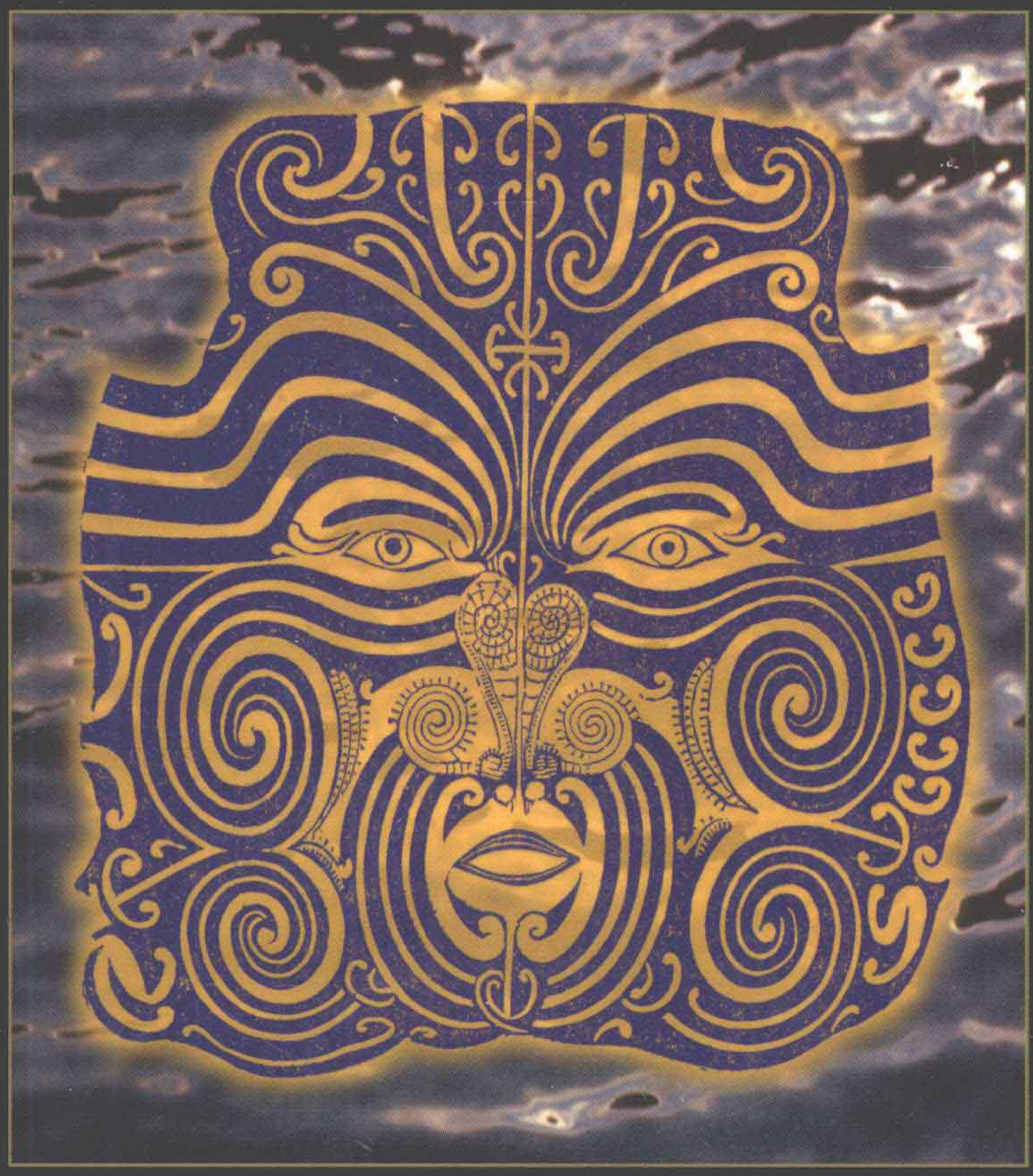
150th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

