

Second Voyage

To

Jamaica & Mexico

in his Majesty's Packet

Duke of York

Thomas James R.N.

Acting Commander

This page about Acting Commander Lieutenant Thomas James is littered with words written in Greek characters – but which are used to spell or approximate English words. The English deciphering of these Greek is transcribed in italics within square brackets. From the tone of the passage it is clear that Surgeon Williamson would not have wanted anyone on board to read his less than flattering comments and observations – particularly not Lieut. James. I have not tried to translate the ‘Latin,’ which I think highly suspect, and possibly schoolboy dog-Latin.

‘[Thomas James] or as [He] is more familiarly known [called Tom James went] out in the [room of] our own [Commander. He] is a native [of Truro,] & is a [Lieutenant] in his Maj.^{ys} [service]. I did not much [admire Him] He could be [pleasant] when [he chose] & most disagreeable when he pleased, which by the bye was very often. His education was apparently [defficient] & he possessed no qualities of natural acuteness & observation to make amends for the want of it. In general his [manner] was [surly] & [ungracious], hardly condescending to [converse] with either [Passengers] or [Officers]. *Habuit insannum facminarum amoram, et sola conversati ei grata as eas spectabat denique erat bestia butissirmae similor quam homium.* He possessed no feeling but [for himself], and entirely resisted that celebrated saying “*Nihil humarri a me a ilnum est.*” [He abused] all separately behind [their backs] – and never [to their faces]. Of the absent he was most unmeasured in [His abuse] & [revealed] many [affairs] which a man of honour would have concealed. In a word I would not [sail with Him as Commander], if he [were to pay double] & according to Homer *odi et urceo.*’¹

¹ O’Byrne in his *Naval Biographical Dictionary*, notes that Lt. William James entered the Navy as a 1st Class Volunteer in February 1806, in the *Experiment*, which he mistakenly identifies as one of the packets. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1815, and later (25/11/1836) had command of the ex-steam packet *Echo*, on the North American & West India stations.

H.M.S. *Experiment* was the R.N. Guard ship and Receiving ship based at Falmouth during the Napoleonic Wars.

The *Navy Lists* of 1832, give his date of promotion to Lieutenant as 16th Feb. 1815, but he is listed as without a current R.N. appointment – *Duke of York* being a civil packet, and only an acting command.

*List
of
The Ships Company*

*Lieut. Thomas James R.N.
Act. - Commander.*

<i>John Geach</i>	<i>Master</i>
<i>Ja.^s Williamson</i>	<i>Surgeon</i>
<i>Charles Williams</i>	<i>Mate</i>
<i>James Evenett</i>	<i>Boatswain</i>
<i>Gustavus Glason</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>
<i>James Pashbee</i>	<i>Steward</i>
<i>James Rowe</i>	<i>Stew.^{ds} Mate</i>
<i>James Webber</i>	<i>Cook.</i>
<i>William Stephens</i>	<i>Sail Maker</i>
<i>Joseph Stevens</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>Samuel Waistcott</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>Philip Waistcott</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>Edward Oke</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>William Watts *</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>Alex.^r Webb</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>Charles Richards</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>John Richards</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>Dyer Williams</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>James Hoskin</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
<i>George Kelloway</i>	<i>A.B.</i>

&

a boy John Evenett

** in room of Francis Hawkins retired from service altogether*

*Short Notices
of a
Voyage to Jamaica & Mexico &.^c*

Sailed 26th March 1832

} absent 19 weeks

Returned 6th August 1832.

For these three last voyages we have always been unfortunate in respect of our stay in harbour. Instead of reposing from our labours for five or seven weeks, our period of enjoyment and social intercourse with friends may not exceed three weeks and on two occasions not more than two. At the present period, after an absence of eighteen weeks, during which we endured incredible discomfort from excessive cold - violent gales - and constant damp - we were disappointed, when we learnt that less than a fortnight would be the extent of our stay. Complaints and grumblings in all such cases are vain and useless - so I made up my mind to enjoy myself as much as possible, and to cram into that short space as great a quantum of pleasure as the season of the year and my necessary avocations would permit. But who can stay the rapid course of time - and old Saturn found me employed when his unwelcome visit was paid, in imagining what my obliviousness of the lapse of time rendered it impossible for me to fulfil. Nay I had even time to have made all my necessary arrangements for going to sea - and you may be sure, that the intelligence of our destination till Monday, which I received on Friday, was most gratifying to me. Indeed our two days of grace were doubly pleasant to me, not only because they enabled me to complete all I had to do, but because they were an unexpected boon which only once in nine voyages before I had yet received. It was therefore with less regret than otherwise I would have felt, that on

Monday 26th March 1832 - at 12 o'clock we left Falmouth with a fresh and favourable breeze and cloudy weather.

Tuesday 27th - cloudy weather. Light and favourable breeze.

Wednesday 28th - cloudy but fair weather. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Thursday 29th - d.^o wind and weather.

Friday 30th - fine weather - fresh and favourable breeze.

Saturday 31st - fine weather. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Sunday 1st April - beautiful weather. Very light favourable breezes inclinable to calms.

Monday 2^d – pleasant weather. Nearly foul wind.

Tuesday 3^d – cloudy weather. Moderate but foul wind.

Wednesday 4th – moderate and more favourable breeze. Cloudy but pleasant weather.

Thursday 5th – beautiful weather. Very light and favourable breezes, inclinable to calms. Caught a porpoise.

Friday 6th – beautiful weather – fresh and favourable breeze from N.^d & W.^d

Saturday 7th - cloudy, gloomy weather with squalls and occasional showers of rain. Wind fresh and favourable. No excessive heat. So much caloric has been abstracted from our bodies by the excessive cold of last voyage that they will now require a good [amount of heat] ere they be saturated.

Sunday 8th April – beautiful weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Monday 9th – fine weather. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Tuesday 10th - fine weather. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Wednesday 11th - fine weather. Very light breeze, inclinable to calm.

Thursday 12th – fine weather and warm. Calm till 11 A.M. when breeze sprung up from SW and W – foul for us, tacked twice to-day.

Friday 13th - cloudy weather with constant rain in the afternoon. Moderate and foul wind from WNW. I believe it is rare that the regular course of the trades is interrupted. I have never witnessed it before, but do not regret that for once I have seen it.

Saturday 14th – very light variable winds with occasional showers and calms, very changeable weather.

Sunday 15th – squally with heavy showers. Moderate and favourable breeze.

Monday 16th – cloudy weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Tuesday 17th – cloudy weather with occasional showers – fresh and favourable breeze.

Wednesday 18th April – beautiful weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Thursday 18⁹th – very fine weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Friday 20th – delightful weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Saturday 21st – fine weather with occasional showers. Fresh and favourable breeze until 1 P.M. when it fell off light but freshened again at 8 P.M.

Sunday 22^d – beautiful weather. Moderate and favourable breeze.

Monday 23^d – very fine weather in the morning and afternoon. Squally with rain at night. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Tuesday 24th - this morning at 6 saw Deseada and in the course of the day, Guadeloupe, & Antigua, and towards evening we were pretty close in shore at Montserrat. We were thus enabled to perceive a small town close to the shore, embosomed in trees and two or three vessels at anchor before it. At any time the near sight of land is pleasant and when we have been out at sea for along period we are apt to think more highly of the first place we come to than perhaps we would otherwise. From this cause I thought, that that side of the island, which we looked upon was exquisitely beautiful, with its Chief town situated close to the waters edge, at the bottom of a sloping country highly cultivated, which as you followed it, led your view up to mountains of considerable elevation. When darkness closed in, we did not altogether lose sight of the land, for numerous fires on the hills still pointed out its direction at many miles distance. As Ovid said, speaking of his knowledge of the first poet of the age Virgil, *pigrilium vidi tantum*, so we had only a glimpse of a small round island called Redonda, and a very indistinct view of S.^t Kitts and Nevis. Lovely weather all day.

Wednesday 25th April - very fine weather - fresh an favourable breeze.

Thursday 26th - beautiful weather - fresh and favourable breeze.

Friday 27th - very fine weather - fresh and favourable breeze.

Saturday 28 - this morning abreast of Alta Vela, after passing which we had very strong breezes and furious squalls. Coast in sight of immense height, with the tops of the mountains visible far above the clouds, which threaded their bases and middle. Just as we approached Jacquemel, the wind fell light, and prevented us from coming to anchor till 10 minutes past 3 P.M. when the Captain and passengers went on shore with the Mail, leaving self and brother officers to come off afterwards. At 4.40 P.M. we went on shore. No change has taken place for the better in the town, since I was here last, nor is there any likelihood of this being the case, until some miracle shall be worked to instil a love of improvement and a desire to labour in a country where a love of idleness & an inveterate languor pervades all classes of people.

