

# *The Cruise of the Schooner*

*Tamana, 1805-1807*

*An Episode in the  
American Penetration of the Pacific Ocean*

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ON THE MORNING of February 9, 1806, the Hawaiian topsail schooner *Tamana* rounded Point Conception, the headland sometimes called the 'Cape Horn of the Pacific' where the California coastline changes from its basically north-to-south trend to one which is east-to-west. Heading eastward into the Santa Barbara Channel, she ran close along the shore where steep cliffs rose from sandy beaches to a narrow coastal shelf, behind which towered the Sierra Santa Ynez. By six o'clock in the evening she was abreast of Rancho del Refugio whence a smoke signal indicated a wish to communicate with the vessel. A small boat brought off a letter from Sergeant José María Ortega, a soldier of His Most Catholic Majesty and grantee of the rancho, expressing a desire to sell some sea otter skins. Captain John Thomas Hudson of *Tamana* hove his vessel to, went ashore, and found the sergeant together with Fr. José Antonio Calzeda, Franciscan in charge of the newly-founded Mission Santa Ynez which lay just behind the mountains, waiting to talk with him. From them Hudson purchased 250 sea otter skins as well as three 'indifferent' bullocks, but they had no flour to sell him. The schooner's crew was busy all night landing the trade goods selected by the sergeant and the padre in exchange. Although the purchase price of the skins was

\$2000, the goods taken in exchange exceeded that, and the Spaniards still owed Hudson \$800 when he got under way at seven the next morning. At the request of Ortega and Fr. Calzeda, no other sellers of skins came from the nearby Presidio of Santa Barbara because the two 'wished to do their Business in a private manner.'<sup>1</sup>

In this quiet, matter-of-fact episode was epitomized much of the clandestine trade which was carried on increasingly around the perimeters of the crumbling Spanish Empire in the early nineteenth Century. Alta California had been colonized by the Spaniards less than forty years before Captain Hudson appeared off the coast, and its most valuable exportable commodity was the skin of the sea otter which abounded along its shores. These and the provisions which were needed by visiting vessels were being exchanged for the great variety of goods which the Californians otherwise could not obtain at all or at best could get only in small quantity and at high cost when they were brought from Mexico by the annual San Blas ships. It was this trade which brought *Tamana* to the coast of California.

The visit of *Tamana* came a decade after the first Yankee trader appeared in California waters, and nearly twenty years following the pioneer American voyage to the North Pacific. The high value of the skin of the sea otter on the Chinese market had been discovered by members of the third voyage of Captain James Cook to the Pacific when they called at Canton in 1779. Furs from the Northwest Coast of America had already been reaching China by way of Siberia, but now the possibility of an all-water trade beckoned, and in 1787 the voyage of Captains Robert Gray and John Kendrick to the Northwest Coast from Boston signaled the advent of American mariners in the business. Due to the restrictions set by the

<sup>1</sup>"The Schooner *Tamana* from Woahoo, (Sandwich Islands) to the Coast of America. John T. Hudson Master," ms., Henry E. Huntington Library, entries for February 9, 10, 1806. This journal covers the period from December 9, 1805 to July 13, 1807. It consists of 127 folio pages. Hereafter cited as Hudson, Journal, with date of entry.

East India Company on British subjects in the China trade, the collection of furs from the Indians along the coasts of what later became British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon was established as well-nigh a monopoly by the sailors of the United States.

The Spaniards themselves had realized the possibility of a profitable trade through the export of sea otter skins by the Manila Galleon's annual voyages from Acapulco, and after 1784 some moves were made in the direction of its establishment. This trade did not prosper, however, partly due to the unwillingness of the Franciscan missionaries in California to have their Indian wards taken away from agricultural pursuits to be trained as hunters and partly due to the hostility of the Royal Philippine Company and the bureaucratic 'red-tape' of the Spanish system of control.<sup>2</sup>

