

## THE NANINA'S LAST VOYAGE

BERTHA S. DODGE

WHEN, on January 5, 1804, the Pittsburgh shipbuilding firm of Tarascon Brothers, James Berthoud and Company launched from their shipyards on the Monongahela the brig *Nanina*,<sup>1</sup> none of the cheering crowd would have believed the strange intrigues in which the ship was destined to become involved and which, on November 29, 1814, would culminate in her losing her identity. It was on that date that the High Court of the Admiralty decided, quite routinely, that she was a legitimate war prize to a British gun brig that had been patrolling the South Atlantic. Though gossiped about in English ports, the truth of the seizure never seems to have reached the grave judges of the prize court.<sup>2</sup>

The *Nanina* must have been a sturdily constructed brig for, among all the vessels then anchored off the port of New York in the spring of 1812, it was she that caught the eye of a knowledgeable sea captain, Charles H. Barnard, and of shipowners "Messrs John B. Murray and Son," who purchased her from a previous owner, now unknown. With war then occupying Britain and France and a ninety-day shipping embargo threatening from Congress in Washington, a resourceful shipmaster was bound to seek out ways to use his skills. Barnard, about thirty years old at the time, conceived a plan of slipping out of port ahead of the embargo and heading for the Falkland Islands where, previous experience had shown him, he might hope to acquire a cargo of sealskins. After winning approval and cooperation from the shipowning firm, Barnard looked around for a vessel small enough to penetrate the Falklands' rockbound harbors and sturdy enough to outlast the rough storms of that area. Master and

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With an initial interest in science and undergraduate and graduate degrees in chemistry, Bertha S. Dodge, a resident of Burlington, Vermont, began her writing career in World War II with a textbook for use by nursing students. This led to a history of nursing and a series of books (four of them with Little, Brown) explaining subjects in the history of science. In recent years, she has turned to more purely historical subjects, such as the book, now in press, from which the material of this article was drawn.—Editor

1 William F. Trimble, "From Sail to Steam: Shipbuilding in the Pittsburgh Area, 1790-1865," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 58 (Apr. 1975): 152.

2 Adm. H.C.A./8/155, Admiralty Records, Public Record Office, London (hereafter cited as Adm. . . . PRO).

owners settled upon the *Nanina*, then presently characterized by the captain as a vessel of 132 tons. The brig, Barnard further explained, was to be fully outfitted and supplied with stores for the proposed voyage. In addition, she was to carry "the frame of a shallop of twenty tons, and all that would be required to complete her for service after we should have arrived at the islands."<sup>3</sup>

The plan, which was eventually to determine the fate of the *Nanina*, was to accumulate a cargo of skins during the first season in the islands, then to send the brig back to New York whence, eventually, the owners were to send a larger vessel — a ship — to take the cargo to the Pacific and on to the profitable markets in Canton, China. To undertake this successfully, Barnard needed copartners to share the work and the responsibility, and it was in the choice of these that he, all unwittingly, sealed the fate of the brig.

"My first business after completing the arrangements with Messrs Murrays," Barnard wrote, "was to select from those who wished to go and remain with me at the islands, during the interval between the departure of the brig and the arrival of the ship, such persons as I could depend upon, and who would be agreeable companions in that solitary and inhospitable clime; where, if the proposed succeeded, we should remain several years. When the contract was made, there were in New York a number of ship masters, who, from our political relations with England and France, were out of employ. I communicated the outlines of the intended voyage to some of them,

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3 Charles H. Barnard, *A Narrative of the Suffering and adventures of Capt. Charles H. Barnard in a voyage around the world . . .* (New York, 1829), 5-6. Barnard's resurrection from the list of now totally ignored Americans of past centuries depended, in turn, on mention made of him by the British sealer-explorer, James Weddell, in whose book, published in 1827 and republished in 1971, Barnard received lengthy mention. The two captains had met on New Island in the Falklands in 1821, when Barnard was on a successful sealing expedition to the South Shetland Islands. Weddell's account of their conversation aroused in this writer a determination to find out more about the man and his voyage on the *Nanina*. After much sleuthing, it came to light that Barnard, too, had written a book. Yet more investigation was required to locate a copy, then to check as many details as possible. The result, insofar as facts are now available, reveals that Barnard never consciously wandered from the literal truth.

The book of this remarkable man is, as far as the significant part of his abandonment and later wanderings are concerned, being republished by Wesleyan University Press and edited by this author, to appear this year. The title will be: *Marooned; being a narrative of the sufferings & adventures of Capt. Charles H. Barnard, embracing an account of the seizure of his vessel at the Falkland Islands, &c. &c. 1812-1816*. The author is deeply indebted to the Old Dartmouth Whaling Museum of New Bedford, and to the museum's director, Mr. Richard C. Kugler, through whose help she first read Barnard's now very rare account, then acquired a photocopy, and finally, an original copy of the book.

and several wished to embark with me. I chose messrs Fanning, Hunter, and Pease, and agreed to take them into co-partnership."<sup>4</sup>

Edmund Fanning — a name already well known in maritime circles — was probably not the explorer after whom a small South Pacific island was named, but his nephew of the same name, a captain in the West Indian trade. Of Captain Andrew Hunter, nothing is now ascertainable. Presumably both might be considered "agreeable companions." But how Captain Barzillai Pease became a candidate for that designation is extremely hard to understand now. Captain Valentine Barnard, Charles's father, had known Pease as a lad forever warring with his own father, eager to make good and make money while serving on sailing vessels. Yet neither Barnard could have seen much of Pease since the early 1790s nor have had the slightest inkling of the egotistical, querulous, paranoid character Pease's incoherent, often misspelled journals now reveal him to have become.<sup>5</sup>

"These arrangements having been satisfactorily completed," Barnard wrote further, "I still wanted some competent person to go in the brig with us to the islands, and after her cargo was made up and aboard, to take charge of and navigate her home . . . at this juncture, my father, although upwards of sixty years of age, volunteered his services. . . . I gladly accepted his offer, promising that he should always remain master of his time and actions, and not be required to perform duty until he assumed the command of the brig, at the eve of her sailing from the Falkland Islands. With these arrangements, our voyage commenced."<sup>6</sup> Valentine Barnard, listed as "Master," was to be captain on the return voyage.