Jacquemel Town - Soldiers

We took a long walk thro' the Town, and down by the river side, whence the view was beautiful. The streets are not much to be commended for their excellent pavements, and the labour of ascending some of the steeps with their jagged stones and deep ruts would hardly be compensated by the beauty and magnificence of the scenery, which the eminences opened up to you. I have still the same opinion, as I previously had, of the quietness and orderliness of the people. Robbers are seldom heard of and assassinations never - but then the lesser vices, in the world's estimation, are as generally and as eagerly pursued and among the most immoral of nations. Hence the true Religion does not flourish, much less exercise any beneficial influence,

by its moral precepts. Superstition approaching in grossness to paganism, or unreligion, otherwise miscalled liberal principles divide the vulgar and the noble "*hommes de couleur*."

We met two or three parties of soldiers on our return. Each was preceded by a band playing, in my opinion not amiss. All the soldiers had swords by their sides, sheer bayonets fixed, and their guns held in one position, except one or two, who when the order was given, shewed by their mistakes that they were not quite *au fait* to the business. It was with difficulty that I refrained from laughing, when as we stopped and looked at them passing by, those who mistook right for left, - shoulder arms for ground arms, were warned by a knudge with the elbow to correct this error. But I did restrain myself, lest my exclamation should give offence, as I could not help remarking how scowlingly we were looked upon by the black niggers miscalled soldiers - abominable libels upon the character - unsightly deformities of a perfect piece.

Uniformity was not much attended to. Blue coats with red facings all had - but there was a lamentable difference in the dye, plainly showing that some had seen much longer and much harder service than others, and producing a pleasing contrariety of light and deep blues. Their hats in general were pretty uniform, and where they either had no proper one or had mislaid it, a common one supplied its place as well. Their guns were indeed uniform, for they were uniformly dirty and a disgrace to soldiers. Some had white trousers - some blue - some brown &.^c Some out of vanity wore stockings, while others out of comfort went without. The officers of these heroes were pretty well matched with their men. Their coats and Trousers were whole - at least I did not observe a single hole in any one altho' I was wholly intent in examining them. The cocked hats were of course intended by the Maker to have had two similar corners - but unfortunately the rats, or some other mischance had rendered them minus one, & the embroidery of their dress & their epaulets were without exception tarnished to a dirty copper colour. Regulation Swords are no go here - and a highland broadsword is as equally useful with a foil or a bread-toaster. One would think that of all their lamentable deficiencies they are deeply sensible, and could hardly hold up their heads for very shame. Never were you more mistaken in your life. In them, it is as in the world - the fewest personal or intellectual advantages a man has to value himself upon, the more pride, and self satisfaction. These pigmies swelled out in their deportment into giants and heroes - *Ted ohe jam satis* I was tired out and disgusted with the sight & shall move as fast as my legs will carry me from such specimens of vain glory only mentioning that I saw the commanding officer, in a splendid second-hand scarlet coat, which nothing but vanity could have made him wear as it was not the national uniform.

From walking so much in the sun, we were dreadfully fatigued, and felt glad when we recognised an old acquaintance, M.^r Lorie the American Doctor, whom I mentioned before. In his house we remained half an hour - had a glass of grog - learned that he was married & had two children - that he was in high odeur for skill &.^c and at last left him for M.^r Friths's where I dined along with our passengers, the Master and Captain being on board. At 10 P.M. with very much pleasure repaired on board our own craft, and felt as if indeed I had returned to my own proper home.

Sunday 29th April - in consequence of the sea breeze of yesterday continuing till very early this morning, we did not get under weigh until 5 A.M. when we had a moderate

land wind. This died away at 8 and we had a calm till half past 10, when [the] Doctor came in and continue fresh all day - variable weather.

Monday 30th - fresh and favourable breeze - pleasant weather. At 5 P.M. saw East end of Jamaica, distance 20 miles.

Tuesday 1st May - came to anchor at 11 A.M. at Port Royal - fine weather - At 12 Capt.ⁿ went up to Kingston with our passengers. I remained on board all day - but at night went on shore to Port Royal, where I saw nothing new.

Wednesday 2nd - very squally with occasional deluges of rain. In the forenoon along with the Capt.ⁿ and two passengers I visited the Dock and Hospital at Port Royal. Both are admirable and complete in their arrangements. In the former little is doing - but every thing nevertheless is kept in the nicest possible order, and any thing may be obtained or executed at the shortest notice. Indeed, I received very great pleasure from the inspection, and felt proud of my country, when I compared in my mind, the very different appearance and appurtenances of the foreign Dock Yards which I have seen. Of the Hospital I cannot speak in too highly in terms of praise. Tho' not by far the largest it is the neatest & far best I have ever seen. You enter by an iron gate, on either side of which is a porter's lodge. From it two gravelled narrow walks, diverging in opposite directions lead to the front of the Building. These walks border a large piece of ground, beautifully laid out and filled with plants and fragrant flowers, from which you inhale health as you pass. Having reached the Hospital, you pass under a large porch thro' & thro', and find a long corridor in front & at the back, where you can enjoy a delightful promenade in the hottest day. Having walked there for some time we ascended a broad flight of steps, and stopped in a wide airy piazza, which ran round the interior part of the building, where the patient[s] lie. This piazza is not altogether open, but is furnished with Venetian blinds, which admit a perfectly free circulation of air. The kernel as it were of the Hospital, containing the sick wards have regular built windows, admitting or excluding the air, when necessary. In short in every possible point of view, I consider Port Royal Hospital as a model for all similar institutions in warm climates, and believe that in such an establishment the chances of recovery are as a hundred to one to what they may be anywhere else. I take shame to myself for having neglected so long to visit it, and would rather have gone there than to the finest acting or most graceful dancing.

As soon as the rain had ceased, we returned on board, when we had lunch, and immediately after started for Kingston, the commander calling en passant on board the *Blanche*.² I did not observe any thing new in town - and in fact the whole place with its motley inhabitants is now becoming less and less strange to me & I go thither rather with the feeling of old acquaintanceship than with the expectation of observing things novel. The streets were perfect puddles, and I had often, in order save myself from going round about, to take springs and leaps which however easy to accomplish on a cold frosty day, were by no means pleasant in the eye of a tropical sun. I wonder much that this nuisance has not been removed - an Englishman would easily solve the question by saying, that the chief inhabitants being North countrymen, they acted only in so doing in accordance with their national principle of not being *fashed*. I hardly think this can be the true reason - but I must confess I know no other. I had too little

² HMS *Blanche*; 5th Rate, 46 guns; 1,074 t-bm.; launched Chatham Dock Yard 26/5/1819. Broken up at Cowes Oct. 1865. J J Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*. *Navy List*, 20/03/1832 – Captain, Arthur Farquhar, *K.H.* 22/02/1830.

time to enquire after M.^r Drummond, but from what I heard, I am inclined to believe that his circumstances are not improving, but on the contrary still retrograding.

Disagreeable situation on return from Kingston

At half past four we received the Mail at the Post Office, which was carried to M.^r G. B. Smith's store, where I remained whilst the commander went in M.^r Smith's Gig to see a review some short distance out of Town. A little after six he returned, and we left immediately for the ship. The prospect before us was most unpleasant. Darkness was past approaching, threatening to hide from our view the various marks by which we steered for Port Royal - the distance was considerable - and the weather was very squally with every appearance of a deluge. We had however no alternative - we had received our Mail & must set sail next morning. For about a quarter of an hour after pushing off, we did very well. We had our sail up and a light breeze carried us along. At the end of that time a heavy squall overtook us, which obliged us to douse our sail and pull, whilst at the same moment the rain poured down in torrents, and gave us a thorough soaking. It was now dark, and the torrent of consequential drops was so precipitous, that earth and sky were confounded together. We pulled about at random in the direction which we supposed to be the right one. We had lost sight of all marks - and no friendly light shone or rather glimmered to guide us. Except when the vivid lightning shewed us for an instant the dark forms of the mountains, all was indistinctly **beyond** a yard or two around us. Meanwhile our men never ceased rowing and no suspicions arose in our minds but that we were making progress towards Port Royal. As the rain abated we discovered one or two lights ahead of us, which all of us at first considered to be those of P.^r Royal - but a little reflection led to a different conclusion, and upon comparing various circumstances we were convinced that we had actually pulled back to the place we had left about an hour ago. Our chagrin and disappointment were excessive, and with much grumbling we turned the boats head in the direction in which we imagined our vessel to be lying. With great difficulty, and often after being on the point of returning from the contrariety of opinions as to our real position, each man who pretended to know the passage, with equal positiveness asserting his own to be true, we at last made an old floating powder-magazine, with which we were all well acquainted. From this point we took our departure, and approached the old *Duke* after nearly three hours cruise in the boat, fagged & jaded, and as wet as if we had been dropped in the sea.

