "Spoke the Hannibal of New London Captain Lester 11 whale," and drew a little ship in the margin. Two days later, off Cape Thaddeus in the Gulf of Anadyr, Captain Lester wrote home: 1,700 barrels, all well, but nine whales lost to bad irons and lines. He was bound south to cruise for sperm whales on the Line, and expected to be at Hong Kong in February.

The work was filthy. A whale was killed from a small boat, towed alongside and cut up on deck, and the blubber, sliced into what the men called Bible leaves, was boiled down in the try-works, great iron pots set in brick amidships, whose fires at night made the ship look as if she were burning. The men fried their biscuit in the boiling oil, and made fritters from the whale's brains when the steward was feeling generous. The rest — the offal, the rot, the smell — had to be lived with.

"So the main thing it took," Daniel said, "was a good iron stomach." The pay was worse. A green hand's share, or lay, was about one two-hundredth of the catch, which worked out to around twenty cents a day, when a laborer ashore made ninety; and a man could finish four years at



A GOOD IRON STOMACH: THE ARCTIC, 1852

sea owing the ship for the clothes he had bought from it.

Erasthus pulled stroke oar in the second mate's boat, and by his count it took seventeen whales on the voyage, the largest "on September 26, when coming through the Bering Straits." Two hundred and twenty-five barrels of oil came out of that one. The three boats' crews raced one another for every whale, he said, "and each one of the crew which won got an extra griddle cake next morning."

It was dangerous as well as filthy. On September 29 Erasthus wrote to his parents from what he called the Kamchatka Sea, and his letter names the ship *Vesper* of New London and her captain, Edward Howes, whom the family knew as Captain House. Howes came from Glastonbury, the next town down the river from South Windsor, and on July 15 that summer he had been killed by a whale. The Kamchatka Sea was Russian water; Alaska itself would stay Russian until 1867, when the United States bought it for $7.2 million. The whalers sailed past the Pribilof Islands, where, more than a century later, Daniel would spend three years of his own.

In the autumn the fleet came south. On November 20, 1852, the *Hannibal* anchored at Ascension Island, as the whalers called Pohnpei, in the Caroline Islands. It was a favorite stop, for its chiefs' hospitality and for its prices: a hog cost five dollars in tobacco. It was also a favorite place to jump ship. Some hundred and fifty beachcombers lived ashore, deserters and castaways mostly, and one recaptured runaway had made his second escape by paddling ashore in the captain's wooden bathtub.

The first American missionaries had arrived ten weeks before the *Hannibal* and been unnerved by the rowdy beachcombers who met their ship begging for tobacco. The *Hannibal* sailed on December 3 to cruise on the Line, passed the island again on January 15 bound for Hong Kong, and reached Hong Kong in February 1853, in company with three other American whalers.

Hong Kong, as Daniel explained, was a common stop for the whalers: it was British, so money could be changed and stores taken on. The *Hannibal* stayed about three weeks. Captain Lester sent twenty thousand pounds of whalebone home to New York aboard the *Annie Bucknam*, and on February 27 the ship sailed north again. It was her only call at Hong Kong that year, and it was there that Erasthus and the *Hannibal* parted company. The family's version is that the crew, unhappy with their treatment, mutinied.

Daniel guessed it was the quiet kind: they went ashore for supplies and never went back. "But that's something that could be seen from his letters," he said. If so, he had plenty of company. The average whaleship of the time lost nearly two-thirds of the crew she sailed with before she got home, and about three men in ten deserted.

Erasthus's own account was neither. In 1914 he told the *Courant* that for nineteen months at sea he "never touched old Mother Earth's soil." In 1916 he said that when the *Hannibal* put into Hong Kong, "Mr. Burnham and a companion fled to the island of Mecca until the ship left port as they would have been compelled to finish the voyage." Mecca is very probably Macao. His obituary put it more politely: "after cruising two years in this vessel, he left the ship at Hong Kong, China."

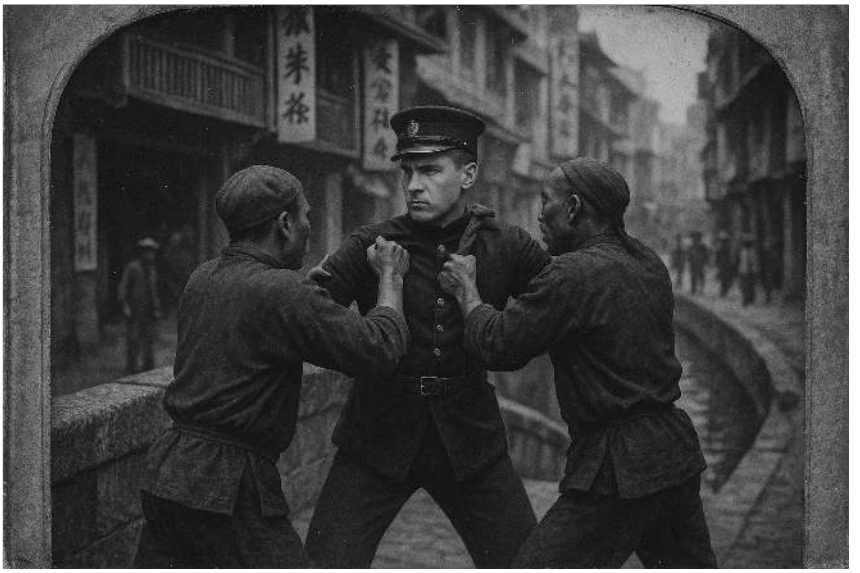
Hong Kong in 1853 was a raw place to land. Britain had taken it from China only eleven years before, and the colony's police were, by the force's own later account, "chaotic, disorganised and made up of largely suspect individuals." Pirates worked the harbor and burglars the streets at night. A stranded Yankee sailor who could stand up straight was, evidently, police material, and Erasthus joined the force: a British bobby, as Daniel put it.