Captain Valentine Barnard, born about 1750, was one of the many Nantucket seamen who, tiring of the constant threat posed by a maritime war, moved his family in 1773 to the vicinity of Hudson, New York, a safe 120 miles upriver from the sea. There, in 1781, Charles was born. From the port of Hudson, ships voyaged to the far reaches of the oceans in pursuit of seals and whales, and it was on one such ship, in 1791 or 1792, that young Pease had served as a foremast hand under Mate Valentine Barnard, whom Pease described: "I sailed with him before this and he had always been good

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Barzillai Pease, Journals of voyages on Ship *Prudence* and brig *Nanina*, George Arents Research Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y. (hereafter cited as Pease Journals, Arents Library, Syracuse University). The author wishes to thank the Arents Library for permission to quote from the journals.

<sup>6</sup> Barnard, *Narrative*, 7.

to me and knew me well and by this means I was recommended to Captain Bunker.”<sup>7</sup> If, for the *Nanina* voyage, too, Captain Valentine Barnard recommended to his son the now no longer young and eager Pease, he was destined to pay for it in months of irritation and years of regret.

By April 6, 1812, Barnard had moved the *Nanina* beyond the possible clutches of the embargo and had her anchored off Sandy Hook where, a day or two later, Pease joined her. Apparently the other copartners were already on board. Within a week, Congress proclaimed the embargo, but by then the *Nanina* was already at sea, heading, as usual with sealing vessels, for the Cape Verde Islands, there to load a cargo of salt for curing sealskins, plus such “refreshment” — water, fresh fruit, vegetables, and meat — as the port of “St. Jago” might afford.

On June 3, the *Nanina* left those islands. She “experienced several heavy gales from the South to West, which prevented our making the Falkland Islands until the 7th of September. We anchored in Hooker’s Harbour, New Island, at 2 P.M. moored our ship, and commenced sending down yards, topmasts, &c. and were employed in putting the frame of a shallop of 19 tons on shore, which had been prepared in New York. . . .”<sup>8</sup>

In early December the shallop was on a sealing cruise to the Jason Islands, a line of very rocky islets that extended to the north of New Island. As supplies there began to run low, Barnard took the shallop back to New Island, where his father had remained in charge of the *Nanina*. There unhappy news awaited him :

I found there the ship Hope, of New York, Obed Chase master, who informed me of the declaration of war by the United States against Great Britain, brought me several letters from my family and friends, and among the rest, one from the owners of the brig . . . who confirmed the news of declaration of war, and advised me to return with the vessel to the first port in the United States. . . . As this island is frequently visited by English whalers, who are generally commissioned as letters of Marque, for the purpose of replenishing their water, I deemed it prudent on receiving information of the war, to remove the brig to a less frequented harbour, as she would become an easy prey to the whaleships of the enemy. I recalled my men from the Jasons, with the implements they used, giving them orders to leave behind their seal skins in stack; and so industriously did we labour, that in a single day we completely rigged the brig, and by the next evening we arrived at a harbour in the English Maloon, [West Falkland] where we determined to lay up the vessel. . . .

This harbour, which I had previously surveyed in cruising after seal . . . had never before been visited, I believe, except by myself, and promised, from its inland situation, and other advantages, security from gales or capture. . . . Its entrance is protected by four small islands, and its sides by vast and lofty

<sup>7</sup> Pease Journals, Arents Library, Syracuse University.

<sup>8</sup> Barnard, *Narrative*, 11.

hills, which render it, in my opinion, one of the best harbours in this part of the world. Here we stripped the brig of all her rigging and spars except the lower masts. The spars were put on shore to be secured from the weather, as we expected to remain here twelve months at least, since the prospect was good of obtaining a valuable cargo. . . .<sup>9</sup>

Barzillai Pease, growing ever more querulous while his antagonism to both Barnards became more evident in his sneering journal references to "Sir V.B." and "The Collossean," made only passing mention of the move and none at all of the discussion among the co-partners which preceded it. Of the decision this discussion led to, Barnard wrote: "Even should the war continue" — which none of them could believe — "and we be so fortunate as to acquire a full cargo, our chance of conveying it to the United States would be just as favourable as if we were to make the attempt with only a part. At all events, the time in collecting a full freight would pass much more pleasantly than in the walls of an English prison; and if in completing it, the war should not have terminated, and we should have the misfortune to be captured on the passage, we would not have so long a time to spend in confinement, as if we now made the effort and became prisoners of war. I accordingly assembled the crew and stated to them my views respecting the propriety of remaining here until the vessel was loaded, or the conclusion of peace. . . . My propositions were fully acceded to by all the party, who cheerfully and diligently continued their labours."<sup>10</sup>

