



DANA STATUE

Namesake Visited in 1835

During the days of Mexican rule here in the early 1800s, many ships braved the storm belt around South America's Cape Horn, hauling their cargoes of New England-made goods to trade for Southern California cattle hides. These were carried back to New England leather factories, to be returned on later trips as shoes and saddles — to be traded again.

One young seaman of the time was Richard Henry Dana Jr., on leave from Harvard University studies to recover his eyesight and strength after measles. He sailed into this anchorage on the brig *Pilgrim*, then the ship *Alert* in 1835. Dana carried his vivid impressions of this coast back to Boston, where he wrote and published his classic book of adventure, *Two Years Before the Mast* in 1840. He also became a noted maritime attorney. (see *Pilgrim*)

This protected cove, one of few natural anchorages, was described by the author as "the only romantic spot in California." He wrote a pleasing description of the "grandeur" he found in the cliffed and rocky cove setting. Grateful residents named the coastal point for Dana in the 1880s, and the community that slowly grew up beside it also came to be called "Dana Point."

As a modern harbor was being built at the site, local citizens raised funds and commissioned this nine-foot bronze statue to honor Dana, enabling him to permanently face the cliffs he so enjoyed on his brief visit. It was designed by sculptor John Terken, cast in Michaelangelo's Italian home town and unveiled here in 1972. Dana's statue stands with his foot upon a rope-bound bit on his ship's deck. He holds the journal kept during his voyage ... and which was later lost at sea. Tributes within the landscaped plaza around the statue honor the man and his work.

Island Way and Dana Drive on Dana Island