

Winter 1-1-2020

The Voyage of the Slave Ship Hare: A Journey into Captivity From Sierra Leone to South Carolina

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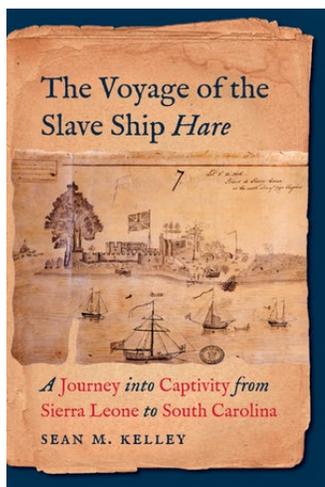
Each letter was clearly written, and easily understood. Gideon served as a Second Assistant Engineer on the USS Powhatan. Beginning his military service in Norfolk, in 1853, traveling around the seas to Japan to return in 1856 to Cape Town, Gideon wrote letters to his dear wife, Lide. Many letters were hundreds of words, copious topics that included all his adventures and the adventures of his shipmates. Each letter was dated and covered a particular span of days and months. Topics of great interest were explored, such as “An Island of St. Helena”, “At Hong Kong”, “Goes ashore to see rebel chief Chen Alin but is denied”, “Captain Abbott sent ashore with 14 boats full of presents for Emperor of Japan”, “Return to Shanghai”, and “Cape Town”.

One particularly interesting entry, “You ask me how I look, and How much I weigh. Well, I think when I’m shaved clean and my head cropped short I’m pretty good looking...” (p.183)

Recommended for public and academic libraries, 253 pages. Notes & Bibliography, page 198-247, Online resources 247 and 248.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D. MLIS

The Voyage of the Slave Ship Hare: A Journey into Captivity from Sierra Leone to South Carolina. Sean M. Kelley. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. ISBN 978-1-4696-5476-8 (Pbk.: \$27.95); 978-1-4696-2768-7 (Hardcover: \$30); 978-1-4696-2769-4 (Ebook: \$19.99). 304 p.



Sean M. Kelley tells us “this book reconstructs the voyage of a single Rhode Island sloop that carried captives from Sierra Leone to South Carolina in 1754-55. It seeks to answer a seemingly straightforward question: who were the Hare captives?” He goes on to share that although the purchased and sold captives consisted of twenty-eight men, twenty-five women, twelve girls, and seven boys, no names were ever recorded. This question, “who were they”, drove his research to build this book.

Kelley provides a look at the slave trade which is painful to read and horrific to recall: see chapters, “The Port”, “The Crew”, “Long Knives”, “Traders and Captives”, “Passages”, “The Sale”, “Town and Country”, “Shipmates and Countrymen”, and finally “Remittances”. These sections contain Kelley’s vast research collected from documents, archival materials and various interviews on the topic of slave trade in the United States.

One excerpt to share:

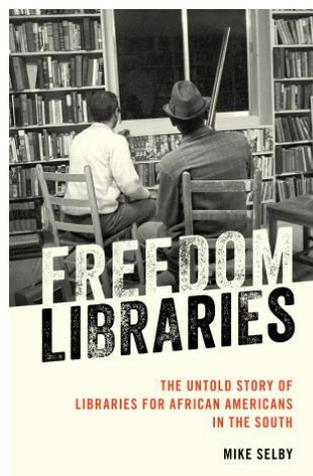
“...many of the details of the Hare’s crossing are unrecoverable, we can fill in some of the blanks by examining other voyages. Illness was common to all slave ships, with “fluxes”, or gastrointestinal diseases, the most prolific killers, one observer described a lower deck so covered with the blood and mucus...it resembled a slaughter house, small pox ravaged a number of ships...rape by crew members was a common occurrence, other forms of non-sexual violence on voyages occurred ...advisable to bring an attack dog on the voyage” (p109).

Kelley proves very helpful through the Illustrations, the maps, the charts and tables giving a deeper understanding of the experiences and lives of the captives of the Hare.

Recommended for academic, public, and archival libraries. There are 290 pages, with Appendices I, 2 and 3. Notes on page 217, Bibliography on page 249 and Index on page 281 to 290.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

Freedom Libraries: The Untold Story of Libraries for African Americans in the South. Mike Selby. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. ISBN 978-1-5381-1553-4. 193 p. \$36.00.



In this monograph of library history, public librarian and author Mike Selby provides a comprehensive account of the “freedom libraries” that were established for African Americans in the United States during the civil rights movement. As with other aspects of social life during the Jim Crow era, African Americans throughout the South and in other parts of the country were systematically denied the