The Indians of the Northwest Coast became increasingly difficult to deal with and although Yankee captains did not abandon trade in the more northerly seas they began to look with favor on the California Coast with its docile Indians and ill-enforced system of restriction on foreign trade. The ship *Otter* out of Boston, commanded by Captain Ebenezer Dorr, was the first American vessel to call at California ports. Pleading need for provisions and repairs, she called at Monterey in 1796, and managed to stay in port long enough to do some profitable trading in sea otter skins.<sup>3</sup> Although the California Indians were not skilled hunters compared to the Aleuts of the Northwest Coast, they together with members of the Spanish community in California managed to kill enough of the numerous and inoffensive sea otter to provide a supply of skins which was attractive to traders. Captain Dorr was followed by other Americans, and although excuses for seeking shelter in California ports became increasingly thin there was no open

<sup>2</sup>Adele Ogden, *The California Sea Otter Trade, 1784-1848* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1941), pp. 15-31.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

break in friendly relations until 1803. The hospitable disposition of many of the Spaniards added to their desire for foreign goods led to a rather permissive enforcement of regulations except for an occasional stiff-necked official.

These accommodating relations ended in 1803 when the Virginia-built brig *Lelia Byrd* arrived on the California Coast. She had been purchased in Hamburg in 1801 by Captain William Shaler and Captain Richard J. Cleveland. They undertook a trading voyage to Brazil, the Pacific Coast of South America and then on to Mexico and California. Shaler commanded and Cleveland acted as supercargo while a third partner, a Polish nobleman, the Count de Roussillon, went as a passenger. They collected over 1400 otter skins, but at San Diego they had to shoot it out with the shore battery as they ran out of the harbor on March 24, 1803 following a brush with the local commandant. After coasting south to San José del Cabo at the tip of Baja California *Lelia Byrd* crossed to the Hawaiian Islands and thence to Canton where her cargo was disposed of to good advantage. The proceeds were invested in tea for the American market and trade goods for a second voyage of *Lelia Byrd* to the coast of California. Cleveland went home from Canton and Shaler took full charge of the second attempt at trading in California. Arriving off the Columbia River at the beginning of May 1804 he coasted down to Trinidad, San Francisco, San Buenaventura, Cerros Island, and thence to the coast of Mexico and Central America. *Lelia Byrd* returned to the California Coast in 1805 and spent over a month at Catalina Harbor on Santa Catalina Island while the ravages of worms to the hull were repaired. Thence she returned to the Hawaiian Islands where Shaler, believing her to be unfit for another voyage to California, traded her to King Kamehameha I for the schooner *Tamana* which was then under construction. Shaler was less successful on the second California voyage of *Lelia Byrd* than on the first and he still had a large supply of trade goods on hand when he sold her. He decided to dispose of these for

more sea otter skins, as well as to collect debts owing to him, by sending *Tamana* to the California Coast. He himself sailed from Honolulu for home in October 1805, leaving command of *Tamana* and the winding up of his affairs in California in the hands of John Thomas Hudson, then a young man of 27 who had joined Shaler and Cleveland at Valparaiso, presumably as mate although Shaler described him as his 'assistant.'<sup>4</sup> Thus he had been with Shaler for about two years, and had been at sea and away from the United States since about 1800. He was a native of Schenectady, New York, and was said to come from a 'respectable' family.<sup>5</sup>

Hudson's new command was a 45-ton topsail schooner, built at Waikiki by the king's carpenter and Hawaiian workmen under the supervision of John Boyd, formerly the mate of the American sloop *Lady Washington*, and now a resident of the Hawaiian Islands.<sup>6</sup> She was launched on November 13, 1805, and towed down to Honolulu to receive her rigging and cargo. Her name, *Tamana*, honored the consort of Kamehameha I. Although Hudson remarked at one point that the schooner 'sailed miserably,' his journal noted that she behaved remarkably well in the 'strongest squalls I ever saw' during a gale in December 1806. He noted in March 1806 that she was averaging seven knots, and a year later he reported that she made 147 miles by log in one day, the longest day's run that she had accomplished to that time.<sup>7</sup> She was apparently equipped with a Vancouver chart of the Pacific Coast, and Hudson also referred to Spanish charts. The courses and

<sup>4</sup>For the voyages of *Lelia Byrd* see *Ibid.*, pp. 37-39, 42-43, 158-159. Richard J. Cleveland, *A Narrative of Voyages & Commercial Enterprises* (London, 1842), pp. 39-64. Hereafter cited as Cleveland, *Narrative of Voyages*. William Shaler, 'Journal of a Voyage between China and the North-Western Coast of America, Made in 1804,' *The American Register: or General Repository of History, Politics, and Science. Part I for 1808* (Philadelphia, 1808), III, 137-175; reprinted as *Journal of a Voyage Between China and the North-Western Coast of America, Made in 1804 by William Shaler* (Claremont, 1935).

