

*Extracted from
American Register for 1808
vol 3.*

*See Bancroft
Hist North West Coast vol 1. p. 318.*

JOURNAL

OF A

VOYAGE BETWEEN CHINA

AND THE

NORTH-WESTERN COAST OF AMERICA,

MADE IN 1804.

SUNDAY morning, the 8th of February, 1804, I left Canton, and arrived, in the evening, on board the *Delia Byrd*, a few leagues below Whampoa; we got immediately under weigh, and arrived the next evening at Macao, where we anchored in four fathoms. The next morning I sent the boat ashore with an officer, to bring off an Otaheite girl, wife to my carpenter's mate, whom I had agreed to take on the voyage. The next morning we again weighed, and launched out on a most difficult, and, as it finally proved, a most disastrous voyage. In the first place, my ship was so leaky that she required pumping every ten or fifteen minutes; we had a stormy coast to beat up against the monsoon; and then to grope our way through an unexplored ocean to the north-west coast of our continent. On the 7th of March, we had advanced as far as the south end of Formosa. This short passage, which may be effected in three days with a favourable wind,

cost us an infinite deal of trouble; we had a constant contrary gale, in which the ship suffered very considerable damages in her sails and rigging. During this passage we were constantly near the coast of China, and were always surrounded with numerous fleets of fishing vessels. These junks are about twenty-five tons burthen, of an uncouth construction, but they sail remarkably well. Several of them beat us when we were under double reefed top-sails. They cruize by pairs, dragging between them a large bag seine, which is occasionally hauled in to secure the fish. We ran very near some of those fishermen, and I observed large families of women and children on board. Men born and brought up in this way must make excellent seamen; and should China ever, in the course of events, become a maritime power, their fisheries would be no contemptible beginning towards a navy.

The 7th of March we had, for