During the following months, with the brig laid up in Barnard's Harbour, the shallop, *Young Nanina*, was constantly employed in sealing among the innumerable islands that made up the archipelago, in places where the larger brig might have been in danger. By April, the shallop was on the south side of English Maloon, and it was there, from Fox Bay, that "we descried heavy columns of smoke rising in the direction of the Anacan Islands, which are so low as not to be perceptible from where we were." Did it mean an encampment of Spaniards, whose land claimed sovereignty over the islands and who would resent the intrusion of others? Or could it be some English trying to lure American ships into captivity? Both thoughts seemed farfetched, and Barnard wondered whether it might not mean American "adventurers like ourselves, who were either preparing their food, or trying out the oil which they had collected? But such a supposition was improbable, as it is very rare that vessels touch at the Anacans. Occasionally the crew of a boat or shallop belonging to a

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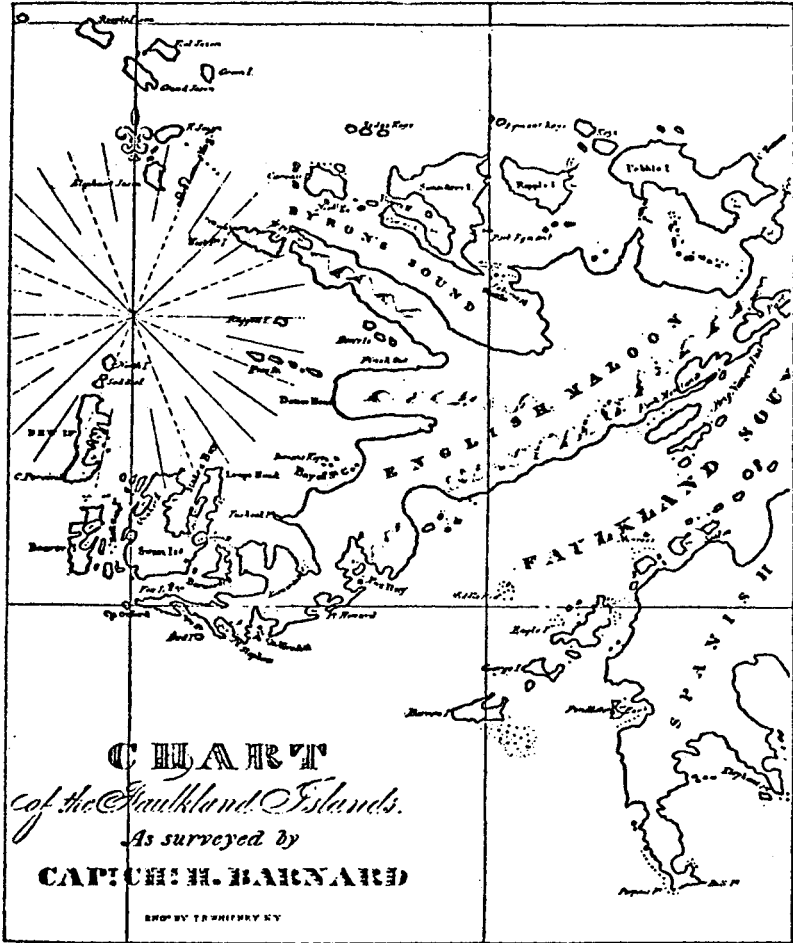
<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

Barzillai Pease. Beginning from the time he left home.

- Monday 18<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Took breakfast at my Brother-in-law's and started early in the morning with Robert Lawton for Red Hook where I took the steam boat at 4 P.M. so ends all well with me thought employ'd about home.
- Monday 5<sup>th</sup> 1812  
at 2 P.M. arrived at New York and found the Brig had sailed that morning in order to keep clear of the Embargo, which was expected, and which took place on Monday.
- Monday 19<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Sunday, I employ'd my self in getting ready for the voyage so ends all well and spirited for the voyage.
- April 7<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Tuesday, Charles Barnard came up from the Brig which he left lying off and on this day the Embargo was on in New York we got a pilot-boat and took some of our things down on board and our Captain at about 4 P.M. left N. York and ran down to the Hook where we lay all night so ends all drily.
- April 8<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Wednesday, at sun rise run out to look for the Brig and at 10 A.M. got to her took out all or riggers that had her out and put the Captain and a pilot and left one Man on board then run up to town again so ends
- April 9<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Thursday, hired a smack to take our crew down which we shipped after receiving a letter from Capt. Manning that had been gone to Saggs Harbor two weeks after men, and had got but one, at 5 P.M. I took charge of six black men and went down to the wharves where we lay all night wind S and rainy all night and thick fog.
- April 10<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Friday, we took our anchor and beat down to the Hook thick fog, wind came too wind S.W.
- April 11<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Saturday, we beat it all run out in the fog after the Brig *Nanima* and could not see any thing of her, saw and spoke several sail at 4 run in and went to town when the wind came N.W. and blew a gale I there receiv'd a letter from my Wife informing me of the families good health.
- April 12<sup>th</sup> 1812  
Sunday, I got what provisions I wanted and went out to sea again and at 11 P.M. found the Brig