He described the force himself, twice. In 1914 he said he served on it six months, "at which time there was only one other Yankee policeman on the force." In 1916 he said it "was mostly made up of Americans, Englishmen and Irishmen, with Chinese ministers as interpreters," that the night squad "all carried carbine guns," and that officers who met resistance would "tie the whole bunch together by their 'pig-tails' and march them into their squad house." The obituary says simply that he "joined the British police force, serving in that city."

One day, he said, his squad was sent to seize a pirate vessel in the harbor. "The officers all floated out in different directions in sampans and completely surrounded the vessel capturing the crew of twenty-seven pirates, all of whom were beheaded." The obituary makes the crew twenty-eight. No report of the capture has been found.

One day on patrol, as the family told it, seven bandits jumped him. They stabbed him seven times in the back and threw him off a bridge. He lived, and years later he could still show his grandson the scars. It was the day on which everything after it depended. "If he hadn't made it through this," Daniel said, "none of us would exist."

About six weeks after the *Hannibal* sailed, the United States Navy came in. At sunset on April 7, 1853, the steam frigate *Mississippi* anchored at



SEVEN BANDITS AND A BRIDGE: HONG KONG, 1853

Hong Kong with Commodore Matthew Perry aboard, on his way to open Japan, and in the months that followed the Commodore made the colony his squadron's depot. The expedition's official narrative found the town "a picture of busy activity," its harbor "crowded with the shipping of all nations," and its population, counted to the last soul, 14,671.

It also noted what kept a policeman busy. Several piracies were "committed almost under the guns of the vessels-of-war," and the land pirates were "as expert at picking and stealing as the most accomplished thieves and pickpockets of New York or London." One of the *Mississippi*'s lieutenants, stepping into a hired boat at twilight, was seized amid a crowd that went for his watch; "his Pickwickian rotundity of form saved the watch, but the chain was carried off in triumph."

Perry went up to Edo Bay that July with four ships and a letter from the President, came back to Hong Kong, and on January 14, 1854, sailed from there again, by way of Lew Chew, for Japan; on March 31 he had his treaty. A biographical encyclopedia printed about 1922, in its article on Erasthus's youngest son, says that Erasthus "saw Commodore Perry's fleet on its memorable voyage to Japan in 1854." His obituary says the same, and so, in 1916, did he: "This was at the time that Commodore Perry opened the ports of Japan." The fleet, at least, was there to be seen.

The *Hannibal* went on without him. She spent the summer of 1853 back in the Arctic, where she took only two or three whales, and on October 22 she came in to Lahaina, on Maui, a whaling town with a brand-new prison for sailors. The newspaper's list of arrivals noted that she had "sailed without clearance," which is to say without waiting for her papers. Smallpox was loose in the islands that autumn.

Four days later she was at Honolulu with two thousand barrels of whale oil; she cleared for home on November 12, called at Rarotonga in December, and on March 29 was spoken sixty miles south of Montauk. She reached New London on April 4, 1854, thirty-three months and eleven days out, with about half the oil of her previous voyage. Captain Lester died six years later, in command of another New London ship, and in 1861 the *Hannibal* herself was abandoned in Cumberland Inlet, off Baffin Island.

By then Erasthus had gone home another way. "July 1, 1853," he said, "Mr. Burnham resigned from the Hong Kong police force and on the 4th shipped on the Challenge, bound with a cargo of tea and silk for New York." She sailed from "Wampolo," very probably Whampoa, the anchorage on the Canton River, on the 12th, and "after passing through the China Sea, sprung a leak off the island of St. Helena." She was in such a state that she had to put into the Azores, "where the crew was discharged and later Mr. Burnham shipped on a barge for New Bedford, where he ended his seafaring career."

The obituary names the vessels. He left Hong Kong "as a seaman on the American clipper ship 'Challenge,'" left her in the Azores, "and came to New Bedford on the bark Grampus." The *Challenge*, it adds, "after leaving Port Haute, was never heard from again." Port Haute is very probably Horta, the harbor of Fayal.

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His father died on October 20, 1854, at forty-four; whether the son was home by then, no record says. Home again, he learned the moulder's trade in a brass foundry in Holyoke, Massachusetts, a new city built a few years earlier to harness the Connecticut River, and on May 15, 1855, he married Mary Graham Devine, a Scot. Daniel had remembered him marrying at about twenty-one, and he was right. Their first child, William, was born on April 3, 1856, and died that December.

The obituary remembered the Holyoke years a little differently: "He worked as a paper maker in Holyoke," it says, and it dates the wedding May 16, 1855, a day later than the museum, at Holyoke, to "Mary G. Devine of Glasgow, Scotland." Erasthus said in 1916 that he had worked "in a paper mill from which the Hartford Courant Company bought its paper," a connection the *Courant* was evidently happy to print.

Mary had been born in Glasgow in 1830, the daughter of Owen and Agnes Devine, and had come to America in 1853, the year Erasthus was walking a beat in Hong Kong. The family remembered her as something more than a bride. In Scotland, Daniel said, "they have these wise

women ... they're not like witches but they believe to have second sight. They can see things in the future." They knew the uses of herbs, too, for treating people, and Mary Devine was said to be one of them.

Samuel Johnson, who toured the Hebrides in 1773 and looked into the matter "with particular attention," defined the Second Sight as "an impression made either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived, and seen as if they were present." He reported that the Lowland Scots considered the notion to be "wearing away with other superstitions," and after much inquiry he "came away at last only willing to believe."

The story that came down about her was a prophecy she made about herself. Before she left Glasgow, she told her relatives she had seen the man she was going to marry. As Daniel told it, "He was now at the sea. He was catching big fishes or something. And sure enough ... soon after she arrived in the United States she married Erasthus who had been a whaler." He let the coincidence lie where it fell: "so maybe he was I don't know when he stopped being a whaler."

The record can help him a little. For most of the two years before she sailed in 1853, he was on the far side of the world, catching the biggest fishes there are, if a whale may be allowed to count as one.

