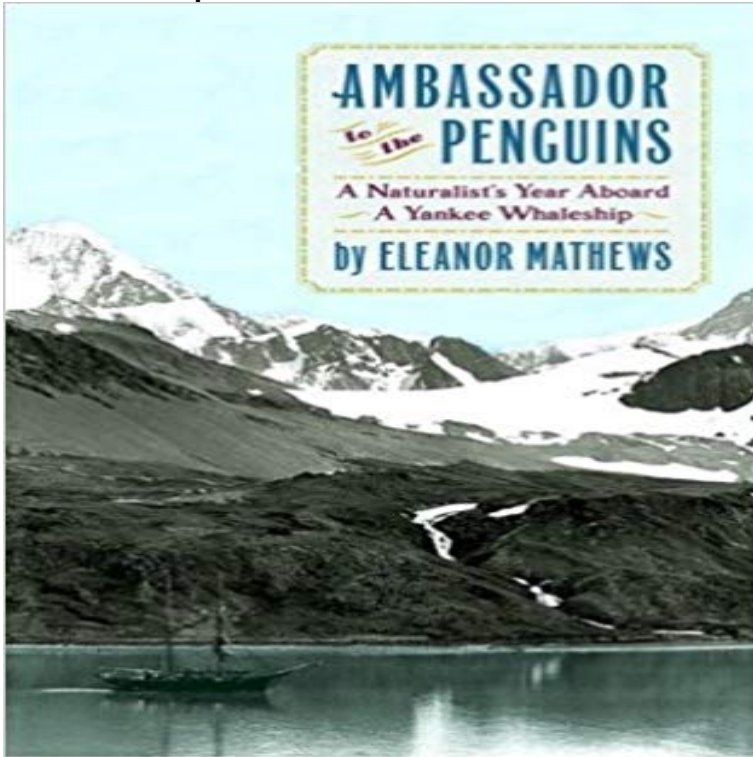


Ambassador to the Penguins: A Naturalists Year Aboard a Yankee Whaleship



In 1912, a young naturalist named Robert Cushman Murphy was offered the opportunity of a lifetime to spend a year on one of the last Yankee whaleships out of New Bedford, on a voyage to the Antarctic. Only recently married, Murphy had many regrets at leaving his wife Grace so early in their life together, but he saw that the chance to journey to the end of the world, to bring back new specimens, to record what he saw, was also the chance to launch a stellar career. During the voyage, Murphy kept a journal, packing it with observations of his experiences on board, both as a naturalist and as a witness to a disappearing way of life. When he was not taking photographs and developing them in seawater, or skinning birds to take back to the American Museum of Natural History, he was watching his shipmates raid penguins nests or harpoon whales and boil down their stripped carcasses. This journal, recorded in the voice of a man who relished the world around him, was later published as *Logbook for Grace* and became a bestseller. Murphy himself went on to become a world authority on oceanic birds. Eleanor Mathews, his granddaughter, has now taken this extraordinary diary, updating & supplementing it with never-before-published information and his own original photographs. She presents his voyage in a compelling third-person narrative, maintaining his voice while expanding the tale for modern readers. As a story of seafaring life, a portrait of the whaling industry still under sail, an account of a natural history expedition, and a love letter to an absent wife, it was described as a book to set on the shelf beside *Moby-Dick* & *Two Years Before the Mast*. *Logbook for Grace* has disappeared; but we can proudly offer *Ambassador to the Penguins* to replace it.

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