go after the remaining crews which were left at Eagle Island. To get  
this with what was saved.  
Not long after the ship was stranded (which happened on the  
night of the eighth February) the long boat was fitted out and  
blaned for the purpose of seek after some relief, and the day their  
shallop arrived at the Island, the vessel was sent off in quest of  
relief, after 11 days the shallop left there for home ward bound  
on a cruise leaving Capt. Manning & Capt. Huntley and three of our  
men in order to keep the charge of what was saved and to save  
all they could remaining still in the sea, and get what  
seal and oil they could. in the Month of April it was when  
our shallop sailed from the Island, when about half way out  
to Fox Bay they found the yawl and crew returning to their  
camp, when they were taken on board the shallop, who had  
come very fortunately for them for in less than an hour it  
came on a gale, when without doubt they must have  
perished in the sea.  
April 25<sup>th</sup> 1813. Capt. Barnard and 3 others returned to the ship  
on the following day I went with one boat and three  
men, to Swan Island after hogs, we got to one Island lagoon  
and put up upon it and the day after went on the Mauloon  
yawl the preceeding day being fine arrived at Canton har-  
bour, on Swan Island, where we got hogs and geese.  
And on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May the shallop arrived here and left  
on the 3<sup>rd</sup> for the brig. I still remaining to procure a lot  
of hogs and geese and on the 10<sup>th</sup> returned on board the  
brig where we remained until the 16<sup>th</sup> May, the shallop having  
sailed 2 days before for Eagle Island, in charge of Henry Sigmanson  
(first officer) when we got under way and made an attempt to get  
out, the wind proving very light we returned again on the 17<sup>th</sup>  
to the gentle breeze from N E still lying at anchor, I shot  
me, half seal, and eighteen geese, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> made another  
attempt, but the wind did not prove so favourable as the day  
before, we ran in again. Where Capt. C. H. Barnard had a cabin  
out with one of the Shallop's Popengers, Mr. Atkinson, the attention



A portion of Captain Barnard's chart, as published in his *Narrative*.



sealing vessel may land for a few hours in quest of seals, but never, except in case of shipwreck or contrary winds, are they known to remain in a place so desolate. The fires, then, were possibly lighted by some unfortunate shipwrecked mariners as signals of distress. . . . I held a consultation with some of the party on the subject, and we determined immediately to go to the Anacans." <sup>11</sup>

The party consisted of Barnard, Hunter, Fanning, and crew, Pease having remained behind with the elder Barnard at the brig's anchorage. As they approached Eagle Island — today's Speedwell at the south entrance to Falkland Sound — they saw a group of people coming along the shore. "Surveying the men, I saw with pleasure one or two wore the uniform of British marines" — and thus were not the dreaded Spaniards — "Although they were enemies to my country, I apprehended no danger or loss from relieving them from their perilous situation; as I felt assured that by rendering them this assistance I would bind them to me by the strongest ties of gratitude. Alas! it was impossible for me to surmise the difficulties and sufferings in which I should involve myself for nearly four long wretched years, almost two of which were passed on an inclement, desolate and uninhabited island. . . ." <sup>12</sup>

Had these strangers been survivors of a British gun brig, their sense of honor as well as their sense of indebtedness might have protected Barnard from the "danger or loss" he mentioned. It was his ill luck that they belonged to the wrecked ship *Isabella*, headed from Port Jackson, Australia, to London, with a passenger list that included several rascals, male and female, as well as many others whom the rascals knew quite well how to manipulate. The ship's captain himself was an irresolute individual, much given to women and wine, whose indecision had taken the *Isabella* over the brink of disaster.

Nearly two months prior to the date Barnard reached Eagle Island, the *Isabella* survivors had sent out a longboat to thousand-mile distant Buenos Aires in the forlorn hope of summoning assistance from British naval vessels stationed there. Of this Barnard commented: "When I was informed that the ship was only one hundred and eighty tons, and of course her boat was small, and those in her unacquainted with the tide rips among the islands, which occasion a very confused sea running in all directions, so as to render it impossible for a boat of her size to live a single moment in one of them. As it had frequently been the unhappy fate of boats and their crews

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

to be swallowed up and lost, I was apprehensive that that had been the lot of the boat and her crew." <sup>13</sup>

Of course the *Isabella's* survivors, unaware both of the special risks to the longboat and the special skills of ex-passenger Captain Brooks, who was navigating her, were overjoyed that some miracle had brought to their relief a group of Americans with a brig at their disposal. At that moment, even had they been aware of the state of war, it is doubtful whether they would have been inclined to regard the Americans as enemies. They had not yet learned of the war by December 4, 1812, when they set sail from Australia and would not have learned of it had they not been so informed by the Americans.

Barnard and his men agreed to render what help they could, which meant refitting the laid-up *Nanina* and bringing her round to Eagle Island. Sailors from the *Isabella* were to accompany Barnard back to the brig to help in the refitting while most of the *Young Nanina's* crew, with Captains Hunter and Fanning, were to remain behind on Eagle Island. At his own special request, one of the *Isabella's* passengers, Captain Durie, of His Majesty's Seventy-Third Regiment, his wife, their two children, and a Mary Ann Spencer, companion to Mrs. Durie, were to accompany Barnard back to the brig.

Since this was to involve him in personal loss and some risk, and since Barnard was accountable to the *Nanina's* owners, an agreement was drawn up between the *Isabella's* survivors and the Americans. Of this Barnard wrote: "but previous to their signing the agreement we thought it advisable to inform them of the existing war between Great Britain and the United States, which we were convinced they knew nothing of, as our crew had positive orders not to mention it; but we were now induced to make the disclosure, lest they should discover it, and suspect us of having concealed it from interested motives, and might thus think themselves justifiable in taking advantage of us at sea, in altering the course of the vessel to any port they thought proper, which, from their superior numbers, they could easily effect." <sup>14</sup>

Marines, sailors, and passengers were duly summoned: "Each division was drawn up in line, and was informed of the war between the two countries, with the request, that they would not violate the agreement that had been concluded, but conduct themselves as though there was no difference between the two governments. The disclosure

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 25, 26.

did not appear to make any alteration in the minds of the crew and passengers. I must except the already infamous Sir Henry Brown Hays, who endeavoured to prevail upon the others not to abide in any manner by the agreement, but to compel us to take them directly to South America or England."