M.^r Levison

I shall now conclude this part of our voyage by giving some sma' account of a passenger who left us here. His name was Levison, and as you may easily guess from thence he was of Jewish extraction. His person was rather under the ordinary standard, with the rather longish nose, which was the only mark of his tribe I observed. Indeed his manners were so different from my Jewish conceptions, and so little did his conversation & opinions lead me to guess his origin, that I was ignorant of it for some weeks. Above all he eat [sic] pork, which I had always considered the test of trial or shibboleth of the people of Israel. He has a considerable store in Kingston and talked rather largely of his ways & means. Yet there seemed to be an evident constraint laid upon him. An affectation of ease, politeness and good breeding shone thro' all he did or said. He ostentatiously mentioned several Hotels & houses, which he visited to give us a notion of his status in society - and if you were very

credulous, you would consider him a little great man, standing in the relation of a planet to the sun of fashion, and receiving in his proximity to it a reflected light and splendour. He appeared anxious not to be thought a Jew, and all his attempts at subverting the natural bent of his mind and origin only rendered him more ridiculous. And yet he was rather pleasant in his conversation - he had certainly seen and observed much for he was by no means destitute of acuteness or intelligence. He could talk passable in French, German, Spanish, Italian and English - I say passable because I was told by our other passengers that he spoke the continental languages very incorrectly, and for my own part I can say that he murdered the King's English most barbarously. Instead of speaking plainly and using the most common and simple words, his sentences were exceedingly complex and his words far-fetched & uncommon in ordinary parlance, with this additional absurdity that they [were] almost all mispronounced or misapplied. In his own opinion he was a *non-pareil*. He used to tell me of his perfect knowledge of the languages, and advised me to attend particularly to him whilst he was conversing, as I should thence derive immeasurable advantage - ha! ha! ha! I certainly paid him great attention but not from the motive he recommended but because when I was dull a few minutes with him would set me up again.

State of Jamaica

Before finally bidding adieu to Jamaica I shall make mention the state in which we found that part of the islands visited by us. Martial law had ceased ever since February but with it the prevalent discontent and sense of insecurity had by no means ceased. Upwards of 3 or 4000 slaves had met their merited punishment of death by the bullet or the cord, and every where the Militia, and regular troops had been successful. But suspicion and dissatisfaction were still general. The calm was a dead one indeed but a person of the least sagacity could see that the storm was slumbering only to break forth with additional violence, and that the elements of a furious conflagration still subsisted tho' apparently smoothed. For my own part, as an uninterested spectator, I conceive that the policy of the Government at home has been most mistaken in its ulterior view, and most mischievous in its immediate tendency. In consequence of the measures already pursued, the slaves of the colony have been led into the most fatal error of supposing that the Government in England had ordered their immediate and unconditional emancipation, and that the boon of freedom was forcibly withheld in opposition to positive orders - and that therefore, if the[y] rose *en masse* to assert their rights against their oppressors their Masters, they would meet with sympathy & support from that administration, which their Masters, as dependant colonists were bound to obey. And what has been the melancholy result. Property to an incalculable amount has been sacrificed in their fury - which loss again has been retaliated by miserable end of 4000 slaves. Nor is the actual loss in property sustained alone to be considered, large as it is, but we have to reflect that the plantations destroyed will not be brought into their former state until after a long period, if ever they will, and that meanwhile the owners have been reduced from a state of affluence to one of comparative indigence. Several years also in my opinion must elapse ere confidence and a sense of security can be restored. I have myself conversed with several slaves and in particular with one, who holds forth on matters of religion at a Baptist meeting house. If their sentiments can fairly be taken as the standard of the discontented slaves, the whites must be constantly on their guard, and should they be worsted must expect to experience the most horrible treatment which implacable

revenge for imaginary ill treatment can inflict. In the course of conversation with the above Baptist, I urged upon him the Christian doctrine that we are all bound to discharge the duties to which Providence has called us in our different stations, whether as Masters, servants, bond or free - and hence inferred that he having been born in slavery ought to be contented therewith, and leave to a rational government the gradual abolition of slavery. But no - all I could say was of no avail, and in reply to my observations, his answer invariably was that '*were all bredren de sons of one common fader Almyty*' and that all deserving equal rights from the same source, no one could make either black or white men a slave. I again said that the Apostle Paul in addressing slaves did not tell them to rebel against their Masters, who held them in an unjustifiable state, but on the contrary he exhorted them to be faithful servants in all things, not consulting their own advantage but always having a single eye to the interest of their proprietor. M.^r Baptist, however, did not care one fig for the opinion of Paul when it militated against his own preconceived opinions, and like the parrot in the fable, he reiterated and reiterated his solitary argument without a single change of note. Any one the would a *priori* judge that as this black gentlemen founded his claim to freedom solely on the beneficent doctrines of Christianity which he asserted to be a paramount authority to all others, that he must have been a truly religious character, and imbued with the very essence of its principles, which command us to love all men as brothers & to love our neighbour as ourselves. Alas for poor human nature. The Whites have ere now raised the standard of revolt, committed the most horrible cruelties under the sacred name of religion - and ere long I am afraid that the Blacks will follow the same righteous examples. My friend the Baptist, the severe professor of the Christian doctrine, fully disclosed to me his views of brotherly love which were, that his sable brethren, if they should gain the ascendancy, were called in strict retributive justice, to return upon the heads of their white oppressors, in a tenfold degree the cruelties which they had inflicted - and that their motto should be '*Kill & Slay - spare none, even as the Israelites destroyed the Amelikites the enemies of God.*' In short he was of opinion that the Tragedy of S.^t Domingo would be an acceptable performance to the Deity, and that upon the total extirpation of the Whites a *Te Deum* should be sung in token of thanksgiving and triumph. That such bloody sentiments are entertained, and that this is no exaggerated statement of mine, many incidents during the revolt will justly prove. Men put to death with excruciating tortures - women deforced and then murdered - and children slaughtered before the parents with the most ingenious cruelty were scenes which actually occurred. From the tender mercies of the Blacks, good Lord deliver us.

The most egregious hopes have been entertained by slaves when they are free. They look forward to leading a life of idleness and pleasure, without reflecting that industry, which they hate is the only means which can prevent them from starving. To work then they will not - and as a necessary consequence they must rob & murder. Instead of having all their bodily wants supplied, also being attended to in sickness, hunger, nakedness and irremediable disease must be their portion. In my opinion our Government has much to answer for, as well as those well meaning and philanthropic persons, whose Christian sympathies have been powerfully called into play by their fanciful ideas of the condition of slavery. I am ~~not~~ an ~~anti~~-slaverite, as you might from the tendency of my observation imagine - on the contrary. I abhor the principles of the slave trade and of slavery in general. I merely uphold that the slaves are not in a fit condition to be emancipated from their ignorance & their opinions, and that their Masters, possessing in them a perfectly legal species of property, ought to be indemnified for their loss. I think it possible that some plan might be fallen upon the

secure the gradual abolition of slavery - and surely those who are anxious for the immediate abolition should cheerfully sacrifice some part of their means to form a fund of Indemnification, and thereby shew that the sentiments they express come not from the mouth but from the heart.

All slaves are by no means so eager for freedom. Many there are who possess common sense enough to perceive the fallacy of the expectations of their more ignorant brethren, and the great measure of comfort which they themselves at present enjoy. Several gentlemen at Kingston, with whom I conversed on the subject, told me, that they had offered to emancipate several of their slaves, and that their offer had been refused. Not satisfied with their declaration I interrogated several of the slaves to whom it was said, that freedom had been tendered and from their own mouths learned that the statement was true, and also the reasons they had for declining the proposed boon. They told me that they had kind Masters - plenty to eat and drink - clothes to cover them and a good house to shelter them - and why should they wish to change. Who was to take care of them, if they could not procure work, or if they were unable from disease to labour. Without work they must starve and the charge for medical attendance was too high for them to be able to pay. By being free they would exchange a state of comfort and certainty for one of many troubles and anxieties - and an increasing family would only add to their miseries in place of being able to throw all their cares in that respect on their owners. If they had wished to be free, they could have purchased their freedom long ago & in deed many of them were possessed of money which they could leave to whomsoever they pleased.

I must however drop the subject of slavery and emancipation. I have merely stated my own opinion and leave to others the same right which I have exercised of retaining their own. I shall now proceed to state that on

Thursday 3rd May - we weighed anchor from Port Royal at 5.30 A.M. with moderate and favourable breeze & variable weather with occasional showers.

Friday 4th - fine weather. Moderate and favourable breeze.

Saturday 5th - light and favourable wind - fine weather.

Sunday 6th - fresh and favourable breeze - very fine weather.

Monday 7th - abreast of Bonaea at 9 A.M. and of Ruatan at 1 P.M. - fine w.^r

Tuesday 8th - at 8 A.M. received a pilot on board at Half Moon Kay and made sail for Belize. Fine weather, and delightful sail among the numerous kays, which stud the Bay of Honduras. At 4.55 P.M. came to anchor in front of Belize when the Commander went on shore with the Mail

Wednesday 9th - fine weather - went on shore to day and strolled away, spying out what changes had taken place since we were here last - but could see none, everything remained unaltered therefore I can say nothing more in addition to what I have already mentioned.