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In the spring of 1857 his letters begin again, and the vessel in them is a good deal smaller. The museum files three more of his letters to Mary, from 1857 and 1858, among his "Letters From the Sea," and all three name the sloop *Mary Elizabeth*; the first two name her captain, Warren Taylor. A Middlesex County history of 1884 speaks of "the numerous small coasters that plied between the several ports of Connecticut and New York," and by the places in his letters the *Mary Elizabeth* was one of them.

The first letter is dated May 5, 1857, and names Middletown, Hartford, New York and, for reasons the catalogue does not explain, Port Huron, Michigan. The second, nine days later, names Higganum, a landing in the river town of Haddam where sloops had been built for a century, and the Hudson River.

On June 11, 1857, a month after the second letter, Mary gave birth to their son Owen. A year later, the *New-York Daily Tribune* for May 27, 1858, listing the vessels arrived in the port of New York, printed one line that belongs to this story: "Sloop Mary Elizabeth, Taylor, Norwich for Rondout." Rondout, near Kingston on the



A RIVER SLOOP, 1857 (ILLUSTRATION)

Hudson, was where the Delaware and Hudson Canal brought down the coal of Pennsylvania to be unloaded and sent on to market. What the sloop carried, and whether Erasthus was aboard that trip, no record says. On June 21 he wrote to Mary again, and the letter names the *Mary Elizabeth*, Norwich, Fall River, their little son Owen and Catherine Devine McLachlan.

That October Mary wrote to him. It is the only letter of hers in the collection from before the war, and it too survives only as a photocopy. It names Westfield, Massachusetts, his sister Juliet, among others, and Catherine Devine McLachlan again, whose name suggests she was born a Devine and who turns up in their letters for years. On December 20, 1858, their son Charles Lee was born, and on November 29, 1860, a daughter, Emmeline. By the time the war came he had settled back in South Windsor, working in the paper mills there, first for Wood & Keeney and then for the Parsons mills.

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On December 28, 1861, eight months into the Civil War, Erasthus enlisted at Hartford as a private in Company A of the 12th Connecticut Infantry. Company A called itself the Colt Guards, after the Hartford gun works, and it was mostly Hartford men, with six from South Windsor. The regiment's roll for 1862 sums him up in four words: twenty-seven, married, paper-maker. The regiment spent an unusually cold and stormy winter under canvas at Camp Lyon, with stoves in the tents and measles going round, and at the end of February it marched out over fresh snow, still shivering, to board the steamship *Fulton* at New York.

Eight quiet days later the *Fulton* put them ashore at Ship Island, off the Mississippi coast, which one of the 12th's own captains called the sandiest region this side of the Great Sahara. The men got drinking water by sinking barrels two feet into the sand and waiting. Erasthus's first letters to Mary came from there, and from the ship *E. W. Farley* anchored off it, and in one of them he named three men of a Maine regiment who had drowned.

In April the *Farley* carried the 12th into the mouth of the Mississippi. The men watched the navy bombard Fort Jackson and dodged the fireships the rebels floated down on them; one night a sunken gunboat stove in the *Farley*'s side and tipped the men out of their berths. Erasthus turned twenty-eight on the river, and wrote to Mary on his birthday.

Farragut's fleet had run past the forts and taken New Orleans, and on the evening of April 30 the 12th became the first Union regiment to appear off the city, a day ahead of anyone else. They slept that night on a wharf. New Orleans did not want them. White citizens glowered at the troops from the levee; a boy asked by a Connecticut sailor to drop a rope over a post replied, "No, I'll be damned if I will!"; and within two weeks General Benjamin Butler had issued his order that any woman who insulted a Union soldier would be treated as "a woman of the town plying her avocation," which caused a diplomatic incident with Britain. The 12th's colonel, Henry Deming, was made mayor of the city.

Erasthus remembered the welcome. When General Butler marched his men through the streets, he said in 1916, "torrents of abuse were poured on the Union soldiers, but General Butler exercised such a strict discipline that the men would not retaliate to abusive language from women and children under any circumstances." Two years earlier he had told the paper, modestly, that he "took no part in active fighting during his first enlistment."

In May the regiment went twelve miles upriver to Camp Parapet, an abandoned rebel camp whose guns had been spiked by the women of the neighborhood. There was drill every morning and drill every afternoon, the camp was terribly muddy, and in the later summer typhoid made, in the words of the state's history, "fearful havoc." Sometimes a hundred men were in the hospital at once, and more than forty died. Company A was sent downriver to Jefferson City for June and July, with its captain as provost marshal, and it was from there that Erasthus's last Louisiana letters were written.

The state's official roster records his discharge for disability on July 29, 1862, the same day as four other privates of his company. His last letter from Louisiana is dated August 15, and he was home by the end of the summer.

The obituary agrees with the roster: "an honorable discharge July, 1862." Erasthus's own account in 1914, that he enlisted "for three years, at the end of which time he received an honorable discharge," does not fit the dates.

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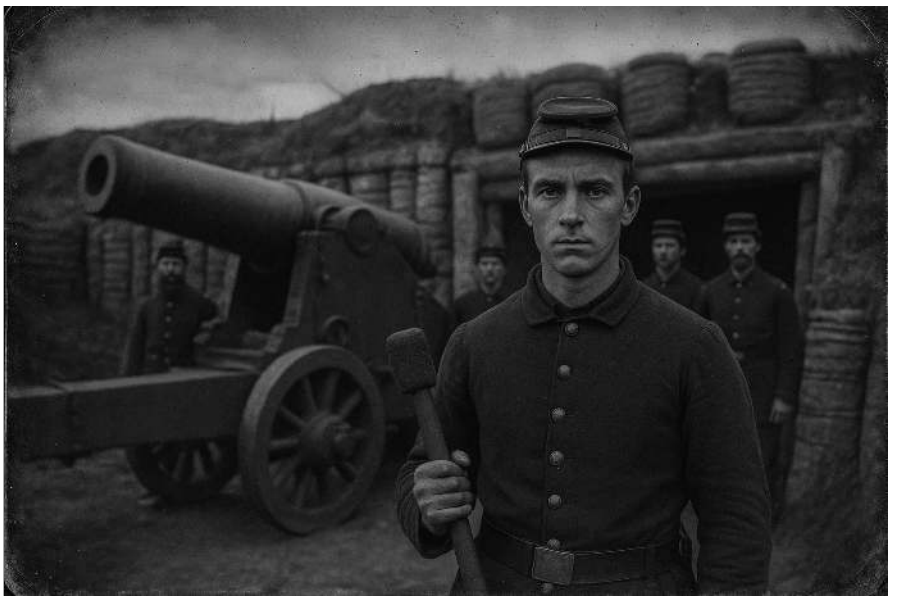
In the autumn of 1862 he was back in the paper mills, and for a year and a half the war went on without him. On October 10, 1862, Mary gave birth to a daughter, Agnes Maria, through whom this story would one day reach Daniel. Then, in the autumn of 1863, President Lincoln called for three hundred thousand more men, with a draft to follow in any town that had not filled its quota by January 5, 1864.