As it was later to appear, Sir Henry's intentions were yet more sinister, but at the moment his fellow castaways were in no mood to risk, by word or hint, this God-given chance to escape their desperate situation. Sir Henry was a picturesque and conscienceless ex-convict whose neck had barely escaped the noose through last-minute commutation of his sentence to banishment for life to Port Jackson. An impoverished Irish knight, he had attempted to improve his fortunes by forcing into marriage a moneyed young lady. He had been in Port Jackson for over ten years when, as he claimed, he was pardoned through the kind efforts of ex-Governor Bligh for whom, gossip Mrs. Durie had told, Hayes had acted as an informer.

Since Sir Henry remained behind on Eagle Island when the *Young Nanina* departed, his sinister schemes might have died aborning had the shallop not snatched from the sea an almost drowning fellow passenger who had set out in a small boat with a crew of three to try to locate a reputed settlement along Falkland Sound. Before they reached the sound or could discover that the settlement had long since been abandoned, the wild seas swamped the little boat and all in it would have drowned had they not been providentially rescued by Captain Barnard. Yet barely had this passenger, Thomas Mattinson, recovered from his abject terror when he discovered the small supply of liquor on board the *Young Nanina* and invited his fellow countrymen to join him in discovering "How American prize money would drink." Clearly he had already been told of the war and, quite likely, of his friend Sir Henry's secret schemes.

Mattinson was an unsavory character who claimed he had been a sailing master in the Royal Navy, from which he was forcibly separated.<sup>15</sup> Mattinson's rank, as well as Sir Henry's pardon, seem so questionable that one wonders by what scheming they managed to obtain passage on a homeward bound ship, and, when Mattinson was

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15 Commander W. E. May, who was most helpful in searching Admiralty Records in the British Public Record Office, wrote: "I was interested in the statement that Mattinson had been a sailing master in the Royal Navy. I have searched for him under that rank without success. The possibility occurred to me that he had really been a Masters Mate, a sort of senior midshipman. There are no seniority lists of these . . . I begin to wonder whether he was merely a liar or has assumed another name." May to author, Aug. 3, 1977.

smacking his lips over the taste of American prize money, Barnard began to have doubts of the wisdom of his generous gesture. By this time it was already too late to remedy the situation. It continued to grow worse daily, notably after the whole company became crowded on the little *Nanina*, with the wind roaring menace outside and the heavy seas defying all efforts to get the refitted brig out of her snug harbor and around to Eagle Island to pick up the rest of the *Isabella's* survivors. By May 19, "Mattinson and some of the crew came aft, and showed a mutinous disposition as he told them that he could get the brig around to the wreck himself. These proceedings gave me some uneasiness, for I felt assured that, if instigated and led by this ruffian, they should attempt to capture the brig, and deprive me of the command, they would eventually succeed; as with my limited means and numbers I could not oppose to them any effectual resistance. Desirous of ascertaining, if possible, the intentions of the majority on board, Capt. Durie and myself examined them, when they all, with the exception of Mattinson, declared that they would obey my orders." <sup>16</sup> His apprehensions thus somewhat calmed, Barnard resumed the task of getting the brig out.

All this time Captain Barzillai Pease had been keeping a most revealing journal. Soon after the others had reached the *Nanina*, Pease was expressing his sympathy with the English, his continued resentment of the "Collossean." After the memorable near-mutiny of May 19, he wrote, Mattinson was "confined under a centery. . . . At length the charge of the Brig was excepted by me and on the 20th sat Mr. Mattison at liberty with injunctions not to walk on the quarterdeck nor even step on it, which he readily complied with" <sup>17</sup> — naturally, since to do otherwise would have meant an unpleasant encounter with a man of gigantic stature who seemed unaware of a movement afoot to relieve him of command of the brig. Clearly, though Mattinson boasted of his ability to take the brig around to Eagle Island, he knew nothing at all of the way thither and wished to have an experienced pilot at his beck and call. One shipwreck and one near-drowning had been enough for him. Thus Barzillai Pease — egotistical, paranoid, subvertible — was made to his order.

Meanwhile, as Barnard recorded,

There was one continued gale from the 22nd until the 3rd of June. . . . As the storms and severe cold at this season of the year are generally of long duration, and having considered the deplorable situation in which we should be

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<sup>16</sup> Barnard, *Narrative*, 30.

<sup>17</sup> Pease Journals, Arents Library, Syracuse University.

placed, if any accident occurred to the brig, I determined to use every precaution to ensure our safety. From my responsibility to the owners of the vessel, I recommended to Capts. Val. Barnard, Pease, and Durie to strip the brig and safely moor her until favourable weather; they all coincided with me on the plan, which was to secure the vessel the first opportunity that offered. We moored her in Hooker's Harbour, close in shore, under Burnt [New] Island; we unbent the sails and made all secure. . . . All now deemed it proper to remain on the island a few weeks, rather than encounter the risk of proceeding to sea at this tempestuous season; as the weather, at the expiration of that time, we had reason to believe would become more settled and moderate.<sup>18</sup>

Pease and Durie, unless Pease's own journal is not to be believed, were giving only lip service to the arrangement. They could not protest the immediate necessity of those left behind on Eagle Island since most of the *Isabella's* stores had been salvaged there before she finally sank. They would not plead what now appears to have been their true motives — Pease to experience the triumph of undermining the "Collossean," Durie to put himself in line for prize money — to which the Macchiavellian Mattinson seems to have been supplying fuel.