Church at Belize

Thursday 10th May - very hot weather, went on shore with a small party for the purpose of taking a stroll. The Commander being anxious to see the church, his request was granted at once, and accompanied by the clergyman, he and all of us went into the interior. From the external view which shewed you a good size building of brick, decent and respectable in appearance, I should never have formed any idea of the inside at all like the truth. To my surprise and I may add to my great gratification, we were introduced to a place of the most elegant simplicity. There was no tawdry ornaments - no gilded ginger-bread work, the admiration only of the vulgar and sure evidence of bad taste - nothing unmeet for or out of character with the sacred nature of the edifice - but all was simple, and neat yet rich in the materials. In short I know not when I have been so much gratified with any Church - certainly not more so with the most splendid of Catholic worship. In particular the pulpit of solid and highly polished dark mahogany, to which you ascended by a handsome flight of steps of the same material - with the reading desk in the front, struck me as peculiarly fine. Then the altar at the one extremity and the gallery with organ at the other added to the effect of the whole. In short I was quite delighted and the more so, as the spectacle took me quite by surprise. The Clergyman, when I asked him to point out the portion of the church set apart for the separate accommodation of the Blacks and Whites, told me that here there was no distinction observed as in the West Indies, but that all united together in perfect equality to offer up their tribute of prayer and thanksgiving to their common Lord and Saviour. How pleasing is such a view to the Christian & Philanthropist and how merit is due to the Whites of Belize for throwing off the shackles which pride & prejudice had conspired to throw around them in respect to their coloured brethren.

Black free school at Belize

After the Reverend gentleman had finished pointing out to us the several parts of the church - the comfortable vestry containing the different registers & some fine plate, the gift both of the Blacks & Whites, we next proceeded to the opposite side of the road where stood the Black free school. This was not a separate building - but formed the end of a range of houses. When we entered the large school room, all the little black boys (being all standing) began patter-patter with their feet, which is the mode they have been taught to shew their respect on the entrance of strangers. What a pleasant sight was there! Upwards of 100 boys from 4 to 15 years were present - all of them clean as to their persons (for cleanliness is strictly enforced) but almost all barefooted & some having more or better clothes than others. As soon as the noise created by our arrival had ceased, the Master entered into an explanation of the mode which he adopted in teaching, which was the Lancastrian. To a question proposed by myself, he answered that he found it to succeed very well indeed and that under it the powers and abilities of the children were wonderfully brought forward - that he considered black boys to possess the same powers of docility and understanding as the White - that he experienced no difficulty in communicating the various branches of knowledge which he had undertaken to instruct them - especially as he was able to excite by emulation and avidly ardent application and an ambition to excel - but he added that he was of opinion that the influence of a hot climate had often operated considerably to induce indolence and a disinclination for mental as well as corporeal exertion. To shew us what progress had been made, he made several of the elder boys read - which they did very well - and I could not help remarking that in reading they had none of that negro accent which they invariably have in speaking - and their

enunciation was as different as if the language of books & that of every day conversation had actually belonged to two distinct people. In spelling also they gave good proofs of their progress, as well as in grammar. I proposed, with the permission of the Master some questions, which they answered readily and with an understanding, in grammar and in arithmetic. In the latter branch indeed one or two of the upper class worked their questions much more quickly than two thirds of our home bred boys would have done, and in every instance their working was correct. The Master next submitted to our inspection specimens of writing which were very fair indeed - in large text - half text and small hand. At my request he was kind enough to give me the handwriting of four of his pupils and to state their age and how long they had been at school - and this I shall carefully keep.

Our attention was next directed to the small fry of the school - the little pickaninnies with curly paws of coal black hue, & pearly teeth fully displayed by the ready grin of pleased childhood - with their home books in their hands & feet taught to keep a certain position marked out by a line of chalk. There they stood with wonderment expressed on their faces, and eagerness to attract the eyes & gain the applause of the buckra man. Silence being commanded - the monitor read aloud a few words, and was immediately followed by the whole line, each having his finger pointing out the words as they were pronounced. The words were then spelt by the leader & re-echoed by the band - and in this way the attention of all was kept alive, and their progress facilitated. We bestowed our modicum of well merited praise on the little fellows, and were next conducted to an adjoining large room, where the black girls are instructed after a similar plan - but as they had been already dismissed before our arrival, I can only believe that the proof [of] their progress and attainments would have been equally satisfactory as that of the boys. Gratified as we had been, by every thing we saw, we returned our thanks to the Master M.^r McDonald (who by the bye was not many years ago a large timber merchant in Greenock) for his politeness and attention, and we left the school, receiving from the boys the same marks of respect with which our entrance had been greeted. Now, my dear Jacob, I cannot but say that I conceive this to be the best plan to be pursued previous to the emancipation of slaves - Let them be first enlightened, and the evils we dread from their ignorance will be averted - their freedom will then be a blessing to themselves and to society & their status in the civil, religious & moral world will be nearly if not entirely on a par with that of their White brethren. Education then is the slow but sure means of benefiting the blacks & on this foundation firm as the everlasting hills may be safely raised a glorious superstructure of morality and religion.

Barracks of the Black troops at Belize

Taking leave of the worthy clergyman we wended our way in search of other objects of instructive amusement. Notwithstanding the oppressive heat of the sun, we determined to visit the barracks of the black troops, which lay at some distance from the town. Our walk thither was any thing but pleasant. Without shelter of any sort against the solar rays, and walking on a road of soft mud dried & pulverised to an impalpable powder, we were well content when we reached the green plain on which the barracks are erected. Taking the liberty of strangers, we entered the quarters of the men, and could discover no difference from the neatness, comfort, and cleanliness of our own regular soldiery. The men were with few exceptions all fine built fellows, with a martial air, very different from the crouching, awestruck demeanours of abject slaves. I noticed particularly the great variety of their countenances - their different

modes of lattering – the shapes of their heads & bodies – and might have imagined that they were composed of many different races of men. They in fact belonged to various African tribes – and had such in their own country filled different stations. Some had been warriors – some slaves - & some chiefs. They had been sold into slavery to be carried to Havannah but had fortunately been retaken by our cruisers & carried into Sierra Leone to form part of the free colony there – and had from thence been allowed to volunteer into our West India regiments. I have often heard these regiments spoken of, and always in the highest terms of praise, being compared to our Seapoys in the East Indies, who again are said to be equal under English Officers to the best description of European troops.

After a day thus spent in walking about we were heartily glad of the repose which we found on Shipboard, and for my part it was three days ere I had recovered from the effects of the fatigue I then underwent.

Friday 11th May - at 7 A.M. left Belize – foul wind fine weather. At 1 P.M. the Pilot left us and we tried the northern passage.

Saturday 12th - fine weather – tacked several times, but could not weather the northern triangles.

Sunday 13th - fine weather – foul wind – saw Northern Triangles but could not weather them. Tacked to S & E.^d

Monday 14th - squally with rain in the forenoon – fine weather in the afternoon – foul wind.

Tuesday 15th - fine weather – foul wind – in sight of Bonaca. At 7 tacked to N & W.^d

Wednesday 16th - fine weather – foul wind.

Thursday 17th - fine weather, light and foul wins – saw Cozumel to leeward but far off.

Friday 18th - light and favourable wind during the day – fresh in the afternoon – fine weather.

Saturday 19th - fresh and favourable breeze – fine weather.

Sunday 20th - caught some of our old friends the red fish & a shark. Very cloudy weather with heavy rain at night – very light wind inclinable to calm.

Monday 21st - nearly a clam all day – light and favourable breeze – fine weather but very hot.

Tuesday 22nd May - very light and favourable breeze – caught 26 dolphins – fine weather.

Wednesday 23rd - very light and favourable breezes – fine, but very hot weather.

Thursday 24th - d.° wind and weather.

Friday 25th - fine weather. Moderate and favourable breeze.

Saturday 26th - beautiful weather - light winds. Saw Orizaba this morning and as the day advanced the low country. At 5.30 P.M. came to anchor before Vera Cruz, where we remained all night. Here two of our passengers disembarked, of whom I shall now proceed to give you my opinion. Their names were M.^r Robert Foularton & M.^r Malley.

When I saw M.^r Foularton come on board at Falmouth, I was particularly struck with his phiz. To my eyes it expressed something sinister & unprepossessing - and from the very first, I could not look upon him but with dislike, & thought that this feeling would last if not increase during the whole voyage. As time wore on, and the characters, talents and dispositions of our passengers gradually unfolded themselves, I found to my surprise that I could then observe no traces of blackguardism which I had considered as so unequivocally displayed in M.^r F. On the contrary I began to look upon his countenance as rather handsome, and if not conveying the idea of loveableness, at least free from scowling malignity and impudent forwardness. This change in my opinions was brought about by my frequent intercourse with him, which enabled me to perceive that he far surpassed our other passengers in intellect and extent of information. I infinitely preferred the energy and fervour of his conversation to the insipidity of M.^r Levison or the plain merchant-like discourse of M.^r Malley. Every day we were in the habit of taking long walks, and beguiling the tedious hours in discussing topics of classical and Philosophical interest. Unfortunately for him the bias of his mind was towards scepticism & his standard was Hume, to Claire & Bolinbroke with some ideas peculiar to himself. Of course I avoided as much as I could the subject of religion - but this at all times could not be done. Neither my own firm conviction of the truth of Christianity, nor the inference which he might draw from my silence when he attacked its sacred principles with sneers and derision would permit me to be altogether silent. As might be expected our arguments left us both in *statu quo antea*. I plainly perceived the sophistry & speciousness of his reasoning, while he attributed all I urged on my side to the prejudice of education & habit. I verily believe that if a startling thought should enter his soul that Christianity might be true & that the vengeance of the Almighty might visit him for ever with the punishment of everlasting fact, he would dismiss it as a nonsensical relict of superstition and priestcraft which had been instilled into him when others had the guidance of his thoughts and held the reins of his realm. Surely his opinions are the delusions of a soul which spurned the wholesome restraints imposed on our passions and appetites - by our own holy and uncompromising religion. Anxious to throw off the iron yoke he grasped with eagerness at every point which seemed to afford him a satisfactory of his conduct - and at once in an effort of desperation, settled himself down in the belief that a religion which was encompassed with so many difficult mysteries could not be true. The truths of the bible were indeed hard sayings to him - and of this he was glad. From his own lips I have heard him pronounce sentence of condemnation against himself in as much as he owned to vices and immoralities, expressly denounced in the scriptures. These, if he were a Christian, would often have awoke the strings of conscience as their indulgence was not only sinful & unsanctioned, but productive of the greatest misery to followers, & if universally pursued would involve the whole frame work of society in disorder and ruin. But whilst he acknowledged not the truth and obligations of religion he falsely imagined

that he might revel in every sinful delight & delightful vice, provided he did not outstep the limits of legal permission, and render himself the object of punishment. T'would require no great stretch of foresight to see how boundless would be the evil if his sentiments were adopted by men in general, destroying all social order & harmony - turning every one against his neighbour & erecting will and might as the sole arbiters of our actions.