Connecticut met the call with money: a new recruit could now collect, from the state and the federal government together, six hundred and two dollars. On January 5, 1864, the last day before the draft, Erasthus enlisted again, at South Windsor. The state's own historians later judged that the bounty system "filled the quota without filling the army." It did fill Company A of the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery with at least one man who already knew how to be a soldier.

The 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery ran the siege guns for the armies closing on Richmond. It had been drilled on every kind of gun and mortar the army owned, and it was proud to say it was inferior to no regular regiment in the service. Company A spent the winter at Fort Reynolds, in the defenses of Alexandria, and Erasthus spent it writing to Mary about Copperheads and the governor and the parcels he was sending home by Adams Express.

In May the regiment went to Bermuda Hundred to join General Butler, Erasthus's old commander from New Orleans, whose drive on Richmond had just been stopped cold at Drewry's Bluff. He wrote to Mary on May 15, their ninth wedding anniversary, from "Camp in the Wilderness," and three days later from the front line. A week after the anniversary, on May 22, their son Henry Erastus was born. Through the early summer Company A served the guns at Battery No. 6 and at Spring Hill.

In his own telling, fifty years on, he was in "the battle of Drewry's Bluff on the James River below Richmond," and on May 16 "they left Fort Darlin for Petersburg, where for eight months they were under constant fire." He was a gunner. Once he "had changed places with a gunner when scarcely ten seconds later two men were killed on the spot he had just left," and he kept, among his collections, "a bullet which went through his blankets and the leg of his trousers, just grazing his leg."



COMPANY A, 1ST CONNECTICUT HEAVY ARTILLERY: PETERSBURG, 1864

Then came Petersburg, and the siege. At a quarter to five on the morning of July 30, 1864, Union miners fired the powder they had packed into a tunnel dug more than five hundred feet under the Confederate line, and left a hole in it a hundred and seventy feet long and thirty feet deep. The infantry went into the crater and could not get out again. The regiment's guns, eighty-one of them, fired 3,833 rounds that morning.

Company A's two batteries of 8-inch mortars, under Captain Gillett and Lieutenant Patterson, fired 486 of them. The regiment's famous 13-inch mortar on its railroad car, the *Dictator*, which weighed seventeen thousand pounds and broke the first car it was fired from, managed nineteen. It belonged to another company. That night the regiment moved fifty-two heavy guns seven miles without the enemy noticing.

Erasthus was at one of those mortars. "He has the most vivid recollections of the battle of the Crater," the *Courant* reported on Memorial Day, 1914, "in which he tended an eight-inch mortar, firing the third shot fired in the battle, which was a very fierce one." The eight-inch mortars fit Company A's guns that morning; the third shot is his own claim.

Did the Crater wound him? The family's own account says so. A sketch of his son's family in William Richard Cutter's *Encyclopedia of Massachusetts, Biographical–Genealogical*, published about 1922 and written from what the family told the compiler, says that Erasthus "participated in many important battles during the war, and had many narrow escapes, and was severely wounded in the battle of the Crater, at Petersburgh." The official record says nothing of the kind. Connecticut's *Record of Service* of 1889, which notes the wounds of the men in his company, gives none for him.

The two sources contradict each other, and neither can be checked against the other until his own papers are read. A week after the battle he was writing to Mary from "Camp in the Woods near Broadway Landing," on the Appomattox, where the regiment kept a field hospital for its sick, and again from Broadway Landing on August 16. What took him there, the index of his letters does not say. At some point he wrote out, in his own hand, a list of his disabilities from the war. It is in the museum, and nobody has yet read it for this book.

There is a third witness, and it is Erasthus, who tells it both ways. Describing the Crater to the *Courant* in 1914, he mentioned no wound at all; the same page said that his neighbor Edwin Munsell, of the same two companies, "was struck with a musket ball in the shoulder." Two years later, on his eighty-second birthday, he told the paper that "at the battle of the Crater he was shot in the shoulder." His obituary says he fought there "where he was wounded." The contradiction stands.

On August 17 Company A took four 10-inch mortars and two 4½-inch guns into Fort Morton, in the lines facing the Crater, and stayed there through the winter. The magazines lay under six feet of earth, the gunners worked behind rope mats six inches thick that weighed nearly six hundred pounds apiece, and the Confederates across the way fired back with English Whitworth guns, which Erasthus mentioned in a letter. In September he wrote from the regimental hospital, which its commander called one of the best field hospitals he had ever seen.

On November 3 the baby, Henry Erastus, died at five months. Mary's letter of November 10 names him, and a doctor, Sydney W. Rockwell; his letter of November 15 names the boy too. That autumn his letters were full of the election, McClellan against Lincoln; Lincoln carried Connecticut by 2,406 votes, and the state counted nearly three thousand votes sent in by soldiers in the field. Two passes made out to him at "Battery Morton," as the catalogue calls it, dated February 14 and 21, 1865, survive among his things; where they let him go, the catalogue does not say.