By June 10, Barnard, apparently satisfied that mutiny was no longer a threat, turned his thoughts to the pressing matter of supplying passengers and crew with fresh provisions: "I proceeded to Beaver, one of the adjacent islands, with four men who had volunteered their services" — a black man, Jacob Green, belonging to the *Nanina's* own crew, and three "British subjects, late of the *Isabella*." "Having procured a sufficient number of wild hogs to load the boat," Barnard continued, "we departed [from Beaver Island], and about ten o'clock arrived at New Island Harbour, when we discovered, to our inexpressible surprise, that the vessel was gone! But where? We instantly landed, hauled up the boat, and awaited the approach of daylight in the most impatient and tormenting anxiety, but still cherishing a hope that we might discover a letter, which would inform us of the reason. But in vain did we search, for although they might have deposited one in a bottle, and buried or suspended it in some conspicuous place, yet, after a long and fruitless search, we were reluctantly compelled to abandon all expectation of finding any communication from the vessel. We were so confused and irritated that we could hardly persuade ourselves that we had been thus barbarously deserted, and until we were constrained by the certainty of the fact, to turn our thoughts to ourselves, and to devise some means for prolonging our existence."<sup>19</sup>

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18 Barnard, *Narrative*, 31, 32.

19 *Ibid.*, 33, 34.

Trying to believe that the *Nanina* must have gone to Beaver Island to pick them up, they reloaded their boat and returned thither. "But on our arrival at Beaver Island Harbour, we were fated to endure, alas! the almost insupportable anguish of neither finding the brig nor discovering any trace that she had been in the harbour." The shocked captain and men, with all but one or two charges of powder gone and nothing left on shore to keep body and soul together, "concluded, notwithstanding the dangers we must encounter, and which, under any other circumstances, we should have deemed insurmountable in an open boat, on account of the sudden changes in the weather, and the great tide rips which we must unavoidably pass, that we should attempt to effect a passage to Eagle Island, where the wreck was distant, about eighty miles."<sup>20</sup>

This meant that, without chart or compass to guide them, they must keep in sight of the perilous coast whose two capes — Meredith and Orford — Barnard ranked as the worst in that part of the world. Cold, hungry, desperate, they struggled on for six weeks until finally they gave up the fight and returned to Beaver Island, where the captain's valiant little dog, Cent, might corner wild hogs for the men to club to death. Their survival during the eighteen months until two English whale ships stopped by the islands and carried them off makes a fascinating story which occupies much of Barnard's book.

Of more concern here is the fate of the *Nanina*, of which Charles Barnard would learn nothing until he arrived home late in 1816. Then,

My father informed me that after I had left the brig to go to the island to procure fresh provisions . . . as soon as I was out of sight, Mattinson, the *ci-devant* British naval officer, with the English sailors, supported by Durie and the marines, took possession of the brig, and commenced getting the top-masts up and bending sails, which they completed before night. The next morning they got under weigh, my father using the most earnest entreaties for them not to go away, and leave me and my boat's crew to perish on those barren islands, in the depth of a dreadfully severe winter, without food, raiment, or shelter. But to all these supplications, the cold-hearted British officers turned a deaf ear and an impenetrable heart.

Bazilla Pease they appointed their pilot, to take the brig to Eagle Island, as not one of them knew in what direction it lay. They then got under weigh, and ran over to Beaver Island, and fired two or three guns as a signal, they said, to me of their intention, and for me to come off.

My father informed them that I was on the opposite side of the island, hunting, and if they would anchor and send a boat ashore, our men knew where they could find me, and would make a short cut across the island; and thus I and my boat's crew would be enabled to get on board. But they refused to comply with this reasonable request, which could have been accomplished in two hours, and left me and my unfortunate companions to our fate. . . .<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 263.

Pease, for whom the appointment as pilot could have come as no surprise, was not quite happy about deserting Barnard. If he was ever troubled by twinges of conscience, though, he gave not the slightest hint. Of the pause at Beaver Island, he wrote, "We was to have anchored here and searched the Island for him, but the mutineers broak their word, for they would not suffer her to anchor. And immediately bore away, leaving the boat and crew to their fate."

To give the unattractive Pease his due, he was a knowledgeable pilot. By June 15, "we had fine weather and saw the Sea Lion Islands, where we were destined for, when we hove in sight of Jacks harbour. The boat soon came alongside and boarded us with as much hostility as though we were armed and manned for war. All Americans were ordered below, and the arms secured and the Brig made a prize of, the wind and tide came against them which caused them to anchor. Twas now we learned that the *Isabella's* launch had arived at Bonesirus and we were a prise to his Majesty's Brig *Nancy*, that was sent after *Isabella's* crew that they had taken all of our other boats and now all they wanted was the absent boat" <sup>22</sup> — by which Pease meant the one with Barnard, Green, and the three Englishmen.

