

# THE 19th CENTURY GERMAN DIARY OF A NEW JERSEY GEOLOGIST

BY WILLIAM J. CHUTE

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IN THE FALL of 1852 a young New Jersey scientist William Kitchell, 25 years of age, embarked for Germany in the fashion of the day to acquire the advanced training which would prepare him for his position as professor of geology at the Newark Wesleyan Institute. He was accompanied by a friend, William H. Bradley, and upon arrival both matriculated at the Royal Saxon Mining Academy at Freiburg near Dresden. Sporadically during the next year and a half, Kitchell jotted down his impressions of a multitude of things in a diary—now in the possession of the Rutgers University Library. While his descriptive powers were limited and his style of writing would have received no prize for polish, the diary is informative and entertaining—the personal sketches of world famous men of science, the prevalence of soldiers in Berlin, the horrible climate, the slowness of transportation, his questioning of the authenticity of the Genesis story of the great flood are as interesting as the comical and persistent match-making innuendoes of his landlady and the undisguised matrimonial suggestions of her unblushing daughter. Anecdotes of his American friends who later achieved renown are a welcome contribution to the biographer.

Kitchell's own claim to fame was won as the director of the New Jersey Geological Survey begun in 1854. Unfortunately, the promise of a great career was cut short by his early death in 1861.

The diary was obviously an unplanned afterthought. Kitchell's first entries, for December 23, 1852, record a Christmas holiday trip to the home of one Tobish, apparently a fellow student.

Kitchell was at Dresden engaged in cutting official redtape which was tying up his passage into Bohemia. The weather was cold, and the buzzing activity of shoppers reminded him of New York at Christmas time. The happy simplicity of the people was in sharp contrast to the officiousness of the government functionaries. He

went first to the Dresden police, then to the Austrian minister. "At five o'clock I called upon his lordship, but only saw his secretary, who asked me a thousand little mean questions in reference to my whereabouts; why I wished to go into Austria &c. I told him I wished to go with a friend who was going to visit his parents for a few days. Well, what is his father's business? How long do you wish to stay? and a host of other such questions; all of which he wrote down in a book. He finally gave me a visa to Bodenbach, my place of destination. Austria is at this time very much afraid of Americans. She was not pleased with the reception which she [United States] gave Kossuth a year ago. Every American who enters her boundaries must stand a close examination."<sup>1</sup>

Kitchell and his friend, Tobish, landed in Bodenbach in Bohemia on December 24, "had our carpet-bags examined, crossed the river in a small rowboat to Tetchen & in a few minutes was in the home of Tobish's parents" where he spent approximately a week of Christmas vacation. There he enjoyed the stories of Herr Tobish, and was pampered by Frau Tobish and over-fed with heavy food, washed down with beer and Hungarian wine, until he began to feel "that I am quite a lion in Bohemia." It was the daughter of the house who caught his fancy. "She is only sixteen, good looking, attractive, smart and I think has *fire*. Let me see—'A German wife'—how will that go down in America. I must think upon it. Good night."

He returned to Dresden on December 29, and while resting at the Hotel Stadt Leipzig, entered a description of his impressions of the last few days.

The old gentleman is about 65 years of age, by profession a lawyer. He has an air of aristocracy about him, but at the same time a perfect gentleman. I should take him to be a close money-making man, a man of business, and a man who looks after the pence. He has considerable property, lives in the best house in Tetchen which cost him 30,000 goulden. It is an old-fashioned house about 200 years old, strongly built, walls 5 or 6 feet in thickness, rooms very large, double windows &c. . . .

The old lady is a curious specimen of humanity. She is one of those fidgety old women who tries in every way possible to please single gentlemen, par-

<sup>1</sup> Lewis Kossuth, Hungarian patriot, visited the United States in 1851 after leading an unsuccessful insurrection against Austria. He was a national sensation; the American people overwhelmed him with sympathetic attention. Daniel Webster was prominent among those who compared him with the fathers of the American Revolution.

ticularly when the daughter's interest is at stake. I don't know that I ever received so much attention before from one lady. She would ask me 'what they ate for breakfast & tea in America! Behold at the next tea and breakfast, just such a tea and breakfast was prepared, although I went perhaps a little beyond the bounds of propriety in my descriptions. Upon telling her that I was very fond of musick, she was constantly urging the daughter to play—when the daughter became fatigued she would take hold herself. It was evident however that *now* she understands cooking better than piano musick.