When the Confederates finally left their lines before dawn on April 3, 1865, the regiment's history says, "for the First Connecticut Artillery the war was ended." Erasthus wrote home from Broadway Landing on April 10, the day after Lee surrendered.

The regiment spent the spring hauling away a hundred and seventy-six captured guns and mortars, most of them heavy, and then went to Fort Lyon, near Alexandria, where it test-fired 15-inch guns until, as its history puts it, "all danger of trouble with the French army in Mexico was

over." A third pass, dated August 10, 1865, comes from Fort Willard, Virginia. In September Company A went across the Potomac to garrison Fort Foote, whose two Rodman guns weighed twenty-five tons each and threw a 440-pound shell three and a half miles.

He was mustered out on September 25, 1865. Two days later the regiment took the train north; Philadelphia turned out at midnight to meet it and New York jammed Broadway. Then it went up the Connecticut River by boat, past landings crowded with what seemed the same people who had cheered it off to war four years before, and at half past ten on the morning of September 29 the men came ashore at Colt's dock in Hartford. There was a parade. "No speeches were made," the *Hartford Times* reported, with evident approval.

He remembered it a little differently: his regiment "was one of those kept in the South for the summer," and "he was mustered out September 5, 1865." The rolls say the twenty-fifth.

The family remembered his war differently. In their telling he was a surgeon, drafted for his first term and paid for his second, to go in the place of a man who did not want to, and the money bought the farm. The surgery Daniel described was brutal: first aid, then a saw through a man's leg, a shot of whiskey, and tar to seal the stump. Daniel had seen the picture books of the battlefields, and he thought Erasthus had probably done the same at sea, where the injuries were terrible and there were no doctors: "there were all these peg-legged people."

Whatever else Erasthus was, Daniel said, he "had the guts to do it." The letters and the regiment's records describe a soldier, and there was no Union draft until 1863. The money, though, was real: it was the bounty that came with the second enlistment. It is the way of family stories to improve a little with each telling, and this one had fifty years and two tellers to do it in.

The war ran through the family on both sides. Daniel's grandfather married a woman from Midlothian, Virginia, whose own grandfather — the name comes through as Khofer — was an officer for the South. The two of them, Daniel said, were "fighting each other in the same battlefield." The encyclopedia of the 1920s gives her name as Elizabeth Cofer.

Home in the autumn of 1865, Erasthus bought a tobacco farm in South Windsor and ran it for sixteen years. The children kept coming: Frederick in September 1866, and Robert, who was born in March 1868 and lived not quite four months. In December 1870 the father's name turns up in a



THE SURGEON'S TENT, AS THE FAMILY TOLD IT

booklet printed for the golden wedding of John Bissell and Elizabeth Thompson of East Windsor, fifty years married; in what connection, the catalogue does not say. Four months later, on April 28, 1871, his own thirty-seventh birthday, came a last son, Erastus Devine.

Through those years, Daniel said, Mary's letters went back and forth to her relatives in Glasgow, "1860s and even 70s," and had survived with his. The museum's catalogue lists, from her side of the family, two undated letters to Mary from Owen and Agness Devine, the names of her parents: one from the two of them together and the other from Owen alone; where they were written, it does not say. They survive only as photocopies, given to the museum in 2015 from a binder a donor's mother had compiled; where the originals went, nobody knows.

On September 17, 1879, Connecticut moved its regimental flags from the State Arsenal in Hartford to the new Capitol, and the veterans came to carry them. The day's official history counted two hundred men of the 12th in line and six hundred of the 1st Heavy Artillery, whose national colors were "almost in shreds." The streets "were black with humanity as far as the eye could see." At the Capitol General Joseph Hawley told the governor, "We are eight thousand citizens, who were soldiers from Connecticut in the late war for Union and Liberty," come to bring "these eighty flags" to their final home. Among Erasthus's papers is a ribbon from that parade, for the 12th Connecticut Volunteers. Whether he wore it in the line, the ribbon does not say.

❧

In 1883, after sixteen years of tobacco, the family moved back to Holyoke; Erastus Devine, the youngest, was twelve. His father went to work for the Chemical Paper Company and then at George R. Dickinson's paper mill, as foreman of the engine room, at a daily wage, by the encyclopedia's account, of $1.87½, which had risen to $3.50 by the time he left. He belonged to the Grand Army of the Republic, the Union veterans' society, and to the First Hose Company, one of the city's fire companies.

Four receipts for his dues to Kilpatrick Post No. 71 survive, from October 1885 to May 1890. The Grand Army was a power in the land by then: in 1884 it counted 4,323 posts and more than 250,000 members, and its commander-in-chief suggested to them that it was "in bad taste to wear the G. A. R. badge at any political meeting." Erasthus kept other papers from those years too: the by-laws, printed in 1887, of D. C. Rodman Post No. 65 of the Department of Connecticut, and an 1888 booklet on the monument at Groton



BATTLE FLAG DAY, HARTFORD, 1879 (ILLUSTRATION)

Heights to the men who fell at Fort Griswold in 1781, written by a man who had been there.

The family remembered one more Holyoke job. The city ran on its canals, "three layers of canals," as Daniel described them, with "a 30-foot drop" to drive the mills. In winter they froze, and workmen fell into them, often drunk or fighting, and stayed there until the thaw, when the water was let down through the sluices and the bodies came with it. Someone had to go in after them. Erasthus went, lowered on a rope in a little chair, because nobody else could stand the stench. It was the whaler's old qualification again, and by Daniel's account "his stomach was even stronger afterwards." His verdict was brief: "Erastus was happy to do it."

❧

In 1899 he moved back to South Windsor for good and grew tobacco there for the rest of his life, at 235 Pleasant Valley Road. His grandson William Burnham Krug, born in Holyoke in 1894, was with him through his old age, down at the shore at Old Lyme and out on the farm, and it was Krug who heard the stories and saw the scars.

The pension came in stages, as the law did. On April 13, 1904, two weeks before his seventieth birthday, the Bureau of Pensions put Order No. 78 into effect. It was, as the historian of the pensions observed, "again the year of a presidential campaign, and something had to be done for the veterans." The order declared old age an infirmity: a veteran past sixty-two was to be taken as "disabled one-half in ability to perform manual labor," and past seventy was rated at twelve dollars a month.