<sup>5</sup>Hudson, Journal, Aug. 6, 1806. *Providence Gazette*, July 23, 1808.

<sup>6</sup>Archibald Campbell, *A Voyage Round the World From 1806 to 1812* (Charleston, S.C., 1822; facsimile ed. Honolulu, 1967), pp. 111-112.

<sup>7</sup>Hudson, Journal, Nov. 13, 1805, Mar. 18, Dec. 28-29, 1806, Mar. 30, 1807.

bearings as recorded reflect good navigation and accurate and careful piloting along the coast.<sup>8</sup>

The crew of *Tamana* consisted mainly of Hawaiians but there were Caucasians and Negroes in it as well. Hudson shipped eleven men for the first voyage and twelve for the second. Whether these figures included the two mates, the carpenter, and the linguist is not clear. In any event Hudson had a good deal to say of Charles Peterson whom he shipped as Chief Mate on his first voyage to the California Coast. He complained that Peterson drank to excess, that he fraternized too much with the crew, and that he insubordinately questioned Hudson's ability and skill. On one occasion Peterson attacked Hudson when the latter was asleep in his berth at night, the mate being apparently drunk at the time. Twice Hudson turned him out of his berth in the cabin and sent him forward and there was finally a scuffle when Peterson insisted that the log book which Hudson had taken was his personal property. Hudson found Peterson only useful when the schooner was fitting out, and for the first fortnight after sailing from Honolulu when Mr. Hinkley, the Second Mate, was laid up with 'the Venereal.' Finally in May 1806 while at Santa Catalina Island Hudson suspended Peterson from duty as Chief Mate for the last time and sent him forward. Hinkley served out the voyage as Mate and sailed with Hudson again in that capacity on the second voyage.<sup>9</sup>

Aside from his troubles with Peterson, Captain Hudson apparently had few problems of discipline. Early in the first voyage, while at Cojo Anchorage near Point Conception, a quarrel

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1806. In addition to Hudson's Journal, there exists 'Log Book of the Schooner Tammana John T Hudson Master from the Sandwich Islands to the Coast of America &c' Nov. 17, 1806-July 12, 1807, ms., Henry E. Huntington Library. George Vancouver's 'A chart shewing part of the Coast of N.W. America' was issued in 1798. It showed the coast from 38° 30' (above Point Reyes) to 30° (Santo Domingo in Baja California), and was issued in separate sheets as well as in the Vancouver atlas. Hudson's spelling of place names points to his having used this chart. From the Journal and the Log it is easy to lay down *Tamana's* course on a modern chart.

<sup>9</sup> Hudson, Journal, May 13, 14, 1806; ms. statement regarding Peterson's misconduct in Hudson's hand but unsigned and undated laid in the ms. volume of the Journal.

developed between James Williams and some Sandwich Islanders in the crew and the latter were so intimidated as to be afraid to return aboard the schooner. Hudson sent Peterson ashore after them and, after bringing them off to the vessel, Hudson tied up Williams and one of the Hawaiians and flogged them. A second episode occurred on the next voyage when *Tamana* was at anchor at San Miguel, Baja California, in company with the American ship *Mercury*. Hudson undertook to correct the Negro carpenter, Anderson, for abusive language toward Mate Hinkley. Anderson collared Hudson and attempted to throw him over the side. Captain William Heath Davis and George Washington Eayrs of *Mercury* were visiting aboard and helped to pull Anderson off. After he had been beaten sufficiently he was put in irons. Anderson requested to be discharged on the spot and Hudson agreed to this, giving him the \$135 due from his wages and setting him ashore. The next morning, when walking on the beach, Hudson met Anderson who looked to him as though he wished to be back aboard ship again. Therefore Hudson arranged with Captain Davis to take Anderson to work his passage back to Honolulu in *Mercury*. In exchange Hudson received from Davis a recalcitrant boatswain whom he had had in irons for some time. Hudson never had occasion to complain of this man in his journal.<sup>10</sup>