MOBY-DICK

HERMAN MELVILLE



EDITED BY HERSHEL PARKER AND HARRISON HAYFORD

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

SECOND EDITION

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

Herman Melville
MOBY-DICK

AN AUTHORITATIVE TEXT
BEFORE *MOBY-DICK:* INTERNATIONAL CONTROVERSY
REVIEWS AND LETTERS BY MELVILLE
ANALOGUES AND SOURCES
REVIEWS OF *MOBY-DICK*
CRITICISM

SECOND EDITION

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PICTORIAL MATERIALS PREPARED BY
JOHN B. PUTNAM

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Preface

Herman Melville (1819–1891), the author of *Moby-Dick*, was a Romantic writer (slightly belated, and American), profoundly influenced from his youth by the lives and writings of international literary celebrities such as Lord Byron, Sir Walter Scott, Goethe, and Washington Irving, and later by Wordsworth, Coleridge, and others, including many now little read, such as the poet laureate of his youth, Robert Southey. Melville was also a child of the American Revolution (grandson of two military heroes who had known George Washington and other notables) and of the War of 1812 (then still vivid in the American consciousness). During his triumphal return to the United States the old Marquis de Lafayette, revered as the youthful hero of the Revolution, paid honor to Melville's grandmother Gansevoort, widow of the hero of Fort Stanwix, at her home in Albany in 1825, and in Boston at the dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument he paid tribute to Melville's paternal grandfather (one of the last survivors of the Tea Party of 1773). Even more crucially, Melville was a child of the cataclysmic French Revolution and of Napoleonic Europe. His uncle Thomas Melvill spent years in the Paris of Napoleon as a sort of merchant-banker, and his father, an importer of dry goods, fluent in French, visited Paris repeatedly.

In the post-Napoleonic era of Melville's youth, Americans obsessively followed such remote events as the Greek struggle for independence from the Turks and marveled at the indirect consequences of military action. Everyone knew that one basalt hunk of war booty from Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, the Rosetta Stone, had allowed a heroic French civilian to decipher the hieroglyphics and initiate the study of ancient Egypt (of fervent, if limited, interest to many religious Americans as the home of the Hebrews from Joseph to Moses). Archaeological excavations, at Pompeii and elsewhere, were transforming historical and aesthetic knowledge of the classical world of Greece and Rome as decisively as the deciphering of the hieroglyphics was transforming knowledge of ancient Egypt. *Moby-Dick* is laced with offhand allusions to such recent events, not just military, political, and religious but also scientific, including advances in the study of archaeology, geography, oceanography, and astronomy. Advances in anatomy and geology were already creating pre-Darwinian evolutionary thought and challenging religious chronologies that set the creation of the world around 5000 B.C.E.

More than a third of a century after 1967, when the first edition of the Hayford-Parker Norton Critical Edition was published, the United States is once again in a recurrent phase of thinking globally, as Melville was doing in *Moby-Dick,* even while many Americans were using the Monroe Doctrine to justify isolationism. Early in the twenty-first cen-

tury Americans are concerned as never before with the effects that human beings have on their environment, from immediate surroundings to the entire planet Earth. Many of the geopolitical themes Melville dealt with from his own experience—Pacific Rim commerce, colonialism, deliberate or careless destruction of indigenous cultures and environments, exploitation of nature, racism, enslavement, immigration—are themes uppermost in the minds of many modern Americans. In recent years Roger Payne, the author of *Among Whales*, and other marine biologists are learning how whales feed, reproduce, communicate, and migrate and how they are being pushed toward extermination. In the new environmental activism, the "Sea Shepherd" movement led by Paul Watson is dedicated to saving whales, now threatened not only by commercial whaling fleets but also by global pollution. Knowing about newly defined dangers (*global warming* was not in the national vocabulary in the 1960s), we think differently about extinction of species and read such chapters in *Moby-Dick* as 105, "—Will he Perish?" differently than earlier generations did.