The Commissioner of Pensions, Eugene Ware, was a lawyer and a poet, and by the same historian's account held that old soldiers should not go to the poor-house, "whether they had been shot to pieces or not." The first of Erasthus's pension certificates is dated July 1, 1904. In February 1907 Congress went further: any honorably discharged veteran of ninety days' service drew a pension by age alone, twelve dollars a month at sixty-two, fifteen at seventy and twenty at seventy-five.

On the Fourth of July, 1907, the family was photographed on Pleasant Valley Road. The museum holds two pictures with that date: one with no names written down, and one with Erasthus and Mary seated at the center. Another group from about those years names nine sitters, and the names match the family in the encyclopedia of the 1920s: the old couple; a son Erastus D., with his wife Mellie and their children Edwin, Marion and James; and a Fred and an Edith, the names of his son Frederick and Frederick's wife.

About 1910 the old man was photographed with those three grandchildren, and at some point with an Owen, an Erastus D., a Fred and a Charles, the names of four of his sons. Two more pictures show the old couple alone: outdoors, with Mary in a rocking chair, and at the old Burnham homestead, across the road from what the catalogue calls the Bungalow.

He turned seventy-five on April 28, 1909, and his second pension certificate is dated May 17. Mary died in 1911, fifty-six years after they married. On May 11, 1912, President Taft signed another pension act, grading the rate by age and length of service; nine days later a postcard was postmarked to him announcing the twenty-fourth reunion of the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery Association, to be held on June 19. He kept it. His third pension certificate is dated August 7, 1912. What any of the three granted him, the catalogue does not say.

In October 1913, at seventy-nine, he was off visiting "his daughter Mrs. Kruz of South Hadley, Mass.," as the *Courant*'s South Windsor column put it, Kruz being the paper's way with Krug. On Memorial Day, 1914, the paper gave a page to the town's surviving Civil War veterans, eleven old men in photographs, and Erasthus came first. The veterans were to meet at Wolcott Chapel at a quarter to eight, decorate the graves, and go on to East Hartford in the afternoon. He had, the paper said, "a very interesting history of all the men in the First Connecticut Heavy Artillery," and "one of the best farms in town."

On April 28, 1916, his eighty-second birthday, the *Courant* ran his life story under the headline "E. W. Burnham of South Windsor Has Had an Exciting Career." He lived with his sons on Depot Street, still in tobacco, and each morning devoted "two hours to the reading of this paper." Within the past two years he had been back to Peters-

burg, where his son Frederick owned "a 400-acre plantation on which are the breastworks which were familiar to the father fifty years ago," and he hoped to go again that summer. He was, the paper said, "a man of a very sunny disposition."

Erasthus died at South Windsor on April 11, 1921, at eighty-six. "He died fairly peacefully at an old age," Daniel said. Rodman Post of East Hartford conducted the service, and he was buried in the town's Center Cemetery, under a stone whose inscription, as it has been transcribed, includes the words "Mary Devine, wife."

The *Courant*'s obituary said he died at home "this morning, after a short illness of pneumonia," gave his age as 87, and counted those he left: two sisters, a brother, six children, fifteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. Among the children it lists "Mrs. William King of South Hadley," the paper's way, this time, with Krug.

He left more behind than stories. His Civil War uniform and sword stood for years in the living room of Daniel's grandparents, next to a crank phonograph that Daniel used to listen to as a boy. They did not survive the family: "Oh, people in the family pillaged them, you know," Daniel said. The letters did. Relatives gave them to the Wood Memorial Library and Museum in South Windsor, more than seventy-five from the war and a handful from the sea, each with a transcription.

"People wrote a lot to each other then," Daniel said, "even these wonderful letters from the Civil War. Very eloquent and very good handwriting." With eight grandchildren coming along, he meant to drive over one day with a cousin and scan them, so that everybody could read them.

The museum keeps the rest of what came down: ten ribbons, some for the 12th Connecticut and some for reunions, and a G.A.R. pin; five Confederate notes, among them one for twenty-five dollars issued by a railroad; the papers already met in these pages; and a collection Daniel described as "500 objects that were like American ... anthropological type whatever objects." The museum counts 584 of them: projectile points and stone tools that the Burnhams found on the land they farmed along Pleasant Valley Road, sorted in 2006 by Barney Daley.

The Podunk people had held that side of the river, the land that is now East Hartford and South Windsor, and numbered, by differing estimates, "from sixty to two hundred bowmen." Daley also left a single typed page titled "A Tragic Occurrence," which the museum describes as recording an Indian campsite on Pleasant Valley Road just west of Hilton Drive, and which names E. W. Burnham and a Mrs. Pottinger. What the occurrence was, its catalogue entry does not say.

What Daniel made of it all was less about the man than about the thread. Any one of those moments — the bandits, the bridge, the war — might have ended it. "If he had died in any of those incidents," he said, "... none of us would have any existence." He would have liked to look back in time and cheer him on, and he had a word for the man on the bridge: "Good thing they didn't get your, whatever, your kidney or something."

They didn't. Erasthus Burnham went to sea at seventeen, came home from the far side of the world with seven scars by the family's count, married a Glasgow woman who was said to have seen him coming, went to war twice, and lived to be eighty-six in the town where he was born. His letters are still there, a few miles from his grave, in his own very good handwriting, waiting for the family to come and read them.

THE RECORDS

The recording. Daniel St. John, recorded interview, session S5, transcript `transcript/clean/S5.md`, 00:00:30–01:15:43; story units U030–U040, U050, U053.

His life in the museum's catalogue. The Watershed History Collective (formerly the Wood Memorial Library & Museum), South Windsor, Connecticut, person record "Burnham, Erastus W.," with links to eighteen related records, read 2026-09-29 and 2026-10-04. (person record) Cached: facts/records/erastus-burnham/person.md, museum_full_catalogue.md; per-record text in knowledge/notes/.