In command of His Majesty's Gun Brig *Nancy* was Lieutenant William D'Aranda who had arrived at Eagle Island a month earlier. Clearly, in the meantime his ears had been filled with tales concocted by some of the castaways who, with their real dread of perishing on the island removed, had come to think of the brig *Nanina* less as a means of escape than as a war prize that might help fill their pockets. Having sighted the approaching brig on June 15, D'Aranda's log entry for the sixteenth read: "11:30 A.M. brought in the *Nanina* brig belonging to New York having taken possession of her in consequence of maltreatment experienced by every one on board of her & infamous conduct of her Master, found a boat with part of the late *Isabella's* crew left behind but expected to follow immediately." <sup>23</sup>

Curiously, D'Aranda made no mention, either in his log or in later official communications to his superiors, of any agreement between the people of the *Isabella* and the copartners in the *Nanina* venture. It was a crucial omission, though perhaps understandable in an ambitious young naval lieutenant doomed to spend the war years patrolling the grim far South Atlantic in a tired old brig that was constantly in need of repairs. Here, ready to hand, had come a prize that might partially reimburse him for his years of frustration.

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<sup>22</sup> Pease Journals, Arents Library, Syracuse University.

<sup>23</sup> Adm. 51/2601, PRO.

That the agreement existed is witnessed by more than Barnard's statement. There is the statement, later drawn up in Rio de Janeiro by the other copartners in the venture, and, obliquely damning, the communication made by a passenger of the wrecked *Isabella*, Lieutenant Richard Lundin (spelled by Barnard "London") of the Seventy-Third Regiment. He had gone off in the *Isabella's* longboat, returning on the gun brig, so that whatever he knew of the prior contact between the *Nanina's* captain and the people of the *Isabella* must have come through tales told by the latter after his return to Eagle Island.

What Lieutenant Lundin wrote in his report to Rear Admiral Manley Dixon, stationed at Rio, gives a fair idea of what he must have been told about the arrangements: "On our arrival at Eagle Island we found most of the people absent, a Shallop belonging to an American Brig, having approached the Island in search of Seal skins, and having given up every hope with respect to the safety of the Boat, they entered into an Agreement with them to carry off the Island; and all the able Hands were now absent fitting the Brig which lay among some of the Islands at some distance to bring her around to carry them all off. On the 15th of June the American Brig arrived when Mr. D'Aranda, conceiving they had broke their Agreement made a prize of her determining to send her direct to England."<sup>24</sup> Despite the confusion of antecedents, the message is clear — there was a generally acknowledged agreement, and someone had been working to see that it was broken.

The *Nanina* left Eagle Island on July 27 under the command of a prize master with the American prisoners on board. On September 13, 1813, Admiral Dixon reported to John Wilson Croker, secretary to the Lords of the Admiralty: "I have great pleasure in acquainting you for the information of My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that, Lieutenant Richard Lundin of His Majesty's 73rd regiment of foot, arrived at this Port on the 23rd Ultimo, in the American Brig *Nanina*, a Prize to His Majesty's Brig *Nancy*, from one of the numerous uninhabited Islands at the Faulkland Islands, called by the Americans 'Eagle Island' . . . . Lieutenant D'Aranda's intentions were, that the *Nanina* should have gone direct to England; but the Petty Officer of the *Nancy* on board had no directions to do so, and being blown off the Coast unexpectedly, and the Vessel not appearing to be in a state for such a Voyage, he very properly put into this

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<sup>24</sup> Report, Lundin to Dixon, Adm. 1/21, PRO.



Harbour to refit and replenish his Water and Provisions." <sup>25</sup>

What of the American captives, of whom neither D'Aranda's nor the admiral's communications make mention? Already a week before the admiral sent out the above communication, they had managed to reach an American consular agent, before whom they made the deposition required by law of all officers of a ship lost through any cause. The deposition, later published in a now not-to-be-located issue of the *Hudson Bee* and, fortunately for the record, republished still later at Barzillai Pease's instigation in *Niles' Weekly Register*, ran as follows:

By this public instrument of protest, be it made known to all whom it may concern that on this 6th day of September, 1813, personally appeared before me Philip Rutter, acting commercial agent for the United States of America at the port of Rio de Janeiro, *Valentine Barnard*, master of the brig *Nanina* of New York, together with *Barzillai Pease*, *Andrew Hunter*, and *E. Fanning*, co-partners in the voyage of said brig, who severally depose and swear, that they sailed from New York on board the American brig *Nanina* on the 4th of April, 1812, which vessel had been fitted out by her owners . . . who had previously entered into a contract with *Barzillai Pease*, *C. H. Barnard*, *E. Fanning*, *Valentine Barnard*, and *A. Hunter* . . .

Why, one wonders, was Pease's name first? After two pages of details, presumably reported with the thought to convince the brig's owners that the partners were blameless in the brig's loss, there came a statement which further supported the suspicion that Pease, rather than Valentine Barnard, was the chief agent in drawing up the report. After the seizure of the brig by the British: "B. Pease represented the situation of the vessel to Capt. Drure and the risk she would run sailing among the islands where there was no person acquainted, and that in case they would stop at Beaver Island he would act as pilot on the occasion." <sup>26</sup>

Torn between indignation at being treated like an ordinary prisoner and, presumably, growing concern as to how his own actions were to be interpreted, Pease was bound to be the most pitiable of creatures. He and his journal disappear from our ken in the middle of a sentence which begins with a statement that the *Nanina's* erstwhile officers secured passage on the ship *Bingham*, bound for Philadelphia from Rio. None of his copartners, not even the abused Charles Barnard, who was to record the *Nanina* adventures fifteen years later, seems to have whispered a word against his wretched companion.