Such worries, about extinction of species, loss of rain forests, pollution (of land, air, and water), human overpopulation, global warming, the possibility of world famine, all these and other concerns have been accompanied by a new interest in tales of high adventure, escapist outer-space adventure at one extreme, and at another extreme stringent earthly challenges such as climbing the highest mountains and exploring the depths of the oceans. Once again the reading public is fascinated with retellings of dangerous nineteenth-century voyages such as the search for the Northwest Passage and equally hazardous commercial ventures such as whaling voyages. In particular, new readers have been found for retellings of the story of the destruction of the *Essex* by a whale and the price some of the crew paid for survival. (Not since the time of *Moby-Dick* has the dark subject of cannibalism resonated so variously and so perturbingly in the public consciousness as it does now.)

Once written about as if it were on a subject that could be of interest to only some men and to no women, or as if it were a book of philosophy trying to be a work of literature, *Moby-Dick* is now more popular than ever with both sexes and all ages as the greatest sea story ever told, recognized as a national literary treasure arising from the deeply troubled mid-nineteenth century. Turning away from the notion of good literature as something that makes you feel good about yourself just as you are, readers are welcoming *Moby-Dick* as evidence that good literature has power to challenge, exalt, and even transform.

While shared global concerns inform readers who now read or re-read *Moby-Dick*, readers have lost something that previous generations brought to the book, for changes in American education have reduced what once amounted to a common body of national literary readings. Few twenty-first-century readers know as much of the writings of Oliver Goldsmith or Sir Walter Scott, or even Edmund Spenser and John Milton, as Melville and his contemporaries did, or even as high school graduates of the 1960s did. Yet the loss of knowledge once common in classrooms across the country has been offset in astonishing ways. Shakespeare, whose tragedies marked the plot and language of *Moby-Dick*, has disappeared from some

high school classes, yet his plays, and not only the great tragedies, are dazzlingly available in competing movies and videos (even as *Moby-Dick* itself is available in adaptations and recorded readings). Even if a smaller percentage of religious young Protestants read the King James Bible as the word of God than did a generation ago, that version is now more widely studied, and not only by Protestants, as a literary and historical text. The upshot is that undergraduates and general readers early in the twenty-first century are far more diversely prepared to catch literary allusions in *Moby-Dick* than their counterparts of the 1960s, less knowledgeable in some ways, but far more aware in other ways, and with immeasurably greater access to information (from worthless to wholly reliable) on the Internet.

This Second Norton Critical Edition of *Moby-Dick* embodies the transformation of knowledge about Melville that has occurred since the original 1967 edition, particularly about his life. Many of the new discoveries were stimulated by research for the "Historical Notes" in the successive volumes in the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of *The Writings of Herman Melville*, edited by Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle, particularly the "Historical Note" to *Moby-Dick* (1988). Melville biography has also been transformed by strokes of luck unrelated to the NN Edition, notably the salvaging of several hundred letters, a small portion of the previously unknown personal archive of Melville's sister Augusta, most of which was acquired by the New York Public Library in 1983. By the early 1990s these "Augusta Papers" had been transcribed by Parker into his working version of *The New Melville Log*, an expansion of Jay Leyda's 1951 two-volume *The Melville Log*. Other small but important caches of family letters have been discovered in the decades after 1967 and have also been transcribed into *The New Melville Log*. So much continues to come to light that passages in the 1988 "Historical Note" to *Moby-Dick* have already been superseded by discoveries reported in several chapters of Hershel Parker's *Herman Melville: A Biography, 1819–1851* (1996) and the second volume, *Herman Melville: A Biography, 1851–1891*. (In the first volume chapters 33 to 40 are devoted to the composition of *Moby-Dick*; and in the second volume chapters 1, 2, and 4 deal with the American reception of *Moby-Dick* and chapter 5 recounts the British reception of *The Whale*.) Recent discoveries about Melville's life and sources are reported in this Norton Critical Edition of *Moby-Dick*, the Parker-Hayford edition (names reversed to distinguish the editions). The salting of recently discovered and sometimes previously unpublished biographical information throughout this Norton Critical Edition should make it an essential source for scholars, critics, and even the common readers (who do survive, alive and well, but changed—less like each other, more individualistic).