M.^r Foularton has decidedly the features of a North Briton, viz. the high cheek-bones & carrotty poll. I have heard him say that the Carnegies who live in Warrieston Crescent were his cousins, as also the Taylors of Greenock. He went to see in the East Indian Comp.^y service, but as he said he was kicked out of it for his impudent tricks. He has frequently commanded vessels, owned by his father, who I think he told me had been one of the commissioners of the Board of Trade. He was much in Domingo during the time of Christophe and most likely had his infidel opinions confirmed, if they were not imbibed there. He has been otherwise a great traveller, & originally purchased for a Company the *United Kingdom* steamer.³ I rather imagine he can use a travellers privilege when occasion serves, or in other words can draw a long bow. Notwithstanding all his bravery of language he was very nervous, and as timid as a maiden when a slight illness attacked him. When I charged him with this he faintly denied it, and then said that he was uneasy only on account of his wife & child, whom he has left in England, who would be left destitute should he be taken from them.

M.^r Foularton was going to one of the mines in Mexico, but in what capacity I could never learn altho' he told us of his own accord that he had 30 shillings a day. He had with him a great number of guns & pistols, with all the apparatus complete to sell in the country, & expected to realise a large profit which I doubt. He had besides many nick nacks and curiosities for the same market with the same hopes.

M.^r Malley

Monsieur Malley was a native of Germany where his father follows the business of watchmaker and jeweller, altho' he had originally come from Geneva. His Mother is a native of Leipsic. M.^r Malley in his appearance was soft and mild with a foreign look. Like all his countrymen he was a complete merchant - knew the value of every commodity and indeed only considered any article in reference to its value and not to its ability and beauty. When very young he had attended watchmaking but having lost the sight of one eye, & his health suffering from the sedentary confinement of the business, he became a clerk and went out to Mexico - was there faithful, industrious & sober - slaved year after year until now he is the principal partner in the firm.

M.^r Malley is about 35 years of age, of remarkably mild and soft manners - He was always contented and pleased - and when I remarked this to him, he very oddly said that when he was a young man he laboured hard and had much trouble & anxiety, but now when he was comfortable, why should he disquiet himself with petty evils, and thereby shorten his life which he wished to prolong as long as possible. He seemed very nervous when he had a slight cold. His great fear was that now when he had acquired sufficient to purchase for himself those pleasures after which he had so ardently panted, death might slip in and spoil all his long indulged anticipations. I was much amused with his proposed schemes of enjoyment - they were so simple and inexpensive. To combine pleasure and economy was now his whole study and he seemed seriously to adopt some hints which I had merely uttered in jest. He had

³ Possibly the 335 tons Leith-London steam packet *United Kingdom*, built at Greenock c. 1827, owned by Mills & Co., Turner master, and Classes A1 at Lloyds - *Lloyd's Register* - Jan. 1832.

travelled all thro' Germany - had been in Russia England & France. All his observations on these countries were concerned in the very spirit of a trader - he knew to ___sle their produce and exports but was totally ignorant of their public buildings, their institutions & their literature. His simplicity was an excellent foil to the affectation of Levison, and the powerful intellect of Foularton. In short I liked him very much. He could converse very well in French English and German. I ought not to forget that one of the pleasures of this life consisted in eating. How often have I left off munching myself to observe the intense devotion with which he applied himself to his trencher. He never lifted up his eyes or uttered a word until the contents had disappeared & his tongue only gave utterance in asking for more grub. When you asked him to take wine with you, and this you had to do in a loud voice, he would look up with a sudden start, and hasten to make amends for the unwelcome interruption. With all this strong propensity to gourmandising, he had a most righteous regard to his health - and it was only to hint that such and such an article was not good, and not any persuasion would induce him to touch it. He entertained a high idea "*de regularitate intestinaum,*" and used to observe us all, envying those in particular who had been so happy as to have *duas dejectiones serigulis diebus*.

Notwithstanding all M.^r Malley's oddities, infirmities and whimsicalities, I say may success attend him - & may he live many years to enjoy the paradise of delights, of which his imagination is now so full. *Sic preatur amicus ejus firmis semies Jacobus W.^{mson}.*

State of Mexico

The orders with regard to Vera Cruz are that on the outward bound voyage you are to land your Mail there and proceed. But on the present occasion not having arrived till late in the afternoon, and there being little wind and that foul, it was impossible to comply with these orders. Besides there was another and most imperative reason why we could not set sail immediately. We waited a considerable time for the health boat - after which the Captain went ashore, and returned with the Consul's Clerk to look after the Mail to see that all was right, at it was of no use to land at Vera Cruz if in the then state of the Country. It was thereafter proposed that the Courier should call onboard at 4 o'clock next morning for the Mail, in a boat belonging to his Majesty's sloop of war the *Rose*,⁴ which was to convey him to a place 21 miles from Vera Cruz, & there land him; leave him to pursue the remainder of his journey to the City of Mexico by land. Thus you see that it was impossible for us in any case to have started this night.

I have now to mention in most imperfect statement why such a course with respect to the Mail was pursued, in order that you may understand what otherwise would be implausible to you.

At present the whole of Mexico is in a state of civil war. There are two parties, the Ministerialists, or Government party & the Liberadors. At the head of the latter is Santa Anna, the same who defeated the old Spaniards when they made a descent on Tampico with the view of recovering their lost dominion. By his success on this occasion he has rendered himself very popular and this popularity has I suspect given birth to projects of ambition in his mind. The present government with the President of the Republic at their head had latterly rather shown an inclination in favour of the

⁴ HM Sloop *Rose*; 18 guns; 367 t-bm.; Portsmouth Dock Yard 1/6/1821. Broken up May 1851. *Navy List*, 20/03/1832 – 18; Sloop; West Indies. Cdr. Edw. Wm. Pilkington, 16/08/1830. *Navy List*, 23/06/1832 – 18; Sloop; West Indies. Cdr. John T. Warren (act), 29/03/1832.

old Spaniards by allowing many of them to return and to establish themselves again in the country as merchants &.^c This very ambiguous policy has been laid hold of by Santa Anna, as a ground for undermining the administration of the existing Government and perhaps of laying the foundation of his own power by securing his election as President. The passions and prejudices of those among the people who have not yet forgotten the insults and oppression received at the hands of their old enemies, and the fears of others, and these not a few, lest the return of the Spaniards should be followed by the restitution of the property of every description which they had appropriated to their own use, powerfully cooperated to advance the cause of Santa Anna & to procure him many adherents. All the principal sea port towns have declared in his favour. Vera Cruz with its impregnable castle is his chief strong hold. Many towns in the Interior also are said to be disposed to side with him but are overawed and prevented from declaring their real sentiments by the presence of the Government troops.

Siege of Vera Cruz

Santa Anna commenced his Act of Rebellion by a manifesto setting forth a long list of grievances (among which the residence of the old Spaniards, among them was not the least), and calling upon one and all to obtain their freedom from the tyrannical party in power. To enforce these complaints S. A. had made careful preparation. Every thing was done to put the places that declared for him in a state of defence. Meanwhile the other party were not idle. On the contrary they dispatched a considerable number of Troops against the Insurgents and twelve days before our arrival, they set down before Vera Cruz, and regularly laid siege to it. They even went so far as to dig trenches for the protection of their own men, and commenced operations with just spirit. For six days they plied this trade of smoke and thunder and were favoured in return with equally noisy salutes from the Town. What a pleasant employment the cannonading must have been, and the more because very few accidents happened on either side. How vastly more delightful to set off a 32 pounder instead of a 4 penny gun - as in days of yore. I should have enjoyed the sport hugely. During this busy time three men in the city were accidentally knocked in the head by their play fellows in the fields, who again complained that they had been more roughly treated by the Townies. Little real injury was done to the houses, from their strength. Either the balls fell off harmless as against a wall of iron, or if they [were not] hard, they only stuck in the wall, but never penetrated, being rather an ornament than otherwise.