On at least the first voyage, Hudson took with him a Hawaiian girl, Punahoa, from Kawaihae, Hawaii. His journal mentioned her only when he caught members of the crew paying her undue attentions. She may have been part of the cause of the trouble with Peterson since Hudson quoted him as remarking 'that she was no more than a damnd squaw.' When *Tamana* returned to Kawaihae, Hudson wrote that 'my girl, Punahoa' was very desirous of making another voyage with him and left the vessel with regret. Later Hudson casually mentioned sharing quarters in Honolulu with Captain Hill of the brig *Ledia* and 'Capt. Hill's Kauai lady.'<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, May 6, 1806, May 1, 2, 1807.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 30, Sep. 14, 1806. Ms. of complaint of Peterson referred to in Note 8.

While on the second voyage to the California Coast, Hudson concluded that *Tamana* was overmanned. He seemed to have no hesitation about discharging Second Mate Ingleson and two foremast hands while his vessel was anchored in Catalina Harbor. The men shipped immediately in *Mercury*, which was in company. By way of exchange Hudson took a man aboard 'uninvited,' to work his passage to the Hawaiian Islands.<sup>12</sup>

*Tamana* was too small to carry all the trade goods that had been unloaded from *Lelia Byrd* when she was sold to the king. Hudson, who remarked that during his three months of residence ashore at Honolulu he had been treated with every civility by Kamehameha, left 33 packages of china and lacquered ware in the king's care when he loaded the schooner for her first voyage to California.<sup>13</sup> When he sailed from Honolulu, he crossed to the Island of Hawaii where John Young, formerly boatswain of the ship *Fair American* but who had been in the service of Kamehameha since 1790, was governor. Young himself came off to *Tamana* when she fired a gun off Kawaihae, and piloted her across the reef to an anchorage. Here Hudson left 81 more packages of goods in Young's care together with four barrels of provisions and a water cask. The schooner took on 800 taros, 15 bundles of potatoes, and eight pigs before 'our friend Mr. Young' towed her across the reef and she went on her way.<sup>14</sup> When Hudson returned from California he called first at Kawaihae and loaded the goods which he had left with Young. Two of the governor's double canoes towed *Tamana* over the reef and Hudson gave Young \$60 in goods in consideration of his trouble.<sup>15</sup> Thus the trading voyages of *Tamana* on the California Coast were considerably aided by the assistance of friends in the Sandwich Islands.

*Tamana* followed the same pattern of calls on the Pacific Coast on both her trading voyages. On the first she sailed from Honolulu in December 1805 and returned the following

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, Apr. 18, 1807.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 17-29, 1805.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 22-24, 29-30, 1806.



September. She departed Honolulu again in December 1806 and returned in July 1807. On both voyages Hudson laid a course from the Hawaiian Islands to California which brought him to a landfall just north of Point Conception. On the first trip he worked his way southward along the coast from there trading at San Luis Obispo Bay, Cojo Landing, Rufugio, San Buenaventura, and San Pedro in Alta California, and then in Baja California at Todos Santos Bay, Santo Tomás, San Quintín, and Cape San Lucas. Having made this run between January 29 and March 21, 1806, *Tamana* beat northward again to Point Conception and repeated the run down the coast between April 29 and July 17. On the second voyage, Hudson made a run down from San Luis Obispo Bay to Santo Tomás, then took over six weeks to beat back up to Point Conception against the prevailing Northwesterlies and ran south again as far as Cerros Island whence he headed for Hawaii. These repeated passes along the coast provided opportunity to purchase sea otter skins, to try to collect debts due, and to revisit good customers and fur sources. Due to the increasing official Spanish hostility to foreign traders or smugglers and due to the small size of *Tamana*, she made no attempt to call at Santa Barbara or San Diego where there were Spanish garrisons and fortifications and where a Spanish naval vessel might be encountered.