In this Parker-Hayford edition, our paramount goal has been to help readers grasp the genuine (and occasionally fudged) vastness of Melville's personal experiences and reading that went into the words of *Moby-Dick*. Where the 1967 edition was sparingly footnoted, the Parker-Hayford edition is much more fully annotated. This edition identifies Melville's historical allusions (in which category he would include biblical allusions) as well as other allusions, particularly literary and geographical, and identi-

fies his principal whaling sources and passages that reflect episodes in his life. We recognize that footnotes inevitably distract attention from the text and apologize to any reader who looks down to a footnote and finds only what he or she already knew. We hope no one, however learned, will take offence at our giving the birth and death dates for Sir Thomas Browne, or take offence at our giving chapter and verse for biblical allusions and quoting dozens of brief biblical passages.

The Hayford-Parker 1967 Norton Critical Edition holds a permanent place in the history of textual scholarship on *Moby-Dick*. No other edition of *Moby-Dick* included a full list of variants between the English edition (*The Whale*, October 1851) and the American edition (*Moby-Dick*, November 1851). We made some of our editorial decisions on the basis of our then-new discovery that Melville himself was responsible for some of the English variants—corrections he made on the sheets of the book before sending them to England, so that the earlier-published London text contained a few authorial readings that Melville could not get into the later-published American text. The 1967 edition also contained a number of now generally accepted conjectural emendations made for the first time, such as *augured* for *argued*, where we were convinced that neither 1851 edition had printed what Melville had intended. Our editor at Norton, the late John Benedict, altered the design of the Norton Critical Edition textual lists and in other ways facilitated our attempt to use the Norton Critical Edition to help users think about the new textual discoveries, as the first edition of the Norton Critical Edition of *Moby-Dick* was not designed to be "definitive" but to open up the book to textual study. We knew as we worked on it that our textual discoveries would ultimately go into the Northwestern-Newberry (NN) edition, supplemented by whatever textual, bibliographical, biographical, and historical knowledge we and others might bring forth in the intervening years. The Norton Critical Edition became the edition cited in all serious scholarship and criticism for a generation, and the 1988 NN text, as it turned out, remained very close to the Hayford-Parker text.

The existence of that Northwestern-Newberry *Moby-Dick*, which includes a 182-page "Historical Note" and a 46-page "Note on the Text," means that this Parker-Hayford edition does not have to contain an elaborate textual apparatus. In this Parker-Hayford edition we print the NN text, edited by Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle, without the formidable apparatus essential in a "standard" edition but inappropriate in a text meant for the classroom and the general reader.

The text of this second Norton Critical Edition (in its now lavishly footnoted form) is followed by a short new section, "Melville's Reading and *Moby-Dick*: An Overview and A Bibliography." The opening essay looks at the sequence in which Melville encountered his written whaling sources for *Moby-Dick* and suggests the range of general reading (including great works of literature) that influenced him. The following list of books makes it easy for a reader to locate full titles, publishers, and dates of Melville's known source books mentioned in the footnotes to the text of *Moby-Dick* and in the later parts of this edition.

The maps and items in "Whaling and Whalecraft" have been retained from the 1967 edition, but we have now added to this section a photograph

of the engraved self-portrait of the magnificently tattooed face of the real New Zealander on whom Melville modeled Queequeg—one of two great new discoveries by Geoffrey Sanborn reported in this edition.

A wholly new section, "Before *Moby-Dick*: International Controversy over Melville," contains reviews of Melville's early books that address issues of colonialism, missionary activities, slavery, immigration, and abuses in the navy (principally flogging), for *Moby-Dick* cannot be fully understood without reference to Melville's early historical experiences and the controversies, especially the religious controversies, that dogged him.