His letters. Civil War letters, 1862–1865, catalogue no. 2004.09.001, seventy-seven numbered letters and lettered additions, each with a transcription (record); Letters from the Sea, 1851–1858, no. 2004.09.023: the *Hannibal* (1851–1852), the sloop *Mary Elizabeth* (1857–1858) and Mary's letter of October 4, 1858 (record); Photocopied Erastus Burnham Letters, no. 2015.45.15, including the two Devine letters (record). Index terms cached in facts/records/erastus-burnham/letters_civil_war.csv and letters_from_the_sea.csv. The letters' texts are not online.

His papers and things. Misc. Civil War papers, no. 2004.09.022 (Confederate notes; G.A.R. Post 71 receipts, 1885–1890; pen-

sion certificates, 1904, 1909, 1912; Groton Heights booklet, 1888; Rodman Post by-laws, 1887; Battle Flag Parade ribbon, 1879; reunion postcard, 1912; passes, 1865; his list of disabilities) (record); ten Civil War ribbons and a G.A.R. pin, no. 2004.09.015 (record); 584 projectile points and stone tools, no. 2004.09.020 (record); Barney E. Daley, "A Tragic Occurrence," no. 2001.15.0103.28 (record); Henry M. King shop ledger, 1841–1849, no. 1990.02.001 (record); Golden Wedding of John Bissell and Elizabeth Thompson, 1870, no. 1996.01.001 (record). The nine photographs are listed after these Records.

His family. W. R. Cutter, ed., *Encyclopedia of Massachusetts, Biographical–Genealogical* (New York: American Historical Society, c. 1922), article "Burnham, Erastus Devine," pp. 365–368 (archive.org). Cached: facts/records/_raw/wilhelm-krug-records/ia_encyclopediaofmao3incutt.txt.

The letters on display. Patch, South Windsor, March 26, 2018, "Letters Reveal Civil War Life." (patch.com)

His whaling voyage. The ship *Hannibal* of New London (vessel AS1529), voyage AV06134, sailed June 24, 1851, master Jeremiah Lester Jr.; crew list of June 21, 1851, entry "Erastus W. Brunham," age 18; the *Vesper* (AV15129), the *Pioneer* (AV07659) and the *Betsey Williams* position (CoML AV01853). Whaling History (New Bedford Whaling Museum, Mystic Seaport, New Bedford Free Public Library) (voyage) (vessel) (*Vesper*) (search), and its data packages: voyages (zip), crew lists (zip), logbook data (zip), Census of Marine Life (zip), Maury (zip). Cached: facts/records/erastus-burnham/whaling_*.csv, facts/records/hannibal/.

The original crew list. Crew list of the ship *Hannibal*, New London, June 21, 1851 (National Archives, RG 36), line 29, "Erastus W. B[r/u]nham," South Windsor, 18; filed with the master's oath and the collector's certificate, with no later note of his leaving the ship. Mystic Seaport Museum, New London Crew Lists, NLC1303, images NL33231–NL33232 (scan).

Where the *Hannibal* was. Dennis Wood, *Abstracts of Whaling Voyages*, vol. 2 p. 316 (archive.org), vol. 1 p. 283 (archive.org), vol. 3 p. 550 (archive.org); logbook of the *Betsey Williams*, August 31, 1852 (archive.org), with the logs of the *Phillipe De La Noye* (archive.org) and the *Montpelier* (archive.org) searched; shipping news in *The Polynesian* (Honolulu), the *New-York Daily Tribune* and the *New York Herald*, 1851–1854, in the Library of Congress's Chronicling America (*Polynesian*) (*Tribune*) (Dec. 17, 1852) (*Herald*) (May 6, 1853), and the *Whalemen's Shipping List*, Mystic Seaport (mysticseaport.org); Mystic Seaport's microfilm index (index), masters' biographies (masters) and Coll. 233 (Coll. 233); the Providence Public Library's Nicholson logbook finding aid (pdf). No logbook of this voyage is known to survive. The map is drawn from these reports alone (facts/records/erastus-burnham/hannibal_1851_54_track.csv).

Life aboard. J. Ross Browne, *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise* (1846) (archive.org); F. A. Olmsted, *Incidents of a Whaling Voyage* (1841) (archive.org); Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery* (1878) (archive.org); Elmo P. Hohman, *The American Whaleman* (1928) (archive.org); C. M. Scammon, *Marine Mammals of the North-western Coast* (1874) (archive.org); David Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar* (1988), on Pohnpei (ScholarSpace); John Bockstoce in *Arctic* 37:4 (1984) (pdf); *The Northern Mariner* 16:2 (pdf); the New Bedford Whaling Museum (Life Aboard) (Yankee Whaling); the National Park Service, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (the whaleship) (whale products) (ethnography); the New London County Historical Society (nlchs.org); the Library of America on *Moby-Dick* (loa.org); the Library of Congress on the Alaska treaty (loc.gov); the Lahaina Restoration Foundation (prison). Fact sheet: facts/records/erastus-burnham/context_whaling_1851_54.md, which lists further pages consulted.

Hong Kong. Hong Kong Police Force, history, ch. 1 (pdf); *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Treaty of Nanjing (britannica.com); M. C. Perry and F. L. Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan*, vol. 1 (Washington, 1856), pp. 133–137, 303 (archive.org); U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "The United States and the Opening to Japan, 1853" (history.state.gov); the Hong Kong Blue Book for 1853, Civil Establishment, University of Hong Kong Libraries, not searchable by script and not yet read (HKU). Cached: facts/records/_raw/erasthus-burnham/.

The epigraphs. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (1851), Project Gutenberg no. 2701 (gutenberg.org); Walt Whitman, "The Wound-Dresser," *Leaves of Grass*, Project Gutenberg no. 1322 (gutenberg.org).

Mary Devine and the Second Sight. Samuel Johnson, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775), Project Gutenberg no. 2064 (gutenberg.org).