As for the young lady, he reflected from a safe distance, she "is good looking, modest and a perfect little lady in every respect. I have a good mind to fall in love with her—but perhaps I had better wait until I return to America. It has been so long since I have been under the electrical influence of pleasant women I may be too susceptible."

On the 30 of December, Kitchell was back at Freiburg, "the most tedious place I ever lived in. If I had to spend my days here I am sure their number would be small. 1st of March roll on! . . . I want to get in better climes."

New Year's day found him alone in his room—alone and pensive. "Arose at nine o'clock, drank a cup of tea and ate a little bread. Threw myself on the sofa and thought of home, happy times, fire side circles, New Year's calls, fair women and a thousand other things, drew a long breath and a deep sigh, and went to work at mineralogy. Hard times, thought I, so much for the pleasures of travelling and living in foreign countries, particularly among the Germans. Friends at home envy my position, think I have glorious times. Let them try it."

Study must have consumed his time for the next month, for it was not until January 29, 1853, that he was moved enough to enter another experience that caught his fancy.

Yesterday afternoon I went a little way out of town to see the Guillotine which was erected for the purpose of executing death upon a young man 23 years of age, who had murdered a servant girl (his intended) about a year ago. . . .

At nine o'clock this morning the prisoner was carried about the streets, seated in a common farm wagon between two policemen and escorted by a company of soldiers, mounted upon horses with drawn swords and loaded rifles.

The prisoner carried a mean sneaking countenance although he was within a few minutes of the Guillotine. Now and then he raised his eyes and looked

around the people, but they soon fell again to the bottom of the wagon. Thousands of people lined each side of the street, and a dense mass crowded after. . . . After arriving at the place of execution the 'Kreisamtman' (a kind of overseer of prisoners) made a short speech to the crowd which I was not able to hear. Immediately after the prisoner mounted the platform, walking between the last mentioned man and the executioner. I could not see that he trembled at all. He quietly took off his coat and vest and cravat and opened his shirt to make his neck bare to give the knife 'fair play.' . . . Immediately after the head was severed from the body the executioner held it up by the hair before the people and then made a low bow, as much as to say 'the work is well done Gentlemen.' . . .

I shall never forget the expression of that man's face as he pulled off his cravat and threw himself upon the board and put his head through the hole under the knife. It was horrible!! What could have been his thoughts? As the knife fell I expected to hear a universal shriek, but not a sound was heard. It was as still as death. Immediately before and after the people were making all kinds of sport and cracking jokes upon the fellow and machine. The executioner has recently received a medal and a degree as a reward for his skill in the business.

On March 4, 1853, Kitchell heard news from home which made him proud of being an American. "Nothing affords so much pleasure to an American while visiting in a foreign land," he wrote, "as to hear of the advancement of his country in science and literature. And particularly while a resident of Germany, a land which boasts of the position it takes in Natural Science. The success of the new Caloric ship of Ericson has reached the ears of the scientific heads of Germany. As usual with great American inventions they call it a great humbug."<sup>2</sup>

On the same day he reported reading an article in the *London Illustrated News* concerning a speech made by Prof. Mapes. Its contents irked him. "The Prof says—that agriculture is in a more backward state in the United States than in any other country, that the farmers of the Southern States are more ignorant of their profession than any other race in the world, not excepting the slaves who are governed by them. I do not agree with the Prof in reference to his opinion of the position of agriculture in the United States. I

<sup>2</sup> John Ericsson, 1803-1889, was best known for his introduction of the screw propeller on a commercial vessel, and the building of the ironclad, Monitor, which defeated the confederate ironclad, Merrimac, during the American Civil War. The caloric engine depended upon hot air instead of steam to force the piston. It proved impractical for widespread use, because of its heavy bulk and an uneconomical loss of energy through rapid dissipation of heat.

consider the States at least 100 years ahead of Germany in this science.”<sup>3</sup>

On March 6, Kitchell finally sat down to a long overdue session of sewing numerous buttons on his trousers. Although the arduous task of unskilled fingers threading a needle might not excite the reader, the results of such activity may.

