

The Charles W. Morgan ca. 1936

By Sidney Wotman

I recently obtained some 75 year old black and white photos of the *Charles W. Morgan* as she appeared in the summer of 1936. At that time, the whaler was owned by a gentleman named Colonel Edward Green, who, in 1925, created a museum on his estate, which was located near



South Dartmouth, Massachusetts. Although the *Morgan* possessed a full set of sails, which were periodically set for show, she couldn't really go anywhere due to the fact that she was "moored" inside a cofferdam filled with sand!

It's also interesting to note that she sported the distinctive fake gun port motif, which the ship never utilized during her actual whaling career. It's also noteworthy that, in the photos, she is a three-masted ship. Although the *Morgan* was launched in 1841 with this rig, she would eventually become a bark well before the 20th century.



These changes may have been implemented when she was employed in several movies including *Miss Petticoats* (1916), *Java Head* ((1921) and *Down to the Sea in Ships* (1922).

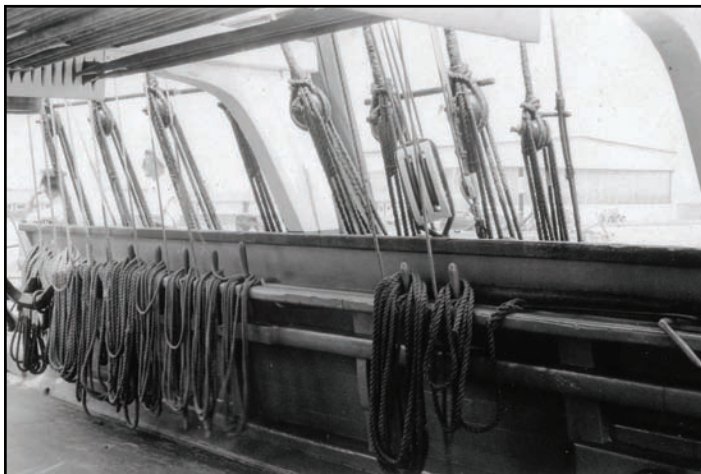
The photos seem to indicate that the whaler is in excellent condition, although her pristine appearance would not be long lived. In 1936, Green would die, and the vessel would lose the necessary funding needed to be properly maintained. The *Morgan* would begin a long spiral downward towards extreme



neglect, which would reach a climax in 1938 when the vessel was extensively damaged by a hurricane.



Although she would be taken over by a corporation called "Whaling Enshrined", times were difficult, and the *Morgan* would, for the most part, sit abandoned for almost three years. On November 8, 1941, one month before Pearl



Harbor, the tired old whaler would be towed to Mystic Seaport, Connecticut where she would get a new lease on life!