The founders of Vera Cruz had certainly looked to some such spot as the present, knowing that English metal was driven home with good will, and has accordingly made all their houses ball proof. The tops of the city walls were on the present occasion covered with sand bags as were also the flat roofs of the house, so that every shot fell harmless. Tired at last with their fruitless labour and despairing of success, they broke up the siege, under pretence that the rainy season was approaching, and that it [might] occasion a great fatality among their troops to keep them unprotected in the field. Santa Anna, collecting what troops he could, immediately pursued after him, & in a partial engagement had come off victor. This was the latest news we received, and it was added, that Santa Anna was on his route to the city of Mexico, where the Ministerialists had concentrated their forces for its decisive struggle and that he expected to have his present small force augmented by

some thousands from Puebla & other places. All at Vera Cruz were of course in a state of great anxiety.

Various contradictory rumours set afloat by the friends & enemies of the Insurgent General within the City, but no authentic intelligence was known. It was impossible to travel by the direct road to Mexico in a private capacity as both parties would be interested in stopping you. Our passengers were therefore to pursue a very circuitous route in order to arrive at their destination. For this reason also the Mail had to be conveyed by water 21 miles from V. Cruz & from thence carried safe on mules (all except Newspapers which were left behind) the courier being furnished with protection from the Belligerents.

Such my dear [blank space] is a very imperfect statement of the circumstances which influenced our stay at Vera Cruz, and now I shall proceed on.

Sunday 27th May - fine weather. At 1 up anchor and set sail for Tampico with a fresh and favourable breeze in company with the United States Sloop of War the *Fairfield*.⁵ She was a fine vessel, and beat us hollow in sailing so that we fully expected to find her anchored at Tampico when we arrived.

Monday 28th - cloudy weather all day fine in the evening with very heavy dew - light and favourable breeze. Saw a small schooner which did not at first attract much notice till we approached her. Her decks seemed crowded with men & her guns were visible. Upon this hoisted our ensign & pennant - ran out our two poppers, displacing two Quakers to make room for them - and handed on deck balls - grape - canister & chain shot with every other appurtenance - all ready - every man at his station because in these seas schooners alone are employed as Piratical vessels. When she passed us to leeward she fired a blank shot to windward and hoisted Mexican colours.

Tuesday 29th - at 8 A.M. came to anchor off Tampico - found there the American Schooner *Grampus* and learnt that the schooner [we fell] in with yesterday was one belonging to S. Anna & had brought money from Vera Cruz to Tampico. No word of the *Fairfield* which delighted us much as we had thus an opportunity of crossing over the Yankee, if not for superior sailing, at least for superior seamanship. Capt.ⁿ went on shore with the Mail and did not return till we put to sea again. One of our men being unwell [I] did not accompany him - for which not sorry as I was more comfortable on board. At 3.45 P.M. arrived the American Sloop of War *Fairfield* - at 7 some of the middies came on board, found that from fear of dealing with the shore they had stood to the Northward whilst we kept boldly to the Southward.

We remained at anchor with fine weather till Saturday, and occasionally heard from the shore. All there was bustle and activity. The people were in high spirits, because they had successfully repelled an attack of the Government troops. The soldiers were drilled every day, & guards posted in all directions. Business was at a complete stand, and whereas we had expected to receive here 3, or 4,000,000 dollars on freight, we did not receive one, it being unsafe to send them down in the disturbed state of the country. Nay so great was the scarcity of coin that the common rate of interest was 8 per cent per month, and money was scarcely to be had even at that extortionate usury. All the old Spaniards had been ordered to quit the country but were allowed 20 days to sell of their goods and effects. Instead of a forced sale many

⁵ USS *Fairfield*, sloop of war. Launched 28/6/1828 from New York Navy Yard. 700 tons, compliment 190. Flag ship for Commodore J D Elliott, West Indies, 15/11/1831-23/7/1832. – *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*.

entrusted their property to English & native merchants to be disposed of at leisure to the best advantage, in the latent hope that by gaining a little time they might still be able to settle in Mexico. Others again sustained considerable losses in parting with their wares at so short a notice - and many glad to get off with whole bones.

Saturday 2nd June - being by this time heartily [tired] of our long detention (48 hours only being allowed) at Tampico, it was with no little satisfaction that this day at 2.30 P.M. we weighed anchor and left Tampico for Vera Cruz. Fine weather - foul wind & moderate.

Sunday 3rd - very little wind in the forenoon - in the afternoon fresh & more favourable. Fine weather.

Monday 4th - fine weather - light winds in the day - fresher at night.

Tuesday 5th - fine weather. Light and favourable breeze.

Wednesday 6th - calm in the forenoon with extremely hot weather. Moderate & nearly favourable breeze in the afternoon. Much rain during the night.

Thursday 7th - very light & foul breeze in the morning - calm all day - cloudy weather.

Friday 8th - very cloudy weather all day with fog and drizzling rain. At 3 P.M. saw the light house on San Juan de Ulloa & at 5.15 P.M. came to anchor before Vera Cruz, when our Captain landed the Mail and our only passenger M.^r Muir went on shore.

M.^r Muir came on board at Tampico. He was a native of Glasgow (where his brother has a house) and has two of his maiden Aunts living at Dumbarton. His appearance was that of a stout little man with a face that but too faithfully revealed that he was fond of the drop. He served his apprenticeship & lived 8 years at Vera Cruz, and he is now settled in the City of Mexico. He was a free and easy fellow - with a pretty considerable deal of the brogue. Many long conversations we had together which were mutually delightful from recalling to each other associations with other places & times. Altogether therefore he was a pleasant addition to our mess & I should have been glad if he had been going home with us.

Alameda at Vera Cruz

Saturday 9th June - fine weather. Went on shore to learn the news - no intelligence has arrived from the Interior of the movements of the Belligerents since we were last here. Everything on shore as usual - except that I perceived that the City walls had been partly rebuilt and partly repaired & the whole white washed - a great improvement. Many of the houses were pierced by balls & the palace & several churches bore more numerous signs of the late siege than any of the other buildings - but I did not notice a single instance where the ball had penetrated through & through.

After walking for some time about the city and satisfied ourselves with it, we issued out at one of the gates & found ourselves in a large open space of ground with a road traced thro' it. Not many yards from the barrier gate was the Alameda or public walk. This was nothing more or less than a pretty broad pavement of large flag stones, carried on for about 60 or 70 yards, and near the farther end was a small arch under which a *burnie* trickled its unambitious course, & many women enjoyed the double

advantages of a shelter from the sun & the means of washing their dirty linen. On each side of the Alameda was a low parapet marking its boundaries. Such is the only place whither the refined ladies of V. Cruz can repair to enjoy the evening coolness in public & no doubt it is considered by them all that could be wished. Comparisons are odious or as some misname it odorous - & so they are. How different this from the lovely Alameda at Cadiz with its shady walks, its perfuming flowers, its marble seats & bubbling fountains. Here no tree casts a lengthening shade as the sun hastens to hide his splendour in the Western waves. Here no delightful seats entice you to rest yourself when weary & to prolong your stay. Fashion rules the world - & were it not that this imperious duty has ordained that this place should be visited on Sundays, it would be left to itself. As it is short is the stay which the dames of Vera Cruz make. All on common days is dull and dreary. Except when the pavement it trod by the wayfarer or by the market people, its appearance is exactly consonant to its situation. Rank weeds and noxious plants - which men have agreed to despise cover the neighbouring ground.

Close at hand (about 20 yards off) is the general burying ground, where skulls, & thighs, & ribs are promiscuously scattered. There the noisome land crab, who riots on the bodies of the dead, threatens to trip you as you walk, while ever and anon you are started by the green lizard & the bloated [I]guana crossing from the grass beneath your feet. The rude emblems of mortality are visible from the Alameda, as broken crosses & dilapidated tombs - and altho' I admit we ought to live always mindful of death, yet I do think that the melancholy objects which every where meet the eye, are very inappropriate, when placed near a public pleasure amusement & relaxation. To crown the whole immediately beyond this burial ground are here & there, in clusters of five or six, stone houses & huts, with the walls alone standing, a melancholy picture of ruin & desolation.

I know not how it was - but I felt quite dull during our walk & could not for my life throw off anxious feelings. Glad then I was when we returned to the City & met with our passenger M.^r Muir and his friend D.^r Glasgow, a native of Belfast, educated at Glasgow, and formerly in the Mexican navy. With these gentlemen we spent the evening very pleasantly, only that I felt once or twice a slight shivering, but so evanescent that I thought nothing more about it.

Sunday 10th June - felt pretty well to day - at least I could complain of no positive bad symptom. Stay on board all day & refused to go on shore in the afternoon with the Master, Mate & M.^r Snell. Fine weather.

Monday 11th - fine weather. Slight headache in the morning, which gradually increased till that night it became unsupportable & forced me to turn in at 6 o'clock. Before retiring I took some medicine, & found considerable relief from the recumbent position. No thirst - foul tongue - pains in the limbs nor rigours. I slept tolerably.