Occasionally *Tamana* met evidences of serious efforts by the Spanish officials to discourage trade. In January 1807 Hudson received a letter from Sergeant Ortega at Cojo Anchorage saying that he could not come to see Hudson due to the arrival of the new governor at the Presidio of Santa Barbara and the appointment of a new commandant as well. He suggested that Hudson return in a fortnight when the coast would be clear.<sup>16</sup> When *Tamana* was at San Pedro in June 1806 Hudson received a letter from Thomas Kilby, Chief Mate of the brig *Peacock*

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 27, 1807.

who together with the vessel's linguist and two foremast hands had been taken prisoner while the brig was trading at San Juan Capistrano. Kilby reported that they were closely confined at San Diego and that they were quite destitute of clothes. Hudson sent them four pair of breeches, eight pair of nankeen trousers, and some odd clothes collected among *Tamana's* officers for their relief.<sup>17</sup> Later in the same voyage, when *Tamana* was at Cape San Lucas, Hudson sent her Hawaiian canoe with the linguist and three hands to the mission to trade and to try to collect a debt due Shaler. The canoe did not return and Hudson eventually learned that the men had been taken prisoner. Seeing no chance of rescuing them Hudson wrote to the padre of the mission saying that he would be back in a few months and requesting him to furnish the prisoners meanwhile with money drawn on the debt due Shaler and with every other possible assistance. The unfortunate men were not mentioned again in the journal and on the same day that the schooner headed away from Cape San Lucas for Hawaii Hudson ordered their effects to be brought on deck and auctioned to the highest bidder.<sup>18</sup>

The purpose of the voyages, of course, was to trade with the Californians. Sea otter skins were mainly sought, but cash was sometimes to be obtained from the missionaries when their shopping lists of trade goods exceeded the value of the skins which they had to offer. Another important item sought was food for the schooner's crew. Although the mission padres were the best source of skins Hudson bought also from ranchers, officials, soldiers, and Indians. As long as *Tamana* stayed away from Santa Barbara and San Diego she encountered little difficulty in trading. Such opposition as was encountered was often not very determined. In February 1806 *Tamana* anchored off San Pedro only to find a corporal and five soldiers from Santa Barbara who had been sent there to prevent any-

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, June 8, 1806.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, July 18-22, 1806.

one coming from Los Angeles to trade. They told Captain Hudson, however, that they would return to Santa Barbara as soon as the schooner was out of sight. Furthermore they sold him six skins before he got under way for Santa Catalina Island. After staying there three or four days he returned to San Pedro to find that, sure enough, the soldiers were gone and he was able to spend three days trading with men from Los Angeles.<sup>19</sup> Later that month at Todos Santos Bay, Baja California, soldiers from San Diego appeared on the beach and these were somewhat more persistent than the men from Santa Barbara but, after a few days of hovering off the coast, the men departed and trading could be carried on without interruption.<sup>20</sup>

The missionaries in northern Baja California were apparently less closely scrutinized by the officials than those of Alta California. When *Tamana* arrived in a bay, it was not unusual for the padre attached to the nearest mission to come down to the beach for a few days. Hudson would report sending sails ashore to make a tent for the missionary, and he and the captain would alternately dine with one another on the beach and aboard the schooner while trading progressed. From what Hudson wrote, however, these friendly meetings had been even pleasanter in the days when he was on the coast in *Lelia Byrd*.<sup>21</sup>

Although San Diego was not to be visited its acting commandant in 1807, Francisco María Ruiz, was willing enough to do some trading on his own with Hudson at Todos Santos Bay, seventy miles south. The commandant and the padre of the mission there traded with *Tamana* in February 1807 and again two months later the commandant was at San Miguel Bay to sell sea otter skins.<sup>22</sup> In the other direction, Fr. Marcos Amestoy came from Mission Santa Barbara to Cojo Anchor-

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 14-21, 1806.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 26, Mar. 6, 9, 1806.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, June 30, 1806, May 11, 1807.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 11-12, Apr. 27, 1807.

age, 45 miles to the westward, to trade. Hudson reported that he was busy most of a night getting out goods for the friar since he had brought eighty skins and \$1500 in cash, and took goods valued at upwards of \$1500.<sup>23</sup>