The sloop. *New-York Daily Tribune*, May 27, 1858, p. 8, "Marine Journal" (loc.gov); J. B. Beers & Co., *History of Middlesex County, Connecticut* (1884), pp. 386–387, 577 (archive.org); National Park Service, Upper Delaware, "The Delaware and Hudson Canal" (nps.gov).

His Civil War service. *Record of Service of Connecticut Men in the Army and Navy of the United States During the War of the Rebellion* (Hartford, 1889), 12th C.V. and 1st C.V.H.A. reprints (12th); J. C. Taylor and S. P. Hatfield, *History of the First Connecticut Artillery* (1893), with the 1st C.V.H.A. reprint bound in (archive.org); *Catalogue of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Regiments* (1862) (archive.org); *Catalogue of Connecticut Volunteer Organizations* (1864) (archive.org) and (1869) (archive.org); H. L. Abbot, *Report of the Movements and Operations of the 1st Conn. Heavy Artillery* (1865) (archive.org); W. A. Croffut and J. M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut During the War of 1861–65* (1868) (archive.org). National Park Service, Soldiers and Sailors Database: (12th Infantry) (1st Heavy Artillery), and the regiments' unit histories (12th) (1st H.A.). Cached: facts/records/erastus-burnham/civil_war/.

The war around him. T. Hollandsworth, "Union Soldiers on Ship Island," *Mississippi History Now* (mdah); The Historic New Orleans Collection, Butler's General Order No. 28 (hnoc.org); National Park Service: Drewry's Bluff (nps.gov), the Crater (nps.gov) (nps.gov), Fort Foote (nps.gov); National Archives, *Prologue*, on Civil War draft records (archives.gov); J. A. Cox, *The Defenses of Washington* (1901), searched for Fort Willard without result (archive.org). Fact sheet: facts/records/erastus-burnham/civil_war/context_civil_war.md, which lists further pages consulted.

After the war. *History of Battle-Flag Day, September 17, 1879* (Hartford: Lockwood & Merritt, 1880) (archive.org); W. H. Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions in the United States* (New York, 1918) (archive.org); City of Holyoke, history (holyoke.org); J. O. Goodwin, *East Hartford: Its History and Traditions* (1879), on the Podunk (archive.org).

His grave. Center Cemetery, South Windsor, Find a Grave memorial 15309965. (findagrave.com)

In the newspapers. *The Hartford Courant*: "South Windsor," October 23, 1913, p. 18 (clipping); "South Windsor and Her Veterans: Remarkable Stories of Surviving Soldiers of Civil War," May 30, 1914, p. 12 (clipping); "E. W. Burnham of South Windsor Has Had an Exciting Career," April 28, 1916, p. 18 (clipping); "E. W. Burnham of South Windsor Dies," April 12, 1921, p. 19 (clipping). ProQuest Historical Newspapers; copies supplied by the Connecticut State Library (ref. 898), October 15, 2026. The 1914 and 1916 pieces are his own recollections, at eighty and eighty-two. Transcriptions: facts/records/erastus-burnham/courant_*.md.

Not reached. The full 1889 *Record of Service* (HathiTrust) and the Connecticut Adjutant-General's reports of 1861–1864 (HathiTrust) and 1865–1866 (HathiTrust) (browser check, not bypassed); the U.S. General Index to Pension Files, 1861–1934 (NARA T288), on FamilySearch (familysearch.org) (login required); Chronicling America's old OCR pages (browser check); the museum's own copies of the letters (the request of October 4, 2026 bounced and was not resent).

A note on the name. There were at least two American whaleships called *Hannibal*: his, of New London (441 tons, built 1821, voyages 1843–1861), and an older, smaller ship of Sag Harbor, New York (vessel AS1530, voyages 1819–1849, condemned at Rio de Janeiro in 1849). A surviving Sag Harbor logbook of 1845–1849 belongs to the other ship, not to his. (Digital Long Island) (East Hampton Library)

PHOTOGRAPHS AND OBJECTS IN THE MUSEUM

Held by The Watershed History Collective (formerly the Wood Memorial Library & Museum), South Windsor, Connecticut, whose permission to reproduce them has not been given: they appear only in drafts, from its small web copies, and print as a list. The illustrations in this chapter are artist's renderings, with his Civil War tintype as the likeness.



2004.09.013 · 1862-1865
Erastus W. Burnham during the Civil War, in uniform.
Catalogue record



2004.09.007 · 1907 JUL 04
Erastus W. Burnham Family, July 4, 1907, Pleasant Valley Rd, South Windsor, CT. Names are not provided.
Catalogue record



2015.45.04 · 1907 JUL 04
The Burnham family, with Erastus W. and Mary Devine Burnham seated at the center.
Catalogue record



2015.45.09 · CA. 1900-1910
The Burnham family, including Marion, Fred, Erastus D., Erastus W., James, Mellie W., Edwin, Edith, and Mary Devine.
Catalogue record



2015.45.06 · CA. 1910
Erastus W. Burnham as an old man with three of his young grandchildren or great-grandchildren, James E., Marion B., and Edwin G. Burnham.
Catalogue record



2015.45.10 · CA. 1900-1921
Five Burnham men: Owen W., Erastus D., Erastus W., Fred, and Charles Burnham.
Catalogue record



2015.45.02 · CA. 1900-1911
Erastus W. and Mary Devine Burnham as elderly adults, outdoors; Mary is sitting in a rocking chair.
Catalogue record



2004.09.009 · 1900-1910
Erastus W. and Mary Devine Burnham at their home: the old Burnham Homestead across from the Bungalow, Pleasant Valley Rd, South Windsor, CT.
Catalogue record



2004.09.008 · 1900-1910
Erastus W. Burnham, early 1900s.
Catalogue record



2004.09.020 · 1860-1920 · FOUR IMAGES
Early American projectile points and stone tools found by the Burnhams on the property they farmed along Pleasant Valley Road: some 584 pieces, roughly categorized in 2006 by Barney Daley (images.01–.04; the first shown).
Catalogue record