The familiar items in the 1967 "Reviews and Letters by Melville" have been retained, but the letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne conventionally dated as about June 1, 1851, has been redated to early May, and the footnotes to "Hawthorne and his *Mosses*" and to the letters have been greatly enriched by recent biographical discoveries, several printed here for the first time. "Analogues and Sources" has been augmented by slight corrections in the transcription of Melville's "Manuscript Notes on Owen Chase" and by two exciting new discoveries (made since the 1988 NN edition), Geoffrey Sanborn's discovery of a source for notes Melville made in his copy of Shakespeare and Steven Olsen-Smith's recovery of significant Melville annotations in Thomas Beale's *The Natural History of the Sperm Whale* (1839).

The section of contemporary reviews has been greatly revised and enlarged to show the impact of the English reviews of *The Whale* on American reviewers of *Moby-Dick*, to show the ongoing attacks on Melville from the American religious press, and to sample reviews discovered by Parker in the Colindale branch of the British Library since the publication of the first volume of his biography (and reprinted here for the first time since 1851). Some items from the 1967 "Interim Appraisals, 1893–1913" have been dropped and some have been incorporated in a new section, "Posthumous Praise and the Melville Revival: 1893–1927." The policy now is to exclude mere hostile grousings, letting some of the contemporary reviews carry the burden of vituperation, slander, and self-complacent ignorance. Everyone now has heard that *Moby-Dick* was a failure for almost three quarters of a century, so space is devoted to celebrating the best that has been said about it rather than recording the long persistence of contemptuous and superficial pronouncements by journalists and professors whose memory has been kept alive only because they did not understand the greatness of *Moby-Dick*.

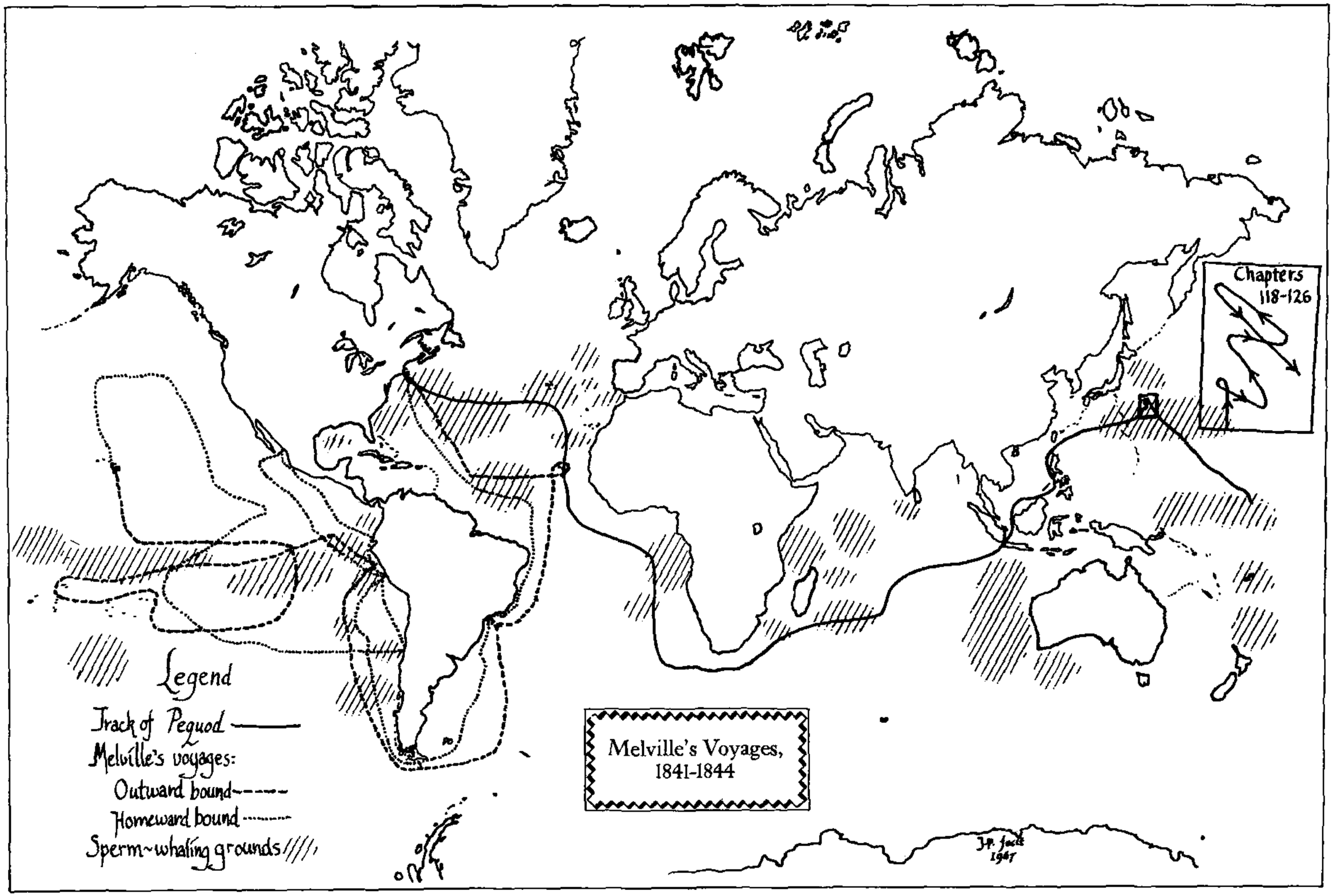
"A Handful of Critical Challenges" retains from the 1967 edition a classic study, Walter E. Bezanson's "*Moby-Dick*: Work of Art." It represents Harrison Hayford's half-century study of *Moby-Dick* by two highly accessible essays, "Loomings" and "Unnecessary Duplicates." Essays by Paul Brodtkorb Jr. and John Wenke focus on the single most persistent theme in the modern criticism of *Moby-Dick*: Melville's creation of Ishmael as the one who tells (and to some extent admittedly invents) the story of Ahab's quest for the white whale. Camille Paglia offers a very welcome reminder that *Moby-Dick* should be read in the context of European Romanticism. Rather than include any biographical sections from the Northwestern-Newberry "Historical Note" or Parker's *Herman*

