

bark <i>Alert</i>	3,374 barrels	7,400 lb	33 months
	<hr/> 7,048 barrels	<hr/> 29,337 lb	

If the respective owners obtained average prices for 1856, that is, 79½ cents per gallon for the whale (and sea elephant) oil, and 58 cents per pound for the right whale baleen or bone, the cargoes unloaded at New London that fortnight valued over \$US184,000 gross, of which Captain Rogers had brought home just over \$US89,000.

#### *Conclusion*

Captain Rogers made another profitable voyage to Desolation and Heard Islands in the *Corinthian* from 9 July 1856 to 10 April 1858<sup>26</sup> but was lost at sea on 10 August 1858.<sup>27</sup> [Meanwhile a veritable 'gold rush' had developed on 'his' island.]

Captain Smith of the *Laurens*, who with Rogers is reputed to have fully explored and mapped Heard Island, brought home in May 1857 a huge cargo of 4,324 barrels valued at over \$US130,000.<sup>28</sup> In 1857 Captain Henry Rogers, with a gang of 25 men, was the first to remain on Heard Island throughout the winter.<sup>29</sup> Such vast profits could not be kept secret, and other American ports soon entered the trade (Fairhaven in 1857; Mystic, Warren (Rhode Island) and Nantucket in 1858).<sup>30</sup> Australia's first, the *Elizabeth Jane* of Hobart, arrived in 1859.<sup>31</sup>

The Desolation and Heard sea elephant industries rapidly achieved a high degree of sophistication. Though by 1874 their decline was evident, the various scientific and narrative reports by the members of the *Challenger* expedition of their visits to Desolation and Heard that year, provide excellent descriptions of the activities there. On Heard alone in 1874, there were forty men, some of whom had returned year after year to the slaughter, to the isolation, to the perpetually howling winds and to the permanent snow from which their miserable huts sunk in the black lava ground for warmth and protection. By then the slaughter had been tremendous. One scientist noted that the rookeries of former times, and indeed the tracks of the sealers, could be readily traced for sea elephant bones lay on some beaches in curved piles so thick as to appear like the lines of flotsam and jetsam left by high tides.<sup>32</sup>

The island could not support such slaughter indefinitely: the last American ship to depart solely for elephanting at Desolation and Heard left New London in 1887. Thereafter the islands were visited only at very long intervals by a few scientific expeditions. The first official occupation of Kerguelen (Desolation) was in 1949 when the French asserted their claims to sovereignty by establishing several permanent scientific research stations. Last year, these included over eighty men. Similarly, after the sovereignty of Heard had been transferred from Great Britain, in 1947 the Australian Government estab-