While in the midst of the enterprise, all absorbed in heart and mind, my reveries were disturbed by the exclamation ‘Herr Jesus!’ ‘Herr Jesus!’ ‘Gott in Himmel’. Looking up I saw standing before me the daughter of the landlady, with eyes and hands raised towards Heaven giving utterance to the above and similar exclamations. After having recovered from the fright and after adjusting my garments which had been disarranged & unconsciously partly through my eagerness to finish my work and partly by fright caused by the appearance of the Fraulein, I assured her that my intentions were honorable and begged not to be interrupted. She began to examine my work, laughed at the manner in which I held the needle, made fun of my ridiculous appearance, ought to have my picture painted, found fault with the work, white cotton and black, that would never do, not two buttons alike and a thousand other things which a bachelor never sees nor thinks of. She promised to help me, off she ran, brought black thread &c & now the work is done. They fit well. The young Fraulein embraced the opportunity to remind me of the duties of men to marry, and that those little difficulties would all be attended to without even a thought from the wearer of the pants.

By the 8th of March, his existence in Freiburg had become almost unbearable. “Thanks to my stars that my time in Freiburg will soon terminate. I really believe were I to remain here a few months longer nothing but dust and ashes would be left of me. During the past four weeks I have lost at least ten pounds of flesh.” His baggage was packed and in the hands of a “commissioner” to send to Bremen and he was prepared to journey first to Berlin to see Herr Professor Humboldt.

Kitchell left Freiburg at six A.M. on March 9, arriving in Berlin at a quarter past three in the afternoon.

At Berlin he checked in at the Hotel de Hambourgh. “Immedi-

<sup>3</sup> Kitchell seemed to miss in this account the slur on the system of slavery. Actually by this time Southern agriculturalists were experimenting with shale and marl, the very things that Mapes himself was doing in New Jersey. Kitchell was himself to come under the criticism of this interesting Jersey character as Director of the New Jersey Geological Survey of 1854. Mapes wrote in his *The Working Farmer* for Nov. 1, 1854, p. 193, that “Our state legislators will vote half a million of public funds for a geological survey, which is but remotely applicable to the purposes of the farmer, when an agricultural survey, costing a much less amount, would be more immediately useful.”

ately after breakfast [the 10th] this morning I was called upon by a soldier, who with drawn sword conducted me to the police office. I was there informed that my passport was not viséed, and further that I had no visa of the Prussian minister, consequently I had no business in Prussia. I showed the officer that he had overlooked the visa of the Freiburg Police, given two days before, and as for the visa of the Prussian minister I had been informed it was not necessary. A hundred questions were asked me concerning my business in Berlin, how long I intended to stay, my age &c, all of which were accurately written down, and the paper and my passport and myself under guard sent to the chief of Police where I was again closely questioned. I was asked my particular object in visiting Berlin. I answered to visit Humboldt and the Professor Rose. Are you acquainted with Humboldt? Not personally, but my profession is the same & I have letters on those gentlemen &c.

It was finally decided that after obtaining the visa of the American Legation and of the Prussian Minister I might remain.”

Kitchell fulfilled this qualification with the aid of the secretary of the American Legation, one Mr. Fay,<sup>3</sup> and proceeded to search for two Virginia friends, Professor Charles Scott Venable<sup>4</sup> and Mr. Bolling, whom he found easily.

That evening Kitchell and his friends attended the usual Thursday evening soirée at the American Legation where he met many Americans including William Dwight Whitney, who within the year would receive a call to Yale to begin his famous career as a philologist, but at the time was known to Kitchell only as the brother of the well-known Yale geologist, Josiah Dwight Whitney. He found the American minister, D. D. Barnard, “A pleasant, sociable man,”<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>3</sup> Theodore Sedgwick Fay (1807-1898) was a minor American novelist and poet, whose novel *Norman Leslie, A Tale of the Present Times* (1835) was a best seller until a drastic review from the pen of Edgar Allan Poe shortened its appeal. His most substantial work, *The Three Germanys*, published many years later in 1889, is considered his best. The very year Kitchell met him, he was promoted to be minister to Switzerland.

<sup>4</sup> Professor of mathematics at the University of Virginia, in 1853 he was studying mathematics and astronomy at the University of Berlin. On his return to the United States he was appointed to the chair of Mathematics at the University of South Carolina, and in 1860 was one of the commissioners sent to Labrador by the United States Government to make observations of the eclipse that year. Lt. Col. under General Lee during the Civil War, he lived until 1900.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Dewey Barnard, an intensely partisan Whig politician from New York, had been appointed minister to Prussia by President Fillmore as a reward for political service.

felt quite at home among so many Americans. He seemed quite astonished to find that Mr. Barnard's daughters did not speak German.