Melville: A Biography, we print a previously unpublished talk Parker delivered at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, a rigorous look at the price Melville and his family paid for *Moby-Dick*. A new stringently selective bibliography concludes the volume.

HERSHEL PARKER
HARRISON HAYFORD

Acknowledgments

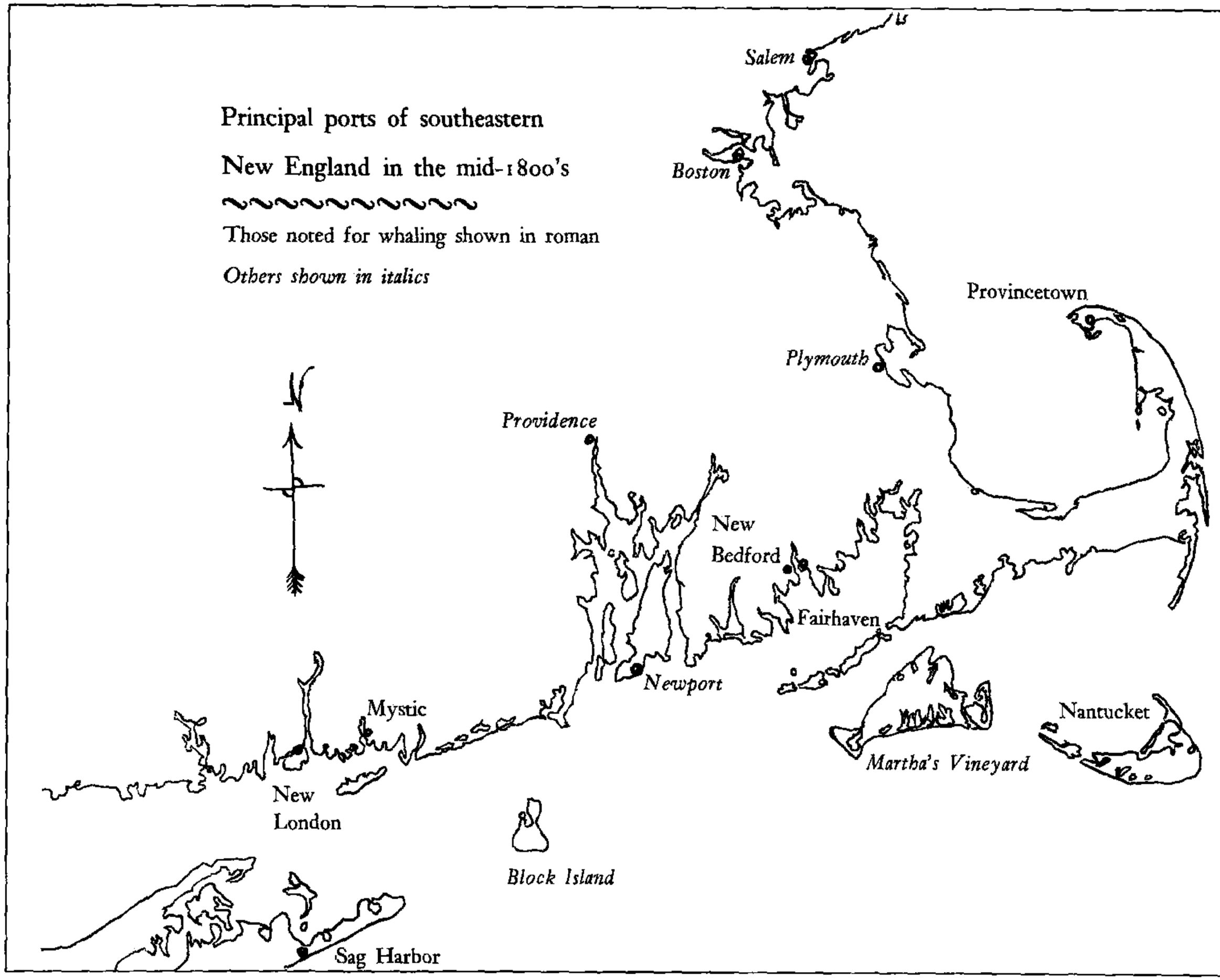
Our greatest debt is still to the late John Benedict, the editor at W. W. Norton who helped us open up the textual study of *Moby-Dick* more than a third of a century ago. Geoffrey Sanborn and Steven Olsen-Smith generously let us publish some significant new discoveries they had made. Dennis Marnon of Harvard College Library proved himself a forensic librarian, one with infinite access to scholarly resources and the imagination to make best use of them. At the Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Ruth Degenhardt and Kathleen Reilly gave generous help. Mary K. Bercaw, Brian Higgins, Dan Lane, Alma MacDougall, Robert Madison, John B. Putnam, and Mark Wojnar kindly gave advice, mainly nautical. For their hospitality during Parker's review-hunting at the Colindale Branch of the British Library, Parker thanks the actress Lisa Harrow and the whaleman Roger Payne, as well as Cormac McCarthy, who deftly arranged this kindness by proxy so as to get the job done. Maurice Sendak responded with heartening ferocity to titbits (as *Moby-Dick* spells it) of biographical information that ended up in footnotes here. Susan Harris at Northwestern University Press helped us in practical ways. Heddy-Ann Richter helped to verify the footnotes; later with Parker she proofread *Moby-Dick* aloud, all the words and all the punctuation marks. At Norton, Julia Reidhead and Nina Baym gave encouragement. Candace Levy copy-edited expertly and thoughtfully. Editorial assistant Brian Baker expedited the stages of production during which the proofreader Susan Sanfrey, the cover designer Joan Greenfield, and the head of the art department, Debra Morton Hoyt, all made their admirable contributions. Through it all Carol Bemis carried on the tradition established by Benedict, one of the most beloved men in modern American publishing.



Principal ports of southeastern New England in the mid-1800's

Those noted for whaling shown in roman

Others shown in italics



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