The last pages of Barnard's book, which summarize conversations he had with his father after his arrival home in late 1816, give

<sup>25</sup> Report, Dixon to Croker, Sept. 13, 1813, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Niles' Weekly Register*, 1814, Supplement, 5: 170-73.

a wryly humorous ending. After recounting the seizure of the brig and telling of her voyage to Eagle Island, his account continued with: "The next day they came off Eagle Island; when near Jack's Harbour, they discovered our boat coming off, with, as they expected, Fanning and his crew; but what was their surprise, when the boat came along side, filled with armed Englishmen, who boarded the brig, and made a prize of her, at the same time informing my father that he and the other Americans on board must consider themselves prisoners of war.

"A scene of plunder then ensued, that could have been performed only by those practised in that honourable business. Mesdames Durie and Spencer, to express their loyalty to his Majesty and his gallant officer, and very probably to attract the regard of the latter, brought up out of my state-room all my books, charts, quadrant, spy-glass, &c. and presented them to this intrepid son of Neptune, who claimed them as his perquisite. These harpies also opened my trunks with their own hands, selected the best of my clothing, and presented them as an offering to the same person; they threw the remainder on the deck to the men, telling them that it was free plunder.

"By this time," Barnard wrote, "they [had] learned that the longboat, belonging to the wrecked Isabella, had . . . arrived at Buenos Ayres, which was considered as next to a miracle. . . ." The English officer, stationed at Buenos Aires, in charge of such matters, had to postpone sending relief until some suitable naval vessel arrived in that port. The first such was the gun brig *Nancy* which could not go out until she had been sufficiently repaired to undertake the winter's voyage. In her went Lieutenant Lundin who had arrived in the longboat. Much praised by his superiors for this noble gesture, Lundin had, according to Barnard, far less noble motives: "The magnet that attracted him back was Mary Ann Spencer . . . the meeting between London and his frail Cyprian was truly affecting."<sup>27</sup>

Though welcome for many reasons, the arrival of the gun brig introduced complications:

There was now an extremely difficult and perplexing question submitted by Durie and his lady, Mary Ann Spencer, Mattinson, and Sir Henry B. Hays, to the decision of D. Aranda; which was no less than who ought to be awarded the first place of honour for capturing an American vessel, by a rare combination of treachery and cowardice, by which they doomed their benefactors to wretchedness? Sir Henry preferred his plea on the grounds that with him originated the opposition to royal British subjects being carried to an American port; and that immediately on becoming acquainted with the war, he proposed the compelling of the crew of the shallop to carry a sufficient number

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<sup>27</sup> Barnard, *Narrative*, 263-64.

of them round to capture the brig, bring her to Jack's Harbour, take all on board, and then proceed to England; Mattinson on the ground that even after they had possession of the vessel, they could not have benefitted themselves by it, unless she had been equipped and fitted for sea under his direction; Durie, that he had the honour to wear the king's cloth; Mrs. Durie, that she controuled the marines and their commander; and Mary Ann Spenser, that she had the power to reward those who greatly exerted themselves.

D' Aranda could not decide upon these conflicting claims, and therefore very disinterestedly promised to lay them all before the admiral commanding at Rio, but he secretly resolved to claim all the honour himself that could arise from the capture of an unarmed American vessel and her tender. . . .<sup>28</sup>

Whatever D'Aranda's secret motives, the fact is that nowhere in his correspondence with his superiors does he suggest that the *Nanina* sailed into his waiting arms. A listing of Australian shipwrecks for 1813 stated that the *Nancy*, "on her passage thither [to the islands]" captured an American vessel. Furthermore, there is in no official paper to be located the slightest hint that any others had a hand in the capture of the *Nanina*.<sup>29</sup>

The *Nanina* completed her last voyage as such in November 1813, when she reached Portsmouth. By June 1814, there was issued a commission for unlivery of her then moldering cargo of sealskins. But it was only on November 29, 1814, when peace was seriously threatening, that the final judgment was made in the High Court of the Admiralty. This read as follows:

"NANINA"

"Valentine Barnard Master

"Our Sovereign Lord the King

against the said Ship her Tackle Apparel and Furniture and against the Goods Wares and Merchandizes therein, taken by his Majesty's Ship *Nancy*, William D'Aranda Esquire Commander, and brought to Portsmouth, and against all persons in general

"Bishop

"In pain of parties cited thrice and not appearing

Nicholl for Bishop gave the usual Allegation which in like Pain the Judge at his Petition admitted and assigned the Cause for sentence on the first and second assignations immediately and having heard the Proofs read on Motion from His Majesty's Advocate by Interlocutory decree pronounced the said Ship her

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>29</sup> Charles Bateson, *Australian Shipwrecks*, Vol. 1, 1622-1850 (Sydney, Aus., 1975), 48.

Tackle Apparel and Furniture and the Goods Wares and Merchandizes therein taken to have belonged at the time of the Capture and Seizure thereof to Enemies of the Crown of Great Britain and as such or otherwise subject and liable to Confiscation and condemned the same as good and lawful Prize taken by his Majesty's Ship Nancy William D'Aranda Commr." <sup>30</sup>

Thus ends the story of the Pittsburgh-built brig *Nanina*. Undoubtedly she was then auctioned off, and presumably, though not necessarily, her name was changed by her purchaser. In any case, we cannot follow her career further. By an extraordinary coincidence, on the exact date when her fate was decided in the High Court of the Admiralty, thousands of miles away on New Island, in the Falklands, the *Nanina's* American master, Charles Barnard, and his four companions were being released from their grim situation by the sympathetic captains of two British whaling vessels which had stopped by for water and "refreshment."

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<sup>30</sup> Adm. H.C.A./8/155, PRO.