The next day was spent in seeing the sights of Berlin as indicated in Murray's *Guide*, such as the beautiful streets and the huge bronze statue of Frederick the Great. At three o'clock in the afternoon he attended a lecture at the university given by Professor Johann Franz Encke, after whom the Encke comet was named.<sup>6</sup> Apparently the young American was not much impressed. He commented that "he is quite old, speaks very low, possesses a poor delivery, very ugly looking, his lower lip protruding half an inch beyond his upper. His lecture was chiefly upon the mathematics of comets." The lecture lasted for only one hour, and then Kitchell, Venable, and Secretary Fay heard Professor Karl Ritter<sup>7</sup> speak on the physical geography of Islands. "He is very old," Kitchell wrote, "I should think about eighty or so. Shuts his eyes while lecturing, speaks feebly, voice trembles."

Kitchell was determined to crowd as many celebrities into a few days as he could. It might have to last him a lifetime. The following day, Saturday, March 12, 1853, he spent from nine to eleven listening to a lecture on tin and copper by the celebrated Professor Heinrich Rose.<sup>8</sup> "The professor is very quick, speaks fast," Kitchell found, "continually walking backward and forward rubbing his hands, is careful about his experiments. A very noble-good sound fellow judging from appearances. Should like to hear his whole course. At eleven heard Prof. Mitscherlich,<sup>9</sup> the distinguished chemist, lecture upon chrome and its compounds. Prof. M. is very large, fine looking, about 50-5 years of age, speaks rather fast, is a nice experimenter, likes showy experiments. Like him very much." That

<sup>6</sup> Encke (1791-1865) had not discovered the comet as Kitchell supposed, but had calculated the comet discovered by the French Astronomer Jean Louis Pons in 1818.

<sup>7</sup> Karl Ritter (1779-1859), German geographer, one of the founders of modern geography, was especially interested in showing the influence of geographical features on the course of history and the relations between man and nature.

<sup>8</sup> Heinrich Rose (1795-1864), belonged to the third generation of a family which distinguished itself in chemistry. He wrote a famous two-volume handbook on analytical chemistry in 1851.

<sup>9</sup> Eilhardt Mitscherlich (1794-1863), German chemist, made researches in chemical geology and had produced artificial minerals. He is famous today for his introduction of writing chemical symbols and formulae.

afternoon it was Professor Heinrich Wilhelm Dove,<sup>10</sup> who lectured on magnetism, and Kitchell's comment was merely "a very pleasant man, like him very much, continually smiling."

Sunday came and there was little to do but to enjoy oneself leisurely.

A most delightful day. Warm and pleasant. I had an excellent opportunity to see the fashion of Berlin. Sunday is the great pleasure day of the Berliners, for all classes, rich and poor, nobles and ignobles. Upon the sidewalks of the beautiful street 'Unter den Linden' ladies dressed in the most costly manner thronged as thick as bees. Officers of every style of uniform were also quite as thick. . . . Now and then a royal carriage would come rolling along drawn by four or six black horses, the drivers riding upon the horses and postillion mounted behind the carriage. The soldiers of Berlin form so great a part of the inhabitants that the city resembles a camp. . . . The great number of orders worn strike the attention of the foreigner. Some officers had as many as seven or eight strung around their necks and I saw many men of middle age with ribbons hanging from their coats. Orders are considered grand signs of honor, and a German would sacrifice almost everything to possess one.

Kitchell was determined to cultivate the friendship of his intellectually brilliant new acquaintance William Dwight Whitney<sup>11</sup> whom he had met previously at the American Legation, so after dinner he found his way to Whitney's quarters. Kitchell bears testimony of the extraordinary promise of this twenty-five year old scholar. He found the young philologist deeply engaged in translating hieroglyphics. "And as the boy said, 'he can read Hyroglyphics like a book'. He is preparing to work upon the subject. He informs me that Egyptian History carries them back more than 2500 years & nothing is said of a flood. He believes that there was no flood at the time we generally consider as to have taken place according to the interpretation of the Bible. It is an interesting thing to a geologist to know that it is the fact for Geology tells us at that time there would not have been such a flood as is generally believed, and when we have the history of nations handed down to us for nearly 500 years beyond that time and in a direct line, and all too without speaking one word of the flood we are led to conclude that there

<sup>10</sup> Heinrich Wilhelm Dove (1803-1879), German physicist and meteorologist.