Prices paid for sea otter skins varied with their size and quality. Hudson usually paid \$9 for a large fine skin, and prices ranged thence down to \$1 for small skins. The trade goods which *Tamana* offered in exchange for skins, cash, and provisions were as varied as would be found on the shelves of any New England mercantile establishment. They included blue cloth, calico, cotton hose, tumblers, plates, hinges, locks, knives, corkscrews, powder, New England rum, cordials, hats, files, razors, scissors, tureens, umbrellas, blankets, and thimbles. In addition she sold such China trade goods as lacquered ware, silks, and nankeens.<sup>24</sup> Not surprisingly these goods were offered at a considerable advance over their original cost. At Santo Tomás in May of 1807 Hudson sold a large lot of goods still on hand to the padre at a discount of 50% on the prices usually charged for them on the coast. This still gave an advance of 10% over the original cost of the goods and, since the padre took all of what Hudson regarded as the 'trash' which he still had aboard, he regarded it as a favorable transaction.<sup>25</sup>

Due to the small size of the schooner, provisions and water were constant problems. At every opportunity Hudson sent men ashore to fill water casks, and he bought food, mainly cattle and flour, whenever it was possible.

The islands off the California Coast were not inhabited by Spaniards, and they served admirably as shelters when troops appeared or when the schooner needed repairs. She spent nearly a month at Catalina Harbor, or Port Roussillon as Shaler

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, Mar. 31, 1807.

<sup>24</sup> Account book for ship *Mercury*, Captain William Heath Davis, Nov. 26, 1806–Aug. 20, 1807, ms. de la Guerra Collection, Mission Santa Barbara, *passim*. Hudson Journal, May 21, 1807.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, May 21, 1807.

had named it, on Santa Catalina Island in May and June of 1806 when Hudson found that her hull sheathing had been rubbed off in places, and that sea worms were attacking the hull itself. *Tamana* was careened, repaired, and painted while her supplies of wood and water were replenished.<sup>26</sup>

At the end of his first voyage to the coast, Hudson shipped 2427 otter skins from Honolulu to Canton in the ship *Perseverence*. These went in 31 packages, and Captain Amasa Delano received \$1000 freight for their transportation. In addition, thirty-one packages of skins and chinaware were sent to the United States in the ship *Pearl*. Surplus paper, muskets, and shoes went to the Russian post at Kodiak, Alaska, with Captain Winship in *O'Cain*. On the second voyage of *Tamana* to California the results were less satisfactory, and Hudson apparently brought fewer than 500 skins with him when he returned to Honolulu.<sup>27</sup>

The decline in the 'take' of otter skins which Hudson experienced on his second voyage was partly due to the competition which he faced from other American skippers who were engaged in the same business on the California coast. A precursor of things to come was the ship *O'Cain*, Captain John Winship, which Hudson met in Baja California waters in July 1806. She came there directly from Alaska, and had aboard 106 Aleut hunters and fifty-three bidarkas, or skin-covered canoes. Working in cooperation with the Russian-American Company which furnished the skilled Indian hunters in return for half of the skins taken, Captain Winship was leaving parties of Aleuts at various isolated points along the coast, and would pick them up later together with the skins which they might have taken.<sup>28</sup> Other traders of the more conventional type also competed with Hudson. On the second voyage he met Captain William Heath Davis in the ship *Mercury* off Alta California.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, May 12-June 3, 1806.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Sep. 15, 26-28, Oct. 5, 1806; July 12, 1807.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, July 2, 1806.

It turned out that Davis had visited almost every point at which furs were to be had just before *Tamana* arrived, and that thus there were virtually no remaining skins to be bought.<sup>29</sup>

Despite the competition, the presence of fellow American captains on this isolated coast offered an opportunity for social enjoyment not to be missed. Whenever vessels were at anchor together, the captains entertained one another at meals and stayed overnight in one another's ships. When Hudson met Captain Davis, he proposed a joint expedition to Santa Catalina Island for a few days since it was apparent that between them they had cleaned the coast of sea otter skins. Davis agreed, and although *Mercury* outsailed *Tamana* on the run to the island, the two vessels spent a week anchored together in a cove. The time was partly employed by Hudson in selling some of his surplus trade goods to Davis and his supercargo, George Washington Eayrs. Also, since Davis was only fourteen months out of Boston, he was able to pass considerable news along to Hudson which the latter had not learned before.<sup>30</sup> At other times *Tamana* met other vessels from home including *Eclipse* commanded by the redoubtable Joseph O'Cain and *Peacock* under Captain Oliver Kimball.