Am stricken by fever.

Tuesday 12th - this morning thought myself much better - got up but found the headache return immediately. During the [day] the symptoms of my illness became less and less equivocal, till I judge that I was labouring under an attack of Yellow fever which opinion was confirmed by D.^r Glasgow. Of course I was confined to my couch & know nothing of what occurred for many days afterwards. Luckily for me,

the wind being favourable our Captain was induced to start this night, so that at 9 P.M. we weighed anchor and set sail for Havanna.

The period from our departure from Vera Cruz till our arrival at Havanna must be completely closed as to the nature of our passage, whether the wind was foul & the weather was bad or vice versa, I had enough to do to attend to myself.

My own Cabin being small, hot and confined, increasing the fever M.^r A Snell most kindly gave the cot he had in his brothers Cabin for my use. There then I awaited the issue of my sickness, and there I learned from sad experience to be able to sympathise most cordially with those in the same situation.

I was not long in finding out that the type of my fever was decidedly remittent. At 5 P.M., within the difference of 15 minutes, on every alternate day, I experienced very slight rigors, so that the least motion or touch would occasion a shudder. This stage was in half an hour succeeded by a violent hot fit, which almost drove me mad, & which terminated in great perspiration with considerable relief. During the intermission I was so so - never free from fever. After enduring two exacerbations or paroxysms, I had recourse to Quinine, which of course I took under the usual precautions. I anxiously awaited the result. The dose being too small, its effect was only to render shorter its duration, & less[en] its violence - but previous to the next I took ag.s.^t & escaped any attack at all. Of course I continued to pursue the same plan & with the same success for some time, & every [day] for weeks after I was convalescent it was a daily medicine, only in diminished quantities. On two occasions I have taken 15 grains previous to the paroxysms & 6 grains on the intermediate day. Afterward I found that 12 taken in the course of the day with four or five in the alternate day were quite sufficient for my purpose. Afterwards I gradually reduced the dose, till I finally left it off.

Besides the Quinine I used to take large doses of Calomel & Colocynth. I think I took 150 grains in 17 days with a beneficial effect upon the liver & bowels, but with a very prejudicial one to the Stomach. I was not salivated at all by the quantity. A dull heavy pain & weight in my liver was completely removed.

One curious effect (I mean new to me) was that every day at half past three in the afternoon, I suddenly became deaf. I could hear nothing - even loud sounds. From experiment I found that this proceeded from the Quinine - but the *medus* of this action I shall leave to others to explain without saying what I may think myself.

Thanks be to God for all his mercies to sinful and ungrateful men - I recovered gradually and slowly & long suffered from debility. Providentially I had no delusions, as otherwise no one could have said what might have been the consequence since none could have administered the remedies I required. For a many nights I never enjoyed sleep - indeed not even after I had arrived in Falmouth was I able to sleep more than an hour. I dozed much but was sensible at the slightest noise.

Before the time when we reached Havana I was able to get up and with some difficulty to walk in the Cabin. Every day my strength increased but I did not venture upon deck until the morning of. -

Friday 29th June - when for the first time the weather being very fine, I stayed up to see our entrance into Havana. The wind being foul, we were obliged to come to anchor immediately behind the Morro Castle, instead of in front of the Town. I then remained on deck all day - & amused myself with the varied contents of the bum-boats alongside, & the Jewish-like rapacity of their owners.

Visit to a Slaver at Havana

Saturday 30th - I had no intention of going on shore at all - and better would it have been for me had I adhered to my purpose. But the Captain on his return last night, told me that he had been on board a slave vessel, & described the scene as being well worth being visited by one who had never witnessed it. My Curiosity was excited, and I became very anxious to go but prudence for a long time withheld me. However I thought to myself that I was strong enough & besides that I should not have to go on shore at all - and accordingly I determined to hazard the experience. Well in the afternoon I dressed myself & repaired along with the Master & Mate & M.^r Snell on board the Slaver. We were there received by the midshipman who had charge of her with great civility & he willingly acceded to our wish of seeing the vessel. What a sight was presented to us on our ascending the sides.

The class of the vessel was a very small schooner, hardly capable of affording comfortable accommodation to ten or twelve individuals, if you except the hold, and yet she now carried 100 slaves and six or eight Englishmen composing the crew. The decks were literally crammed with human beings, of all ages and sexes. The man & boys went about *eodem modo quo natura eos fecerat* - whilst the *pullae ra aidioia celaverunt disclouto sols circum medum*. The bodily appearance of the slaves was very good & I witnessed none of that despair & despondency which I had conceived to be inseparable from the condition of slavery. On the contrary all seemed perfectly contented & happy & no doubt better satisfied with the treatment they received from us than from their former Masters. They were also very cleanly - no thanks to themselves, for every morning & evening they were compelled to wash themselves - a ceremony which was conducted by dashing over them several buckets of salt water.

They all belonged, I believe, to one nation - and certainly their features were exactly similar, which would not have been the case had they been of different tribes of negroes. In their own country they had been either hereditary slaves, or prisoners taken in war - reduced to that state & then sold to the white traffickers in human flesh. It is therefore a false cry of some that they are deprived of their natural liberty & subjected to greater hardships from Whites than from their own countrymen. No such thing. Their treatment at home is a thousand times worse than with us [?] & the exchange of masters is therefore a benefit to them. Besides they have a chance of being instructed in the Christian religion & consequently of being eternally saved - a point which ought to be attentively considered by would be philanthropists.

All the men and boys in the schooner slept in the hold - all the girls in the cabin aft. I went down into the hold to inspect their accommodations. It was very low and extended nearly the length of the vessel. You could not sit up in it but were obliged to crouch down. In order to stow away so many human beings, the poor wretches were forced to double themselves up so that the *[posteriors]* of the one were shipped between the knees & belly of the next behind - a most uncomfortable position but unavoidable. The Cabin again was very small & filled with a very miscellaneous collection - as bales[?] full of Indian corn or rice - coats - swords - pistols & guns, & was withal excessively hot & close.

The slaves are fed three times a day with rice or Indian corn prepared with butter - no meat is allowed. There are several messes & each must keep to his own. The food is contained in large wooden bowls, & each being furnished with a long wooden spoon, dips it in as fast as he can & bolts almost without chewing whatever he brings up. The slaves had much rather use their fingers but this is forbidden. As soon as the dinner is on the table - I mean on the deck - the whole assembly, previous to falling

to, clap their hands & uttered an odd sound with their mouths, expressive I suppose, of their satisfaction and thankfulness.

Condition of Captured slaves in Havana.

The occasion which called me to visit the slave ship, seems to lead very properly to mention the condition of the slaves brought into Havana & some particulars which I learned respecting the *Speedwell*,⁶ the English schooner which captured the Slave ship.

There are two descriptions of slaves at Havana - the first, those who are brought in by Spanish vessels and the second those who have been captured by our schooners. The former are really and *bona fide* slaves in the strictest sense of the word, being the property for life of the Master. They are put up in the market & fetch a good price. The latter, when they arrive in port, are delivered up to English & Spanish Commissioners, whose duty it is to look after them & provide for them according to the laws on that head. Formerly our sailors used to receive £10 for every slave they captured, but at present no more than £5 is given. As soon as the slaves are delivered over to the Commissioners, they are bound to maintain them, till they are disposed of - which may be done in the following way.

If you wish to have a certain number of *servants*, they address a petition to the Commissioners, stating their wish & in general they meet with little or no difficulty. A certain sum - much below what you would pay for the absolute property of a slave - is paid down, & certain writings are drawn out to secure the good treatment & proper support of the Negro, and to provide for his being emancipated after a service of ten years - & the required number is doled out to you. This system looks well but does not work well. The soft term of a servant only conceals the evil one of slave - as if we could arrive at the truth not one in 50 is ever so fortunate as to be emancipated.

Those negroes who live in the town have the best chance, because they are almost sure to learn the terms on which they may be free & if they please, when they have fulfilled them, they can go before a magistrate & insist upon their just rights. But those in the country, are not so blessed, not having the necessary information which is most carefully concealed from them. They are truly slaves & exposed to all the caprices & tasks of a cruel master without remedy.⁷ Many of these poor wretches die from over-fatigue or harsh treatment - nor is any enquiry ever instituted after them. Their Masters come again into town & purchases more *servants*, whose loss is again to be replaced by others - whilst the honest Commissioners pocket large sums for a nominal trust, & provided scenes of Barbary & cruelty are not before their eyes, they care little whether they are transacted elsewhere on the naked & bleeding bodies of those very slaves whom they are paid to protect. Alas for poor human nature - alas for the wisest institutions.

Thus my dear Jacob you will perceive that our vaunted humanity shewn at an enormous expense, but very little betters the helpless conditions of the poor negro. Some good I admit may be accomplished by these measures - but still more would accrue if the Commissioners were more strict & impartial in their duties. But sooth to say, I am prouder of my Christian country thus trying tho' not quite effectually, to

⁶ HM Schooner *Speedwell*. 5 guns; 203 tons-bm. Purchased 1815. Sold, Jamaica Jan. 1834. - J J Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*.