<sup>11</sup> William Dwight Whitney (1827-1894), noted scholar in linguistic science, Yale professor from 1854-1894. As a lexicographer, he earned deserved fame as the editor of the 1864 edition of *Webster's Dictionary*, and as editor-in-chief of *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*.



exists a mistake somewhere.<sup>12</sup> I must inquire farther into the subject. Mr. Whitney is a gentleman and a scholar. He has the appearance and manners of each.”

One evening Kitchell attended Kroll’s beautiful concert room just outside the city and saw Friedrich von Flotow’s *Alessandro Stradella* which had received its premiere performance in Hamburg just nine years before. On another evening he was overwhelmed by the magnificence of Mozart’s music.

Evening attended the Royal Opera—heard the very celebrated opera, Don Juan—was delighted beyond expectation. Such famous music, such brilliant decorations. Such a fine building &c are not surpassed. The actors & actresses receive salaries from the kingdom consequently remain here all the time. They live in grand style. Sometimes the prettiest of them are kept as mistresses by the princes and the young nobles of the royal family. A short time ago the young Emperor of Austria had one of the most beautiful of the Prussian actresses for several months with him. I understand the ministers keep the Emperor well supplied with beautiful women all the time in order to make his mind weak &c that the management of affairs will remain chiefly in their hands.

The closing scene of the opera is magnificent. Don Juan is surrounded by Devils with flaming torches in their hands spitting fire from mouth and nostrils & fountains are turned into fountains of fire & fire falls from above. In fact it looks like the place we imagine to be Hell. Such scenes are seldom to be seen. This scene is the moral of the story. As Prof. Venables says ‘Don Juan gets *burnt* because he goes with women’ a warning to all men young and old!!!

On Sunday, March 13, he wrote the following letter to the great Alexander von Humboldt.<sup>13</sup>

My Dear Sir

Pardon me for the liberty I take in addressing you these lines, begging permission to make you a short visit. During the past four or five years I have

<sup>12</sup> Such a statement was not shockingly new in 1853 to tough-minded geologists, but one wonders how such an utterance might have been taken at conservative Yale. Whitney’s colleague at New Haven, James D. Dana, asserting the harmony between the knowledge revealed by the Earth and the Scriptures in the 1864 edition of his *Manual of Geology* (p. 746), assured his readers that “there can be no real conflict between the two Books of the Great Author.”

<sup>13</sup> Baron Friedrich Heinrich Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), German naturalist, traveler, and statesman. At the end of his famous explorations in South America, Cuba and Mexico, he visited President Thomas Jefferson at Washington in 1804. Humboldt corresponded widely with American scientists thereafter. When Kitchell visited him, he was engaged in composing his chief work, *Kosmos*, a description of the physical universe.

been engaged in studying the geology and metallurgy of gold. It is with the greatest pleasure and profit that I have studied your works upon the subject in different parts of the world. It is through a desire of asking you farther concerning the geology of gold in my native land that I beg the honor of a personal interview.

With my best wishes for your continued health, which may enable you still farther to give the world those grand and valuable generalizations in Natural Science which knowledge and observation permits no other man to give, I remain,

Your very humble servt

Wm Kitchell

Prof. of Geology in the Newark Institute  
of the State of New Jersey, United States  
of America.

He received a reply on Monday inviting him to visit the next afternoon.

Professor Gustav Rose invited him to see his mineral collection on Tuesday morning. "The collection is very fine and large," he reported. "In fact it is said to be one of the largest and best in Europe, but as in most other German Universities the arrangement is bad. It contains the largest specimens of Amber yet found. I found some old acquaintances (New Jersey minerals) but miserably represented."

But he looked forward anxiously to meeting the greatest of all Berlin scientists.

At one o'clock took a carriage at the University and rode to von Humboldt's house. I was received into his library which was well furnished but not extravagantly. The old gentleman commenced to talk before he entered the room and continued until I left,—perhaps about 20 minutes.