The second cruise was increasingly disappointing in its results, and Captain Hudson determined to bring it to an early conclusion. In May 1807 he entered San Quintín Bay, Baja California, to find Captain Winship in *O'Cain* still taking sea otter skins with his Aleuts. With him was Pavl Slobodchikof, a trusted friend of Alexander Baranof, the Russian-American Company's governor in Alaska. Apparently Slobodchikof had fallen out with Captain Winship and wished to return to Alaska immediately. As a result of a series of conversations between the Russian and Captain Hudson, Slobodchikov agreed to buy *Tamana* from Hudson for 125 prime and twenty-five second

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 7, 8, 27, 1807.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 8-19, 1807.

size sea otter skins—worth perhaps \$3000 on the Honolulu market. Hudson would continue south to Cerros Island to take on the skins, and thence he would sail for Honolulu where he would turn the schooner over to her new owners.<sup>31</sup>

With Slobodchikov and three other Russians aboard as passengers, *Tamana* sailed from San Quintín to Cerros Island. There the skins already aboard were landed to be stretched by the expert Aleuts there in the service of the Russians.<sup>32</sup> After reloading these in addition to the skins which were to pay for the vessel, *Tamana* quitted Cerros Island on June 15, arrived at Kawaihae on the island of Hawaii on July 8, and at Honolulu on the 11th. Captain Hudson turned *Tamana* over to her new owners on July 12, and took up his residence ashore. King Kamehameha was annoyed at the news that the schooner had been sold, and questioned Hudson's right to do this. Finally reassured on this point, he still lamented the loss of her caboose, or movable deck house, since he had apparently made great plans for using it.<sup>33</sup>

Captain Hudson proceeded to Canton, and thence took passage for the United States with his friend Captain Winship in *O'Cain*. He landed in Boston on June 14, 1808, nearly a year after he had returned to Hawaii from his last California voyage. On July 18 he committed suicide in Providence, Rhode Island. The published report of his death stated that he had appeared insane at times for many days. He left property in Providence of between \$8000 and \$9000.<sup>34</sup>

In commenting on the financial results of the whole venture, Captain Cleveland wrote that the voyages of *Tamana* were un-

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, May 29, June 3, 1807.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, June 11, 14, 1807. Elsewhere Hudson remarks on getting up skins from the hold, beating them, and packing them away in trunks to secure them from rats. *Ibid.*, Apr. 6, 1807.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, July 13, 1807. *Tamana's* career after her sale to the Russians was a short one. She was renamed *Nikolai* and sailed from Honolulu to Sitka. In the autumn of 1808 she was dispatched for California, but was wrecked at the mouth of Grey's Harbor where she had been ordered to meet her consort, *Kadiak*.

<sup>34</sup> *Boston Gazette*, June 20, 1808. Providence *Columbian Phenix*, July 23, 1808. *Providence Gazette*, July 23, 1808.

successful, and that only four of the 20 priests to whom Shaler had given credit had redeemed their notes. He said that when all was wound up, there was but a small sum left for the owners. Whether this refers to the money which Hudson had at the time of his death is not clear. In any event, neither Shaler nor Cleveland ever saw Hudson again after they parted in the Pacific, and the whole story of the voyages of *Tamana* may not have reached them.<sup>35</sup>

The California sea otter trade persisted for about forty years after the cruises of *Tamana*, although the decimation of the sea otter herds and changing styles in furs caused its gradual decline. After California became part of an independent Mexico in 1820, the restrictions on foreign commerce were relaxed, although smuggling did not cease since customs duties were high enough to make it worth some risk to avoid paying them. Trading ships came increasingly to purchase hides and tallow, however. Thus California's exports went more and more to the shoe factories of Massachusetts rather than to the luxury market of China.

<sup>35</sup>Cleveland, *Narrative of Voyages*, p. 63.



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