Navy List, 25/12/1831 - Lt. Cdr. William Warren, 31/8/1829.

Navy List, 20/09/1832 - Lt. Cdr. C. H. Norrington, 13/9/1832.

⁷ So written, but 'remedy.'

ameliorate the condition of our black brethren, than if one ten times more powerful & illustrious than we really are as a nation. I had almost forgot in favour of our system that it may eventually suppress the slave trade by ruining the merchants, whose vessels are captured by our schooners. This expectation is I confess rather distant, but courage, it may succeed. I have been told that if the merchants save one out of every three cargoes, still their losses will be covered & they will besides realise a handsome profit.

*Eagle and the Speedwell*⁸

Vessels for the slave trade are openly and professedly so, fitted at Havana, even when they [there] are English schooners there. Close to the one I was in, there was a large schooner, in which many were busy preparing her for the Coast of Africa. This rather looks as if they laughed at us - tho' truly they sometimes laugh on the wrong side of the face, when the finest vessels & finest cargoes are taken by us. A great deal of money is often made by these captures and in the case of the *Speedwell* now here, each common sailor became entitled to upwards of £100 prize money, within three months. They Captured two schooners & a large brig. With regard to the brig, I was told some interesting particulars. She was called by a Spanish [name] signifying the *Eagle*, she carried 18 thirty-two pounders & was manned by 70 men. When she was fitting up in Havana, the *Speedwell* was laying there - and the Captain of the *Eagle* was often heard to declare that if he met her or any other schooner - he would blow her out of the water, & that he would not yield even to an English Brig. This vain-glorious boast was applauded by many, & the Commander of the *Speedwell* was often taunted on the subject. About the time when the *Eagle* was expected home the *Speedwell* left the Harbour to go in search of her to the surprise of all & the chagrin of some. After sailing about for some time, in the most probable track, one day a suspicious looking brig was descried at a distance, for which the *Speedwell* bore up.

No attempt was made by the brig to get away. On the contrary she hauled up her courses & backed her topsails with the evident intention of laying to. Nay more, he cut away his quarter-boat & disclosed a large gilt eagle with its wings spread & its talons ready to pounce upon its prey - then ran out his 38 pounders from the ports. He knew the *Speedwell* as well as the latter knew him. From this shew of deliberate preparation one would have expected a most bloody & murderous conflict - but you shall hear.

The two vessels slowly approached each other, the wind being very light. The great object of the slaver was to bring his guns to bear upon the poor little schooner, by which he expected to blow her out of the water at the first broadside. But the Capt.ⁿ of the *Speedwell*, knew better than to give him that advantage. Availing himself of the superior sailing qualities of his vessel, he kept on her bows, where she could not much hurt him, and when at 1½ miles she fired six shots with her long swivel placed amidships, five of which (thanks to good marksmanship) struck the *Eagle* - wounded three men severely. The rest seized with sudden panic abandoned their guns & fled for safety into the hold, so that the Captain was compelled to yield. Oh shame to manhood & your country, those vain boasters, thus with 18 guns & 70 men to

⁸ A brief account of Lt. William Warren and the work of the *Speedwell* and her capture of the *Aquila* or *Eagle*, can be found on pages 274-5, in Basil Lubbock's *Cruisers, Corsairs & Slavers*, Glasgow 1993. ISBN 0 85174 593 8. O'Byrne, in his *Naval Biographical Dictionary*, records *Speedwell* as having captured three slavers in 1832. The *Planeta*, 6th April; *Aquila*, 3rd June; and *Indagadera*, 25th June. These successes resulted in Warren being promoted to Commander on August 31st 1832.

submit thus disgracefully to a little cockle boat with 30 men & four guns & a swivel. True it is that the greater boaster of personal courage is often the greatest coward.

Well satisfied with her prize the *Speedwell* sailed for Havana in Company with her & entered the Harbour in triumph - a triumph how great for our men & how mortifying to the Spaniards - Success to *Speedwell* for ever !!!

You may be sure that the preceding notes were not written at the time at Havana. I was too ill then to write and for some days I had much reason to regret, on several accounts, my visit to the slaver. While there I smoked continually - & the heat & smell were almost intolerable. Soon after I arrived it began to rain, when I sought shelter in the cabin where every one was. There I perspired most profusely & became faint & sick, so that I was glad when the rain having ceased allowed me again to come on deck. Still I was sick & exceedingly weak & longed to be off on board. In compliance with my desire we set off - & oh what did I not suffer in our passage to the *Duke*. I was nearly insensible & turned in the moment I arrived. In bed I became very sick & vomited - fever threatened me anew & I heartily repented of my rashness. Three days elapsed ere I could trust myself to get up - & fortunately I had no farther relapse.

Sunday 1st July - fine weather. This morning at 5 oClock set sail for England in company with his Majesty's sloop of war the *Rose* bound to Portsmouth. A week is here left blank in the daily returns of wind & w.^r - but you will find this in some measure supplied by the table at the end. ⁹

Sunday 8th July - fine weather - fresh and favourable breeze.

Monday 9th - fine weather - fresh favourable breeze.

Tuesday 10th - very wet weather. Moderate & favourable breeze.

Wednesday 11th - fresh and favourable breeze - wet miserable weather.

Thursday 12th July - very cloudy weather with much rain - heavy swell - rather light and favourable breeze.

Friday 13th - miserable we w.^r - pretty fresh and favourable breeze.

Saturday 14th - miserable dull cloudy w.^r fresh and favourable breeze.

Sunday 15th - very light winds & favourable during the day - fresh in the evening - miserable rainy w.^r

Monday 16th - fine weather - fresh and favourable breeze.

Tuesday 17th - very fine weather - light and favourable breeze.

Wednesday 18th - very fine weather - light airs and calms all day.

⁹ It has been decided not to reproduce these navigational tables at this time - Ed.

Thursday 19th - very fine weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Friday 20th - very cloudy all day with drizzling rain & fog in the evening – Blowing half a gale but from a favourable quarter.

Saturday 21st - cloudy with occasional drizzling rain. Moderate & favourable breeze in the forenoon, & foul in the afternoon.

Sunday 22^d - beautiful weather – light and favourable breeze.

Monday 23^d - very fine weather. Moderate breeze inclinable to draw forward.

Tuesday 24th - fine weather - foul wind. Passed 5 vessels bound to the Westward & spoke the Brig *Susannah* of Exeter.

Wednesday 25th July - cloudy weather - foul wind

Thursday 26th - pleasant weather - foul wind from SE - Tacked to South & West.

Friday 27th - witnessed thro' a smoked piece of glass the partial eclipse of the sun at intervals, the w.^r being cloudy - Wind fresh and foul.

Saturday 28th - strong & favourable gales with very heavy sea – Weather sometimes cloudy sometimes clear.

Sunday 29th - fine w.^r Tacked to N.^d. Wind more moderate & more favourable.

Monday 30th - fine w.^r – very light & variable winds.

Tuesday 31st - calm all the forenoon – light and favourable breeze in the afternoon. Beautiful weather.

Wednesday 1st August - moderate & favourable breeze – fine weather.

Thursday 2^d - moderate & favourable breeze – very fine w.^r

Friday 3^d - very strong and favourable breeze, cloudy but fair w.^r

Saturday 4th - fresh and favourable breeze until the afternoon, when the wind slackened – Cloudy weather.

Sunday 5th - calm during greater part of the day - light and favourable breezes in the afternoon. Beautiful weather.

Monday 6th - fine w.^r - At 5 P.M. came to anchor in Falmouth Harbour.

Account
of
Expenses during 2nd Mexican Voyage

1832			
28 th April	At Jacquemel		
	40 Cegars (very bad) -	£00	1 00
	Other expenses -	00	3 00
2 nd May	At Jamaica		
	2 Queen shells -	00	5 00
	Work Basket -	00	2 00
	300 Cegars -	00	9 00
	personal Expenses at Kingston & P. ^t Royal -	00	16 0
	Letter -	00	1 00
	2½ Gallons rum -	00	7 6
May 10 th	At Belise		
	Washing (1 dozen articles) -	00	5 00
	Refreshment -	00	1 00
	250 Madeira or Campeachy Cegars	00	4 00
	3 bundles of Straw d. ^o -	00	1 00
May 11	Refreshments -	0	3 0
9 th June	At Vera Cruz		
	Bottle of Copaiba -	0	7 0
	6 oz. of Spirit: Acth: Nitros: -	0	3 0
	Refreshments -	0	1 0
	1 Gallon Brandy -	0	7 0
30 June	At Havanna		
	12 Cocoa Nuts -	0	2 0
	6 small boxes of Marmalade -	0	2 0
	1½ Gallons of Gin -	0	7 0
	5 Gallons rum (to Cook for his attention to me while ill)	0	10 0
	50 Magnum Cegars -	0	2 0
	Oranges -	0	0 6
	250 Silva's Cegars -	0	12 0
	500 Cabanas Cegars -	1	4 0
	Cegar silver tube -	0	4 0
	9 pines -	0	2 0
	100 common Cegars -	0	2 0
	Boy Jack -	0	4 0
	6 boxes Guava Jelly -	0	3 0
	Total of Expenses	£7	12 0