He commenced by saying that he has often heard his distinguished friend von Buch<sup>14</sup> speak of me, and that in a recent publication of von Buch I would find my name mentioned. Being quite sure that he was mistaken, and he continuing to talk on I did not take the trouble to persuade him that he must be mistaken. He then commenced to give me his ideas upon the occurrence of gold in the Americas. He did not think that there were real veins of gold quartz but only parts of veins which had been broken off and thrown up, and that were they to be examined to a great depth they would disappear. He also gave several comparisons between the geology of that coast of America and other gold bearing regions. It was a good practical lecture, delivered in as good English as any native could speak. At one time he commenced to speak

<sup>14</sup> Baron Christian Leopold von Buch (1774-1853), German geologist and paleontologist, who became a plutonist, and demonstrated the importance of volcanic processes.

in French, saying that his English was so bad he could not be understood, but upon telling him that it was perfectly good, he continued. At this time in about 20 or 25 min. from the time I came, the King of Prussia called and he was obliged to leave, saying that he would immediately return, but I took my leave. He told me should I visit Berlin again within a few years I would find him in the same place and must call to see him. The old gentleman is very feeble, holds his head down, but yet his eye is good and there is such a dignified noble, yet mild and pleasant expression upon his face as I never saw before. I like him very much. He treats everybody as his superior. I was very sorry that the King came in at the time for I wanted to hear more of his views concerning the geology of gold. He thinks that there must be large quantities of platinum in California and that gold & platinum are always geologically connected together.

Upon visiting the New Berlin Museum the following day, Kitchell commented on the vast collections of Egypt, Greece and the northern countries, that "Humboldt is the great cause of the liberality of Prussia in erecting large and costly museums and scientific institutions; for he lives with the King, & what he says is just so much law and gospel with the chief sovereign."

On Thursday, March 16, Kitchell left Berlin by railroad for Bremen where he expected to find a ship for the United States. "The weather was very cold and disagreeable. Thought I should freeze to death. The cars continually filled with tobacco smoke. Sometimes with pipes old enough to scent a small city." At Bremen he registered at the excellent Hillmans Hotel.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday were spent in seeing the points of interest of this seaport city, but on Monday morning he decided that he must seek out passage for home. "Called upon Capt. Fitch (Capt. of the Washington) told him that I hadn't money enough to pay the whole passage down. He said it would make no difference, my face was good enough and I could pay the balance in New York. My baggage has not yet arrived although it was to have been here in eight days. So it is almost always in doing business in Germany."

The Washington was wharfed at Bremerhaven six hours away by steamboat. Like most means of German travel, Kitchell found the "Steam boat horrible, cabin filled with tobacco smoke, very unpleasant travelling in Germany. Ladies had no comfort." Arriving at his destination he found his baggage had arrived, and after placing it on board he and "several officers of the Washington, visited

some of the places of amusement—saw German life after candle light. Bremer Haven is a mean dirty place, very unpleasant. Time drags. I did think at one time of taking a packet ship for New York but there is so much ice it is impossible for them to get off before two or three weeks, and even then to be shut up in such company as German emigrants for 6 weeks or two months it could be killing. I prefer to pay the Washington fare & have some comfort.”

Thursday, March 25, 1853, was Kitchell's last day on German soil. Not that he was sorry to leave. He was ill and “not well enough to read, besides there were no fires here. Nothing but turf is used as a burning material. I haven't been warm before today for several weeks, and that was in the cabin of the Washington where I found a good old fashioned coal fire.

After dinner, paid my hotel bill and moved upon American soil (Washington steamer). Felt like another man, a new being. Had a glorious nights rest, slept sweeter than for a long time before. Had a good tea.

No one is able to tell, except those who have experienced it, how happy an American is once more to be protected by the American flag and to be fed on American food, after an absence from his native land for a number of months. I feel like another person—Vive United States.”

On Friday, March 26, the Washington sailed for Southampton.

“The weather fine. Sea smooth, very few sea sick. As for myself not at all, but there is time enough yet.” He spoke the truth, for after leaving Southampton and being on the high seas for a week, Kitchell entered in his diary on April 4, “Atlantic Ocean Lat 49-49 Long 21.03. Oh what a horrible time I have had since leaving Southampton. Sea sickness!!! Horrible! Horrible!

“*Sunday, April 10, 1853.* A fair, beautiful day, but very cold. Last night I witnessed my greatest storm at sea. At about four o'clock yesterday afternoon the wind commenced to blow a gale from the Southwest, which increased until eleven o'clock in the evening. The ship rolled and pitched sometimes shipping a sea over the boys and sometimes over the wheel house, threatening to carry away all the houses on deck. The people were very much frightened. The ladies came near fainting & there was a great confusion and consternation throughout the whole ship. . . . I retired at eleven consoling myself with the idea that if the ship must go down I may as well be asleep as to remain on deck and then almost frightened to death. I fell asleep and slept soundly until morning finding the ship and all others right side up.

“We are now upon sounding off the banks of New Foundland. A few minutes ago saw a whale near the ship, also saw many a little distance off throwing up water.”